

Bringing the Community to Seniors

Alison Bookman-Skidmore, Interim Program Director of the Marie Smith Center and Lambert House Adult Day Centers, offers an inside look at VOA Oregon's two centers for elderly and disabled adults.

Q: How do Adult Day Centers differ from assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and adult foster homes?

A: Our focus is not on in-home care, but on socialization and preventative care in a community setting. We are a structured environment that concentrates on each individual's current level of function and on maintaining their independent quality of life. To combat isolation and depression, we have a community waiting for them. We make it possible for families to avoid nursing homes as long as possible.

Q: What happens at an Adult Day Center?

A: We provide a variety of therapeutic, inclusive programming, tailored to each person's ability and needs. For example, someone who is no longer able to walk can participate from a wheelchair in an exercise class or in gardening.

We help participants maintain their function and health. Each participant has the attention of our nursing staff. Those who need assistance with activities such as showering or using the bathroom, get that here. While seniors and disabled adults are using these services, their caregivers get respite. That can mean time to go to work, run errands, or to take care of them self or other family members.

Q: Who can attend an Adult Day Center?

A: Anyone age 18 and older who needs ongoing support, supervision and activities to remain as independent as possible.

Q: What kind of therapeutic and health care services do you offer?

A: Our goal is to comprehensively nurture our participants' health. We provide cognitive enhancement activities throughout the day, like brain teasers, games, and discussion groups. In addition, licensed therapists offer art, music, and horticulture therapy, and an instructor leads tai chi. Participants also enjoy healthy meals and snacks.

Our staff includes Certified Nurse Assistants (CNAs) and registered nurses who monitor vital signs and blood glucose levels and administer prescription medication. We provide foot and nailcare, as well as showers and bathroom assistance. Thanks to our partnership with Providence ElderPlace, a chaplain provides spiritual support. We offer a weekly men's support group and also twice-monthly outings to places like the tulip festival and the Gorge. We also provide training and support to caregivers that helps to coordinate and maximize the effectiveness of the overall care.



Caring staff and a program participant at the Marie Smith Center

Q: How do I know if an Adult Day Center is right for my loved one?

A: If your loved one:

- needs additional help to accomplish activities of daily life or if a physician has diagnosed any form of dementia
- has survived an event, such as a stroke or heart attack, that has changed their ability to be at home alone safely
- is feeling isolated and looking for a community of peers
- could benefit from daily health care monitoring on a daily basis

Our intake specialist and case manager can help you understand your options.

Q: What drew you to work in this field?

A: I wanted to be an advocate for seniors, and I wanted to make a difference. The people we serve are incredible. Their life experiences are inspiring, so helping someone find the right fit for them is the most rewarding part of the job. Most people haven't planned for this part of life, and it's important to me to help educate seniors and caregivers about services that fit their needs. It's my job to ensure that every participant is safe and receiving the care they deserve.

Q: What should I do if I know a caregiver who could benefit from these services?

A: Let them know that there is help for them and that they don't have to go it alone. Also, let them know that our staff can meet for a tour at the center closest to them, or our case manager can come to their home to talk with them about their needs.

The services we provide benefit such a variety of folks – we can be a social club, a school; some participants even call us their “work” because we provide that essential routine they've been missing. The time that a caregiver gets back during respite hours is invaluable. A caregiver recently told me, “I actually had lunch with my sister and didn't have to look at my watch the whole time. I could just sit and enjoy my ice tea.”

Q: How can I support your mission?

A: Anyone can support what we do. Spread the word about us and encourage caregivers you know to visit our program. Help out someone who's caring for a loved one – offer to run an errand, drive them to an appointment or provide respite care for a few hours. Be an advocate for the seniors in your life and the elderly in your community, and of course, you could make a donation and check out our wish list at www.voaor.org.



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Increasing Impact, One Volunteer at a Time

Volunteers help the Family Connection program change even more lives

Experienced, caring staff are crucial to the success of any program, but the dedication of skilled volunteers can make that impact go even further. Just ask the staff at VOA Oregon's Family Connection program.

Family Connection operates at seven different low-income housing sites throughout the Portland area, providing positive family activities, homework clubs, parent education, and youth-focused substance abuse prevention services. Services began in October 2010 and will serve over 190 parents and 200 children each year – with just two full-time staff members.

