



HOPE & COURAGE

Young Minds Matter

SPECIAL EDITION

Fall 2009



UACF Launches 1st Annual Awards Banquet



Carolyn Cooper Award
"Inspire Hope and Courage"
**The Staglin Family: Garen, Shari,
 Brandon and Shannon**

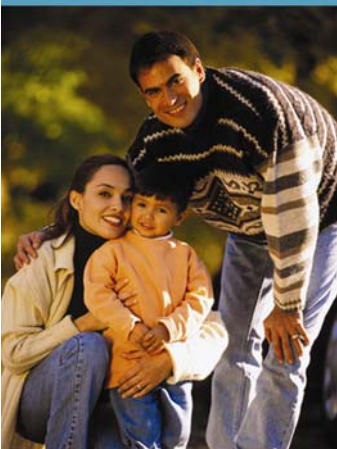
Music Festival for Mental Health

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Parent Partner of the Year Award

Rhonda Parker
Family Partnership Center
Stanislaus County



UACF Youth of the Year Award

Nicole Demedenko
President, Youth in Mind

How to Reach Your Elected Representatives

President of the United States: Capitol Hill Switchboard (202) 244-3121

White House Comment Line (202) 456-1414

United States Senate: (800) 688-9889

United States House of Representatives: (800) 688-9889

Governor of California: (916) 445-2841

California State Senate: (916) 445-4251

California State Assembly: (916) 445-5872

California State Superintendent of Public Instruction: (916) 657-2451

Banquet Welcome From Earl Kelly, UACF Board President

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the United Advocates for Children and Families (UACF) and the entire mental health advocacy community, we welcome you to the 1st Annual UACF Awards and Public Awareness Banquet. The event committee has been working hard for several months to make this opportunity a reality and we thank them for their dedication, commitment and compassion towards this worthy cause. For over 17 years, UACF has emerged as the family voice for families, children and youth statewide and nationally. Our core mission has remained the same, "to promote the emotional, behavioral and social well being of children, youth and families through transformational leadership." Our vision statement sums it up in four short, yet impactful words: "Inspire, Hope and Courage." Today, we are paying tribute

to the achievements and accomplishments of three "Heroes for Hope": The Staglin Family (Garen, Shari, Brandon and Shannon), Rhonda Parker and Nicole Demedenko. We have noted that all three of our award recipients, among other criteria for their selection, are motivated of compassion and commitment for our children and the quality of life they deserve; we commend that dedication and foresight.

UACF has grown significantly from its start-up period when the organization consisted of a 10 person Board of Directors comprised of very strong family advocates interested in building values-driven, children's mental health systems in California. In 1998, the organization



garnered resources for staff. In 2000, we hired our first Executive Director. In 2001 UACF, formerly the United Advocates for Children of California, was awarded a national contract to create the UACC Statewide Family Network Technical Assistance Center (TA Center), currently lead by the able management of Conni Wells and her dynamic national team.

UACF is uniquely positioned to continue a legacy of accomplishments and we invite you to join us in that endeavor in the years to come.

The Staglin Family Receives the Carolyn Cooper Award "Inspire, Hope and Courage"

They have raised more than \$100 million since 1995, to improve awareness and promote private and public funding for prevention and cure. Founders, Shari and Garen Staglin, completely underwrite all the costs to administer and produce the yearly Music Festival event, so that 100 percent of all donations go directly to research. By identifying the



Shari and Garen Staglin

disorders, both genetic and environmental, the research they fund is able to identify people at risk and, often help them to stay healthy throughout their lives.

