



A leading nonprofit  
mental health clinic since 1961

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FALL 2003

# Beacon

NEWSLETTER



## Upcoming Events:

### Holiday Home Tour

Sunday, November 2  
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Tickets \$20  
at Guilded Cage  
Info: (310) 641-9850

### The Inn at Playa del Rey Annual Holiday Tea

Monday, December 8  
1-5 p.m.  
Contact: (310) 574-1920

### Free! Surviving Uncertainty Tuesdays

6-7:45 p.m.  
AMCS  
7891 La Tijera Blvd.  
Info: (310) 670-1410



Patricia S. Goldsmith, Ph.D.

## Executive Director's Message

# Hannon Foundation Grant Funds Immediate Intervention Program

AMCS has received a \$12,500 grant to establish the William H. Hannon Intervention Program at the clinic. Headed by William Pearson, M.A. and assisted by Donna Sexsmith, Ph.D., this program, scheduled to begin in November 2003, is designed to provide urgent attention to those who are struggling to cope with a recent, life-changing event.

The nature of the event is sufficiently severe to upset the person's usual daily life, and as a result he or she is unable to find an effective means of coping while declining into a state of crisis. The precipitating event could be the loss of a spouse or loved one, job loss in this time of financial stress and uncertainty, problems dealing with life transitions, bankruptcy, diagnosis of a life-threatening illness, a child in trouble, unplanned pregnancy, or to assist someone who has survived a recent act of violence in which the person was left in a traumatic state.

This treatment plan is time-limited to between 6 and 8 weeks, with the focus on enabling the person to recover his or her prior level of functioning. In this treatment, a state of crisis is viewed as an opportunity for growth.



The late William Hannon

Successful resolution of the crisis state may also render a deeper level of awareness to the client about particular vulnerabilities and underlying life issues, allowing consideration of the benefits of entering into a long-term therapy relationship.

## AMCS Board Leads by Example

Leadership starts at the top and inspires others! AMCS has a hardworking board, comprised of six committees that constantly endeavor to expand AMCS's ability to provide excellent mental health services and to serve as an outstanding training institute.

For many years, two board members, Director Emerita, Mary Ellen Cassman, and "Heart of Gold" Bill Hatton, former Board Treasurer, have worked at the clinic for part of almost every day. Now Chairman of the Westchester Family YMCA Board of Managers, Mary Ellen hears the heartbeat of the community. Meanwhile, Bill is often drafted as our handy guy and computer guru as well as helper of the Guilded Cage.

LAX Travelodge owner, rancher Lance Lipscomb, has stepped up to the challenge of

being AMCS President and contributes numerous hours every week to this leadership effort. Lance hosts the Jim Bunch Memorial Weekend in October to benefit AMCS and other local charities and works hard within our community, especially for children.

Doris Uncapher, Immediate Past President of the Board, initiated the Westchester Mental Health Guild's first annual Garden Tour and raised net income of \$10,000 for AMCS from this effort! She will chair the second annual event on May 2, 2004. Doris continually provides support and fundraising suggestions to the Board.

For the past four years, Patricia Cantu

Mary and Robert Quinn, special benefactors



# AMCS

## Board of Directors

Lance Lipscomb  
President

Gwen Vuchsas  
Vice President

Patricia C. McLaughlin, Esq.  
Vice President

Jim Baxter  
Vice President

Cozette Vergari, Esq.  
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Suzan Zolla

Patricia S. Goldsmith, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

## Profile: Mary Quinn Bookkeeper and Benefactor

By: Joan Conca

Mary Quinn has been bookkeeper at AMCS for 17 years. She is married to Robert Quinn (her former boss at Hughes). They are the parents of six children: Trisha, Mike, Bob Jr., Craig, Perry, and Shelley, who is deceased. Mary and Bob now have 10 grandchildren to show as a result of the above. Two of these grandchildren, André and Jonathan, both six years old, are frequent invited guests at Mary and Bob's house, where they have a supply of sports equipment, toys, clothes, and their very own room. They come over to play on Fridays, have a sleep over, and sometimes stay the weekend. Bob reads them stories and they just have a good old time with Grandma and Grandpa. They can play together and with Mary's three cats (there have been as many as seven cats, along with a dog or two in the Quinn household.) Rounding out the Grandchildren Group are Tommy, 10, and Tori, 13, who live in Culver City, and the Oregon Branch, consisting of Jennifer, 24, Chase and Chelsea, 20-year-old twins, Jessica, 20, Katlyn, 13, and Craig, Jr., 12.