The difference is made by consistent volunteers, who run the after-school homework club, helping school-age children with their homework, playing games with the children, and assisting staff.

“We may have up to 20 children at one time at a site,” said Nicole Smith, Child and Family Specialist. “We wouldn't be able to do a lot of things without the help of volunteers.”

Besides being an additional adult in the children's lives, volunteers help staff better serve program par-

ticipants. Smith says volunteers are especially helpful when she needs to focus on a particular child to address behavioral issues or provide more intensive care.

For volunteers searching for a high-impact project, there is significant flexibility to accommodate individual interests, according to Nancy Loso, VISTA Volunteer Resources Coordinator with VOA Oregon.

“With a new program like Family Connection, there's a great opportunity for volunteers with expertise to develop elements of the program,” she said. “From leading a yoga class to implementing infrastructure, the program can work with you to create a project that fits your interests.”

For Gabriele Leidecker, volunteering with Family Connection has been a way to make an impact in

the lives of children. “It's amazing – the expressions on the children's faces, the compassion of the staff,” she said. “I've never seen a program make so much of a difference in a child's life.”

To find out more about Family Connection and how you can get involved or make a donation to the program, visit www.voaor.org.



¡Adelante! helps Latino community to thrive

A program expansion seeks to engage the community

2010 Census projections estimate that the Latino population in Oregon will reach an all-time high, accounting for 12 percent of the state's total population.

“There is a lack of services that adequately and professionally address the various forms of addiction while also understanding Latino culture,” said Miguel

Tellez, ¡Adelante! Program Manager. “We're right there to fill the service gap.”

¡Adelante! was launched three years ago to provide problem gambling and substance abuse treatment for adults in a culturally-competent manner with an understanding of Latino culture. It has already expanded its focus and made a name for itself in

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From the desk of the President Kay Toran

Greetings Friends,

We're pleased to provide you with news and updates about the work we're doing in the community.

We create and innovate to deliver effective programs that best respond to the diverse and changing issues in our community -- programs like ¡Adelante!, which continues to address complex needs of the underserved, yet growing, Latino population in our community. Now, ¡Adelante! is expanding its services to Clackamas County, providing Latino youths with culturally-competent addiction treatment and teaching them how to make healthy choices and maintain a positive self-image.

We remain committed to the safety of our community, and our public safety and treatment programs continue to deliver

results. You'll read about the work our Re-Entry Enhancement Coordination program is doing and the exceptional outcomes it is achieving. Clients are graduating to sobriety, stable housing and employment at remarkable rates.

We're continuing to ensure that our community is strong and inclusive of all its residents, from the youngest to the oldest. Our two Adult Day Centers are communities in themselves, where seniors are welcomed and valued and able to stay in the community where they have put down roots and made an impact. Read more about these unique centers on page four.

Thank you for coming alongside us as we change lives, build strong communities and stand for social justice.

Sincerely yours,
Kay D. Toran, President/CEO

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Volunteers of America Oregon

Our Vision
Volunteers of America Oregon is a leader in creating vibrant, compassionate communities where every member is valued, every home is safe and every life is self-determined.

Our Mission
Volunteers of America Oregon changes lives by promoting self-determination, building strong communities and standing for social justice.

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the Latino community. ¡Adelante! now works with Portland Public Schools at Harvey Scott and Humboldt schools, helping them to actively involve Latino parents in the schools. The program has also worked with the Housing Authority of Portland to provide prevention services for at-risk youth. In addition, it provides cultural competency training for schools and social service agencies and works with the Clackamas County Juvenile Department to provide treatment for gang-affected Latino youth, which helps those organizations to be more effective with their missions.

Recently, it launched Jóvenes Adelanté (*Youth Moving Forward*), a substance abuse treatment program that provides services to Latino youth and families in East Multnomah County and Clackamas County. “We’ll be working with kids in many different towns,” said Tellez. “We know that coming into this new service area, the challenge will be serving a lot of families who are very spread out over a very large area.”

The solution? Recovery mentors. Recovery mentoring is a best practice with a track record of helping to ensure success for adults in addiction treatment, but there’s little data about mentoring youth with addictions. “We’re really pioneering in that respect,” said Tellez. “Our plan is to add mentoring to conventional treatment. We are very grateful to Clackamas County Children, Youth, and Families Division for funding the mentoring in Clackamas County. We are looking for help to fund mentoring in Multnomah County.”