YOUTH IN MIND: Young Mental Health Consumers Soar With Youth In Mind

By: Jaime Lee Evans

More than 30 youth, self-identified as being impacted by the mental health system, convened with other young leaders this August for the Second Annual Youth In Mind Leadership Summit. With generous resources from the Zellerbach Family Foundation, the youth spent three days together learning, laughing, swimming, dancing, getting empowered and perhaps most importantly, shedding stigma. The Summit's focus was to continue preparing Youth In Mind members and young mental health consumers to make a contribution to the mental health field. Youth participated in workshops like "All Aboard" which offered skill building on how to join and successfully contribute to a board (mental health board, general youth advisory board, transition aged youth county board, non-profit board, etc). There were also Self Care Workshops that included instruction on mindfulness, meditation, and using

expressive art and creativity to manage overwhelming feelings. Our first night was dedicated to getting to know one another and understanding the mission and vision of Youth In Mind. Youth In Mind President, Nicole Demedenko recruited an A-list of volunteers for this year's Summit, including Feet First who started off our Saturday with a spirited group "Survivor" competition. We were all excited to learn that Feet First indeed has created actual competitions on the Survivor television show as well as on shows on Nickelodeon! The rest of Saturday was filled with workshops and ended with the traditional Youth In Mind Talent Show where youth sang, danced, performed theatrical poetry, flows/raps, sang karaoke and even included original music compositions youth brought and played for us. Sunday



was dedicated to more workshops including a class on memoir writing and a class on the Powerful use of the Voice. Planning for next year's Leadership Academy and Leadership Summit has already been begun. We hope to see many of the youth involved with United Advocates for Children and Families there! Youth In Mind would like to thank the leadership of UACF for having the vision and commitment to youth and to support our work for the last five years.

NICOLE DEMEDENKO RECEIVES THE YOUTH OF THE YEAR AWARD-2009

"Nicole received the Youth of the year award for her leadership, coaching and mentoring in support of the development of mental well-being programs for youth throughout the State of California".

Nicole joined Youth in Mind in our second year, which was 4 years ago. She has been a trainer for the Y.O.U.T.H. Training Project since she was 20. She was a

member/leader for a number of years before she aged out. She was part of the CYC National Training Team for a few years, traveling around the country and teaching other foster youth how to be organizers. Nicole recently received her MSW; she has made 2 digital stories that are in rotation in trainings around the country; one about her grandmother's



care after Nicole and her 4 siblings were in foster care and one about her experience with having mental health needs. She's smart, beautiful and talented and is looked up to by youth from around the state as a role model and inspiration.

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for Children and
Families

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RHONDA PARKER RECEIVES THE PARENT PARTNER OF THE YEAR AWARD-2009

EES: Educate, Equip and Support:

Building Hope

The EES training is a 12 week, 2-hour per week, parent-to-parent education program. The curriculum was designed to provide parents with evidence-based education about childhood mental health illnesses and treatment options. The purpose of the EES training is to provide education to parents and to promote building natural supports for parents in local communities.

YOU MUST BE EES CERTIFIED TO TEACH THE 12-WEEK SESSIONS

What is EES-Train-the-Trainer?

United Advocates for Children and Families sponsors the 3 day Educate, Equip and Support (EES) train-the-trainer course where potential parents are certified to facilitate /train the EES curriculum in their counties to other parents/caregivers.

For more information contact Deborah Van Dunk
Phone-(916) 643-1530 ext. 102

“For your commitment and dedication for the mental well-being of families, children and youth. And advocacy on behalf of Parent Partners in your local community and throughout the State of California”.

Norma Hernandez, one of Rhonda's employees submitted Rhonda's name for Parent Partner of the year. This is what she had to say about Rhonda, "She has been a Parent Advocate since 1997 for Stanislaus County. She started off advocating for her own children and through this she discovered others in need of services. Rhonda endured many obstacles through her journey making it possible to relate to others experiencing the similar chal-

lenges. She strongly believes people are in need of more support and services through well trained advocates. Rhonda moved into a position that gave her a voice at a different level. She is presently serving as coordinator of the center for Family Partnership, where she over sees three programs. These programs are: The Kinship Program, Parent Partnership Program, and Families Together. She's also on many committees where she advocates for children and their families, which are: IRC, Stanislaus County Children's Council, Wrap Around, Children's System of Care QIC, and Work Force Development Council, friends of BHRS, member of UACF, UACF Parent Partner Coalition, Central Regional



Rep., and on UACF's Regional Family Network. She enables her staff to serve on committees to reach the underserved families in need of support and services, take required trainings which enhance, educate and empower our clients. Rhonda would like to see more funding channeled to Parent Partner type programs so more families can be served. Her involvement and commitment is an inspirational example to all who have worked with her and for her."