Their daughter Shelly suffered and died at 19 from the results of Leigh's (pronounced "Lay's") Disease. She was able to live a relatively normal life, graduated from high school and went on to West Los Angeles College to study. Shelley knew her Mom really liked working with figures, since she had handled the books for every organization she

had been a part of over the years. Shelley told Mary that WLA had a bookkeeping course and she convinced Mary to enroll in the class. So, Mary went to school with her daughter, eventually earning an AA degree in spite of the fact that she still had four children to care for at home.

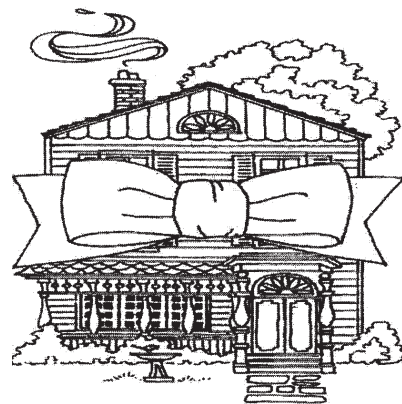
When Shelly passed away in 1983, Mary felt she needed a change in her life and she decided to go back to work. She went to work for a local doctor. A while later, Mary learned that there was a bookkeeping job open at AMCS. She applied for and got the job and, 17 years later, Mary is still at the clinic.

She stays at the clinic because she feels it is a very special place and it gives her satisfaction to know that she can be helpful to those in need of the care it offers. She and her husband have been very good friends to the clinic during the years she has been employed at AMCS.

On September 6, 2003, Mary, resplendent in a beaded, champagne-colored gown, walking on Bob's arm, graced the crowd assembled for her son Mike's wedding to Monica Martelli at the Ritz Carlton in Marina del Rey. The Quinn clan was noticeable by its presence, as you might imagine, and you can be sure that Shelley was looking on and watching her very special Mom, Dad, and family, from her own very special place.

# 97%

of the clients at AMCS have no insurance for mental health care



# Come Home for the Holidays!

## 21st Annual Holiday Home Tour

On Sunday, November 2, the Westchester Mental Health Guild will present its **21<sup>st</sup> Annual Westchester Holiday Home Tour**. Begun in 1982, the Tour was the brainchild of Guild member Shirley Pfeil, who thought neighbors and friends would be interested in viewing the insides of some of the loveliest homes in the Westchester/ Playa del Rey area. All proceeds from the event have been donated to **Airport Marina Counseling Service** to help fund the mental health services the clinic provides to the community.

For 20 years, the tradition has continued, with the tour growing in popularity and profitability each year. With the support of local advertisers, real estate brokers, florists, and over 800 tourists, last year's event was able to raise over \$30,000 in support of AMCS. This year's tour will showcase four beautiful homes in the Westchester/ Playa del Rey area, each of which will feature a different holiday theme. Local florists and decorators will lend their magic to the homes to create a wonderful experience for our guests. Homes will be open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

In addition to the tour itself, there will be a reception for guests at the Westchester Woman's Club from noon to 5 p.m. The Woman's Club will also feature holiday gift boutique from The Guided Cage, with all profits benefiting AMCS.

Please plan to join us Sunday, November 2 for the tour, and encourage your friends and neighbors to do so as well. We promise a fabulous day and a full heart for all ... knowing that each of our visitors has helped to support the vital service that AMCS provides to so many within our community. For tickets (\$20) and information, call **The Guided Cage** at (310) 641-7850.

## Gail Levy – The Velvet Hammer

By: Joan Conca

Gail Levy, Chair of the Westchester Mental Health Guild Holiday Home Tour, believes in joining and participating. She exemplifies the spirit of involvement that sets our communities of Westchester and Playa del Rey a bit apart from the megalopolis that is Los Angeles.

After her beautiful home was featured on the tour in 1995, Gail joined the Guild, worked on the Holiday Home Tour Committee for five years, and since 2001 has been its Chair. The tour has raised over \$80,000 to benefit Airport Marina Counseling Service since she took the job. That's the way she makes her statement. To paraphrase, it's called "putting your time where your mouth is." A low-key velvet-hammer, Levy accomplishes things seamlessly and with enviable efficiency. If it squeaks, she oils it. She would never walk away and let it rust.