A Smooth Transition

Collaboration helps adults with addictions rebuild their lives as they return to the community

One of Volunteers of America Oregon’s newest programs is already showing an impressive return.

The Reentry Enhancement Coordination program (REC) is doing what it was designed to do: close gaps in services provided to men and women with addictions who are transitioning from prison back into our neighborhoods.

“Individuals leaving prison with addictions need intensive support to successfully return to the community,” said Rick Berman, Program Director. “Our community partners at the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice had a vision for a program that brought together several elements: outpatient addictions treatment, clean and sober housing, help finding work, peer mentors and close supervision by skilled probation and parole officers.”

The result is a strong collaboration between VOA Oregon, the Department of Corrections, the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice and community non-profits, SE Works and Bridges to Change. As part of this partnership, VOA Oregon’s InAct program provides individually-tailored mental health services targeting substance abuse and criminality.

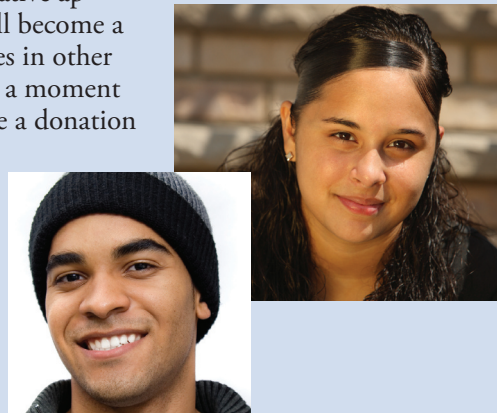
This collaboration has been key to the program’s success. All partners in the collaboration have significant experience working with

Mentors will build relationships with the youth and their families and provide a healthy role model of recovery. The goal is to encourage youths to make healthy life choices and cultivate a positive Latino cultural identity. Jóvenes Adelanté is looking for mentors of Latino descent who are in recovery or who have dealt with addiction in their families.

Family is critical to successful addiction treatment. “We can’t just treat the addict,” said Tellez. “The family has to be there to support and educate, and serve as a countermeasure to enabling.” Still, there is often a cultural generation gap between Latino youth and their parents. “The youth tend to be highly acculturated but their parents aren’t,” Tellez added, “and that’s when conflict can arise.” Part of the work of the recovery mentor is to bridge that generation gap.

Tellez hopes that this innovative approach to helping youth will become a model program that agencies in other counties can replicate. Take a moment to visit our web site to make a donation or to learn how you can get involved to support this vital program.

You can help Jóvenes Adelanté succeed. Visit www.voaor.org.



this population and are very impressed with the most recent outcomes. As of December 2010, the program had served 262 clients. Eighty-six percent of these individuals have remained drug-free, and 76 percent moved into independent housing within 90 days of their release. Given the severe economic climate, the collaboration partners are particularly impressed that 84 percent of graduates have obtained employment within 90 days of completing the program. Clients typically spend an average of four months in the program, which allows them to stabilize their lives as they begin the transition back into the community.

The individual stories are just as compelling as the statistics: families reunited safely; individuals who have never held down a legal job going to work every day and paying taxes; people who never thought they could remain sober outside a prison or jail establishing stable sobriety and stable lives.

“Every month there’s a program graduation ceremony where you can hear the stories of these amazing transformations from the participants and their families,” Berman said.

You can support these individuals and families as they rebuild their lives and rejoin the community. Visit www.voaor.org to make a donation to support this program!

Mark Your Calendars for these Upcoming Events

Family Relief Nursery 19th Birthday Celebration

Saturday, April 16 | 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Blackbird Wine Shop, 4323 NE Fremont | Cost: \$25

Join us for a wine tasting and hors d’oeuvres to celebrate Family Relief Nursery’s 19 years of work to strengthen the most vulnerable families in our community.

2nd Annual Al Forthan Recovery Breakfast

Wednesday, June 22 | 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. | The Oregon Zoo | Cost: Free

Benefiting the Al Forthan Memorial Recovery Scholarship.

For more information about these events, visit www.voaor.org/events

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human potential