Rachel Guerrero
Chief, Department of Mental Health
Multicultural Services
Special Recognition 2009

“In recognition of your successful efforts to procure the initial funding to launch the United Advocates for Children and Families and your continued support of the program over the years”



Stephen Lewis
Principal, Oakridge Elementary School
Sacramento, California
2009

“In recognition of your advocacy, compassion and foresight to include the mental well-being of children as an integral component of student academic achievement”

ART DISPLAY AT AWARDS DINNER



California Institute for
Mental Health
Art Display Facilitation

UACF SILENT ART
AUCTION

Special Thanks to
Alice Washington,
Associate, CIMH
For Coordinating the
Art
Display

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Partnership
Program**
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ARTISTS

- MASTANEH MOGHADAM
- GABRIAL GONZALES
- CHRISTINE GONZALES
- MARGO GUNDERSON
- ROBERT CRUZ
- ANGELA WILSON
- RONNIE WYNN
- DOUGLAS FINCHMAN
- JAMES CHRISTANSEN
- THERESA BOYD
- ALICE WASHINGTON
- JASPER JOHAL

Donors, Supporters & Prospective Members

Please accept our gratitude and appreciation for donating and buying tickets to support UACF and the families, children and youth we serve. Your contribution will go a long way to enhance our services and strengthen our capacity as the Family Voice in the State of California.

We are planning and looking forward to our 2nd Annual Awards Banquet

Save the Date

Rose Jenkins
Conference
December 3-4, 2009
Doubletree Hotel
2001 Pointe West
Way
Sacramento, CA
95815

For more information
Please log onto
www.cimh.org

**Become an
Affiliate of UACF**

**Contact Affiliate
Coordinator**

Poppy Johal
At
(916) 643-1530
Ext. 106

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

UACF Welcomes New Members:

Alma Jeannette
Perez

Emma Harper

Anthony
Digiorno

Susan Gibbons

Rachel Guerrero

If you are interested in becoming a member of UACF, please complete the application on the back cover of the newsletter and mail to the address which is listed on the back.

For more information please call
(916) 643-1530
Ext. 106

California Endowment
California Institute for Mental Health
Zellerbach Family-Foundation
Association of Pension Consultants
Stars Behavioral Health Group
Seneca Center
Kagan and Associates
Silicon Valley Independent Living Center
California Association of School Psychologist
Wells Fargo Home Mortgage/Anthony Digiorno
Utonomy
Remy, Thomas, Moose and Manley, LLP
ACS Quantum Strategies
Avaunte Ltd.
Parents of Los Angeles Network (PLAN)
California Mental Health Directors Association

TAMMY CHERRY RECEIVES SPIRIT OF EXCEL AWARD

I have worked with Tammy for 3 years as her direct supervisor and now as her program director. She has a passion and dedication to youth voice that is amazing. I feel privileged and proud to have been in a position to support and observe her development and diligence in her journey to rightfully achieve the position of our youth coordinator. Tammy is truly making a difference in the youth advocacy world.

“Sandena Bader”

Tammy is among the most capable of Youth Advocates I have ever met. She poses a unique capacity to engage youth in the system, staff members and policy makers at any level

of governance. Her commitment to Placer youth advocacy has brought profound and lasting changes to how we engage with and assist our vulnerable youth.