Born and educated in Los Angeles, Gail grew up in Ladera Heights and graduated as a History major from UCLA. She worked at Doyle, Dane, Bernbach

Advertising after graduation, as a media planner, and later as a magazine advertising sales rep. Gail and Bob Levy married in 1985, having met at UCLA seven years earlier. He is now a sales executive for a national computer leasing company headquartered in Chicago. After the birth of their first daughter Rachel-Ann in 1988, Gail decided that, if possible, her future job should be that of full-time Mom. Rebecca Michele in 1990 and Hannah Rose in 1993 followed Rachel-Ann. When the girls reached school age, Gail and Bob decided that they would send them to the public schools in Westchester, and in the ensuing years, Gail has become actively involved in those schools.



**Gail Levy, three-time chair of the WMHG Holiday Home Tour, pictured with her "Belle of the Guild" Award received in 2003.**

Contribution Categories

Beacon of Hope .....	\$25,000 or Greater	Captain .....	\$500 - \$999
Lighthouse Keeper .....	\$10,000 - \$24,999	Commander .....	\$250 - \$499
Commander of the Fleet .....	\$5,000 - \$9,999	Lieutenant .....	\$100 - \$249
Admiral .....	\$2,500 - \$4,999	Ensign .....	\$50 - \$99
Commodore .....	\$1,000 - \$2,499	Crew .....	\$1 - \$49

# AMCS 2003 Contributors & Benefactors

**Beacon Of Hope**

Westchester Mental Health Guild

**Lighthouse Keeper**

Fritz Burns Foundation

William H. Hannon Foundation

Leon Strauss Foundation

**Commander of the Fleet**

Lance Lipscomb

Gregory Soukup &amp; Mary Jo Carr

Zolla Family Foundation

**Admiral**

California Casualty Foundation

Howard Drollinger

The Lon V. Smith Foundation

St. Matthew's Thrift Shop

**Commodore**

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In Tribute to Mary Ellen Cassman

Alan &amp; Mary Ellen Cassman

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Westchester Family YMCA

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Mimi Brown

Congregational Church of the Messiah

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LAX Travelodge Employee Fund

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Dr. Allan Silverstein

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Gwen Vuchsas

Westchester Elks

Elizabeth Wilburn

Woman's Club of Playa del Rey

Lawrence Yarosh

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Milton &amp; Rose Marie Thaler

Virginia Tobin

Jeffrey Tolin

Barbara &amp; Nat Trembath

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Phyllis Weil

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Winnie Yuen Mei Wong

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Robert &amp; Becky Foley

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David &amp; Nathalie Herbst

Elizabeth Jensen

Leukemia Society

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Eugene &amp; Bonnie Loopesko

Richard &amp; Leda Mark

J. M. McKinney Company

Sally Osborne

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Donald &amp; Marianne Barsumian

Maxine Boshes

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Gloria Chesen

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Robert Cohen

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Timothy Cusick

Howard &amp; Barbara Douglass

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Sandra Falcon

Simon Formann

In Memory of Hugo Francis

William Garber

Allan &amp; Ina Gartenberg

Arlene Goodwin

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In Honor of Mildred Hanson

Abraham Hirsch

Peter Jay

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Christian Jordan

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Karen Minero

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Roy Palmer

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Wilma Pierce

Ann Post

Edward &amp; Ula Pyle

William &amp; Pearl Raack

William &amp; Dorothy Rose

Nate &amp; Ada Rosenblatt

John &amp; Gail Ruhlen

Harry &amp; Anne Santo

Marion Schuster

Autumn N. Scott

K. M. Sengir

Bernard Shapiro

Rita Sheehan

Ruth Smith

Lula Stroda

Claude &amp; Carol Trudelle

Julia Varney

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Mary Ellen &amp; Alan Cassman

Marjorie G. &amp; Herman M. Eisen, M.D.