“Richard Knhect”

Tammy is an inspiration! She is passionate, articulate, determined and wise beyond her years. When it comes to “youth guided”, she walks the talk. She teaches youth to find and use their voice and stays true to what youth want for themselves even when it is not comfortable for the system or for adults “who know what’s best”. In no time CSOC will be transformed by genuine youth advocacy. **“Cindy Brundage”**



This past year and a half, on a daily basis; Tammy continues to show that she is dedicated and passionate in bringing youth voice to all arena’s of CSOC in Placer.

UACF's NEW PUBLIC POLICY DIRECTOR

UACF is pleased to announce that we have hired Carrie A. Fletcher as our new Director of Public Policy and Research. Carrie has twenty years of legislative, regulatory and public affairs experience, both working in the Capitol and representing a number of different agencies in the public policy arena. She has substantive experience working on child and family health and social service issues and has worked as a Policy Analyst,

Public Affairs Manager, Researcher, Legislative Director, Strategic Planner, Grassroots Organizer and Advocate for organizations such as: the California Medical Association, the California Association for Homes and Services for the Aging, and the California Alliance of Child and Family Services. To further that mentioned above, Carrie worked as a legislative, media relations aide to former Speaker Willie

Brown, the Democratic Caucus, and for Assembly member Valerie K. Brown (D-Sonoma). Carrie will be working closely with the UACF Public Policy Committee and the Regional Family Network to receive policy feedback and recommendations from family members, youth and Parent Partners/Advocates.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: GOVERNOR VETOES MENTAL HEALTH PARITY BILL

By Carrie Fletcher

Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed AB 244 (Beall), just meeting the October 11th deadline to sign or veto legislation passed in the 2009 legislative session. According to the Senate Floor analysis, this bill would have required health plans and health insurers to cover the diagnosis and medically necessary treatment of a mental illness, as defined, of a person of any age, including a child, and not limited to coverage for severe mental illness (SMI) as in existing law. The author states that this bill was intended to end discrimination against patients with mental disorders and substance abuse addictions, by requiring treatment and coverage of these illnesses that is equivalent to coverage provided for other medical illnesses. In his veto message, the governor indicates that he has vetoed similar measures twice before because a man-

Date of this magnitude would only serve to significantly increase the overall costs of health care by stating "while these mandates are well-



intentioned, the costs associated with the cumulative effect of these mandates mean that these costs are passed through to the purchaser and consumer." AB 244 was supported by a large number of stakeholders, including the Alliance of California Autism Organizations, the Disability Rights Alliance, the Mental Health Association in California, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness, California Affiliate.

Congratulations! NEW CERTIFIED EES TRAINERS

Charles Perez
Annette Mason
Diane Alvarez
Leonora Oliver-Williams
Pamela Powell
Alma Jeannette Perez
Katie Burge
Elizabeth Kienitz
Cindy Robbins-Roth
Neil Urquidez

For more information on how to become EES Certified Contact:
Deborah Van Dunk
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dvandunk@uacf4hope.org

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CHILDREN AND
FAMILIES**

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Fax: (916) 643-1592**

**Visit us on the web.
www.uacf4hope.org**

**Hope & Courage,
Young Minds
Matter:**

If you are
interested in
submitting an
article

Please contact:

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Or

**Poppy Johal
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pjohal@
uacf4hope.org**

Our Vision:

**Inspire Hope
and Courage**

UACF Membership Application

- UACF Free Membership**
- I would like to donate \$ _____.** Please make checks payable to UACF.
Recommended: \$10 - \$25 - \$35
- Volunteer for a UACF sponsored activity in your local area.**
Call for information.
- Business, Community Organizations, and Affiliates Memberships:** \$175.00

Name:

Organization:

Occupation:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone:

Fax:

Email Address:

How did you hear about UACF?

Family w/consumer child? Yes No Are you a Parent Partner? Yes No

Are you a Parent Advocate? Yes No Are you Transition age Youth? Yes No