Polly &amp; John Gartska

William &amp; June Hatton

Jack &amp; Shirley Hirschberg

In Memory of Howard &amp; Patricia Sturdy

Seymour &amp; Monica Kahn

Patricia Cantu &amp; Kerry McLaughlin

Richard Moon

Doris Uncapher

Cozette Vergari

**If your name is not listed,  
it will be in the next issue!**

# AMCS Board (Continued from Page 1)

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McLaughlin has chaired our huge Jet to Jetty fundraiser (1,009 runners registered this August!), while caring for her family and working fulltime as Vice President and Senior Counsel for Bank of the West.

Recently retired engineer, Jim Baxter, chairs our strategic planning and spring campaign committees, and usually attends other board committee and subcommittee meetings to help us develop and implement essential strategies.

Two of our newer board members head AMCS committees. Family law attorney, Cozette Vergari, chairs our Marketing Committee to publicize the availability of AMCS' helpful and affordable mental health services. Management consultant, Jack Hirschberg, chairs both our Finance and Fundraising committees (watch for the upcoming Spring Event!)

Music professor and organist extraordinaire, James Hurd, chairs our Personnel committee. The visionary Reverend John-David Webster chairs our Board Development committee, directing his efforts to the expansion of our board to 30 committed members.

Long-time board member Polly Gartska is also President of the Westchester Mental Health Guild, which has 250 members working to raise funds for AMCS through the Guilded Cage, November Holiday Home Tour, and May Garden Tour. Polly recently arranged to have Los Angeles Trade Tech students repaint our building! Community activist and Neighborhood Council leader, Gwen Vuchsas, is organizing the AMCS Board of Governors. Past Board President, veteran board member, attorney and CPA Greg Soukup, has been our wise planning and financial advisor as well as practical problem-solver. The well-organized owner of the Inn at Playa del Rey, Susan Zolla, provides personal know-how and expert resources to our efforts to extend AMCS services. Sandy Luboviski, an active businesswoman, knows the community well, and is very innovative and creative for the clinic. Knowledgeable Agnes Huff contributes professional marketing acumen. (Did you know she is a licensed therapist?)

Seymour Kahn is a key decision maker on both our strategic planning and finance committees and served as our able bagel-cutter at Jet to Jetty! Monica Kahn contributes her philanthropic and organizational knowledge to our human resources management and AMCS fundraising efforts, while actively heading up Helen's Room, a nonprofit program for women cancer survivors connected with Daniel Freeman Hospital in Inglewood. Floy Clark, Immediate Past President of WMHG, and her husband John are always extremely supportive and have spent many hours volunteering at the clinic.

Keeping a big clinic like Airport Marina Counseling Service afloat and on course requires strong leadership at the helm, as well as a dedicated crew. Thank you, AMCS Board!



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*The Guilded Cage is staffed by volunteers and owned by the Westchester Mental Health Guild  
Proceeds benefit Airport Marina Counseling Service*

Alan and Mary Ellen Cassman



# AMCS

## AMCS Clinical Staff

Sally Boardman, R.N.  
 Harriet Boxer, Ph.D.  
 Patricia S. Goldsmith, Ph.D.  
 Nancy Iben, MFT  
 Toni Jordan, MFT  
 Lindsay Kirakos, M.D.  
 Katy Kolodziejcki, Ph.D.  
 Barbara Levine, MFT  
 Ronald Markman, M.D.  
 Martin Mendel, Ph.D.  
 Bonnie Miller, Ph.D.  
 William Pearson, MFT  
 Bella Schimmel, M.D.  
 Karen Schlaff, Ph.D.  
 M. Adam Sheck, Psy.D.  
 Kira Williams, M.D.

# Getting to Know Your Board Members: Mary Ellen Cassman

By: Lance Lipscomb

As a community person, Mary Ellen was involved in the original formation of the Westchester Mental Health Clinic, now Airport Marina Counseling Service (AMCS). Her husband Alan, an attorney, incorporated it and became a board member. Mary Ellen joined six friends to organize the Westchester Mental Health Guild to support the newly formed clinic. Although Mary Ellen was already connected with the clinic, two unforgettable incidents subsequently occurred that reshaped her focus and commitment to mental health.

The first incident took place when, after attending a lecture in Long Beach, a young lady whom she had met at the lecture asked if Mary Ellen would mind giving her a ride to Westchester. During the drive, the 19-year-old told Mary Ellen of many sad events in her life and said that she would not be alive had it not been for the help she had received at a clinic in Westchester. She asked if Mary Ellen had heard of it. This clinic was, of course, AMCS.

describes her professor as, “a young kid,” and the “in” technique was Rogerian. Mary Ellen became very adept at uttering the “uh-huhs” at the appropriate moments. At the conclusion of one of her supervised sessions, the professor said, “Tell me, what do you have against mental health?” At that moment, Mary Ellen realized that there was more to counseling than just the desire to help individuals struggling with mental health issues. This realization catalyzed her into entering the intern program at the Didi Hirsch Mental Health Center.

Recapping the clinic’s achievements during the 16 years she served as Executive Director of AMCS, Mary Ellen is proudest of the Family Center established in 1978; the Counseling Victims of Violent Crimes project; and the Human Efforts at Revitalizing Youth program – programs that continue to this day in different forms, and with new titles. This list of achievements is not complete without adding the Sunday clinic – a first in Los Angeles County! The program opened in March of 1986 and remains an important part of the services provided by AMCS.

Mary Ellen was teaching English at Orville Wright Junior High School when she decided to go back to UCLA to learn more about the field of psychology. The second incident happened during those student days. Mary Ellen

Mary Ellen was recently elected Chairman of the Board of Managers of the Westchester Family YMCA. There, she continues to draw on the resources of two community organizations, The Y and AMCS. Their combined efforts enable community members to participate in life-enriching experiences. Mary Ellen remains close to the clinic she loves.



Patricia C. McLaughlin accepts recognition as four-year Jet to Jetty Chair from Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn’s representative, Viet Tran.

## New Website Launched!

We are very proud to announce that our new website is up and running. You can reach it at [www.airportmarina.org](http://www.airportmarina.org). To help get the word out about our new site, we would appreciate your notifying those on your E-mail lists whom you feel would be interested in taking a look to find out more about the mental health clinic with which you are all so involved. You might ask that they forward the information to those whom they feel might be interested in learning about AMCS. Thank you.

# 2003 Jet to Jetty: Another Success Along the Coast

The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Jet to Jetty day dawned at the edge of the ocean, with skies a dusky rose at the horizon and the sky above the clear azure blue of a young child's eyes.

Patricia Cantu McLaughlin, Chair of the event for the fourth straight year, and some of the early-arriving volunteers who were there to appreciate the beauty of the new day, took a collective deep breath and a moment to savor it, and then pitched in to perform the myriad of jobs necessary to make Jet to Jetty work.

By 6:30 a.m., when runners began arriving, the bevy of volunteers was ready for them, with registration packets, T-shirts, and bibs; the AMCS table was laden with goodies including Neutrogena and Coppertone sun block, samples of Prell Shampoo, Power Bars and Clif energy bars; the food tables groaned under the weight of 125 dozen bagels from Western Bagels, there were oranges and bananas being cut up, and Trader Joe's had arrived with water, energy bars, and, yes, cream cheese for the bagels. Gaviña Coffee was on hand to serve its wonderful product throughout the event. Sparkletts water supplied all the water for the course.

By 7:15 a.m., the Grand Marshal, Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, was on the scene, along with Hollywood celebrities Phil Brock, Brett Stimely and Arthur Roberts, who, along with Roy Hefner, entertained the crowd during the day. They helped keep the event lively and upbeat with their jokes and patter. As always, firemen and their trucks from local Westchester and Airport Fire Stations 5 and 51 arrived to join in the fun.

At 8:00 a.m., after the Jet to Jetty Singers performed "America the Beautiful," and "You're a Grand Old Flag," Don Knabe, event Grand Marshal, sounded the horn for the assembled 5K run/walk participants, and off they ran/walked.

For the first time in Jet to Jetty history, there were teams involved in the 5K. Teams from LAX Travelodge, (Sleepy Bear's Gauchos), Rotary Race, LAX/Marina Chamber of Commerce, Neutrogena, Off & Running Tours, Lindora, Inc., The Inn at Playa del Rey, and Bank of the West vigorously competed, winning airline tickets, a year's subscription to DirecTV and other great prizes.

Top finishing teams were: (1) Neutrogena Team, (2) Rotary Race Team, and (3) Sleepy Bear's Gauchos Team. Running of the 10k Run and 1K Youth Run followed.

Supervisor Knabe started the 10K run at 8:30 a.m.

After enjoying 45 minutes of pre-race games and happy activities, during which children who had signed up for the race won many awards and prizes, the 1K Youth Run got off at 9:45 a.m., accompanied by a red-lights and silen police motorcycle escort from start to finish. Every child left with a big smile, a medal, and a goody bag stuffed with prizes and awards.

Over 100 volunteers contributed to the success of this year's Jet to Jetty, the major fundraiser of 2003.

There were 1,009 runners registered for this 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Jet to Jetty race, a record in recent years.



JET TO JETTY

To Volunteer, E-mail: [JettoJetty@aol.com](mailto:JettoJetty@aol.com)

## AMCS Therapists

Massimo Avincola, M.A.  
 Dawn Bailey  
 Kristen Biggie  
 Annalisa Birdsall  
 Mimi Brown, M.A.  
 Rouel Cazanjan, M.A.  
 Tony Chang  
 Roseann Chen  
 Stella Chow, M.A.  
 Jessica Conway  
 Carol Dafesh, M.A.  
 Mike Denn  
 Harry Drasin, Psy.D.  
 Raymond Eason, M.A.  
 Lauren Edelman  
 Ronit Farkas  
 Elisabeth Feiss  
 Graciela Garibaldi, MSW  
 Gina Giacone  
 Cathy Graf  
 Tyler Hinds  
 Belynda Holmes, M.A.  
 Paula Kenney  
 Penny Key  
 Kim Lorine, M.A.  
 Kathy Marks  
 Bonnie Mendelsohn  
 Eileen Miech, Psy.D.  
 Anna Mikhailova, M.A.  
 Jillanne Monaco, M.A.  
 Renee Ohta, M.A.  
 Michelle Otelsberg  
 Calandra Parsons  
 Moira Repola, M.A.  
 Sharon Rogers, M.A.  
 Helena Rosenberg, M.A.  
 Lila Ryan, M.A.  
 Tiffany Shelby  
 David Singer, M.A.  
 Stefanie Singer  
 Larry Starr-Karlin  
 Leslie Tuchman, MFT  
 Luana Turner  
 Alexis Valentine, M.A.  
 Kate Waliszewski  
 Claire Weiss  
 Neil Wenger  
 Kayla Wright  
 Susie Yoo, M.Sc.

# L.A. Trade-Tech Revitalizes AMCS

By: Joan Conca

Once every year, Ralph "Doc" Guthrie and his students at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, (LATTC) in downtown Los Angeles, perform a public service by using their sign graphic skills to do a sign project for a non-profit organization in the city.

In 2003, Airport Marina Counseling Service's structure was chosen as LATTC's Summer project. The stucco portion of the clinic had not been re-painted for many years, and the 42-year-old non-profit's familiar seagull-logo was woefully faded.

On Thursday, August 22, Doc, Edgar Reyes (22), Vidal Diaz, (25) and Alex Flores, (20), arrived at 7891 La Tijera Boulevard, in Westchester, to begin their two-day sprucing up of the mental health clinic building. Under Doc's watchful eye and with the benefit of his years of expertise, the young men repainted the building and the logo was returned to its original beauty. "We look good again, and are very grateful to the students and staff at LATTC," said Patricia Goldsmith, Executive Director of Airport Marina Counseling Service.

Flores and Diaz are graduates of Doc's two-year vocational program in Sign Graphics at LATTC, while Reyes is still in the program. Doc commends the dedication of his students. His classes meet five days a week from 7 a.m. to 12 noon in the spring and fall semesters of the academic year, which can make it difficult for them to find necessary employment while attending school. A certificate of completion or an AA degree is awarded at the successful completion of the Sign Graphics major, which includes: instruction in all traditional hand-painting skills, current computer graphics skills using Sign-Lab (sign specific) and Gerber Graphix Advantage programs.

LATTC has been in existence since 1925, and is located at 400 West Washington Boulevard (at Grand Avenue) Los Angeles, CA 90015. Telephone: (213) 763-7367.

Polly Garstka, retired Vice President of Academic Affairs at Los Angeles Trade Technical College, and a member of the Board of Directors of Airport Marina Counseling Service, arranged for the clinic and the school to get together for this project.

**For our e-letter, please e-mail [info@airportmarina.org](mailto:info@airportmarina.org)**



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