

"I have a dream ..."

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Bridging San Francisco communities through nonprofit services

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Cedric Moore	Publisher
Gretchen Quandt	Editor
Joe D'Arcy	Designer
Ivonne Calderon	Designer

Writers

Lindsay Adams, Jennie Butler, Sam Felsing, Thomas Figg-Hoblyn, Julie McCoy

Photographers

Jennie Butler, Leland Fox, Mike Griffin, Claire Kirschner

Columnists

London Breed, Midgett, Erik Peper, Ph.D.

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AAACC endeavors to build Western Addition cohesion

By Jennie Butler

Every neighborhood needs a third place where both young and old can grow and connect with the community. In the Western Addition, there is an institution where everyone is given the opportunity to better themselves through art and education.

The African American Art and Culture Complex — AAACC — is a social and cultural core for African Americans in the Western Addition and neighboring communities. The complex is a 30,000-square-foot facility with art, dance and production studios, event rooms, gallery space, and a 203-seat performing arts theatre. Exhibitions from local artists, ongoing special events, and free or low-cost programs for adults and youth are featured regularly.

AAACC promotes constructive community change by providing access to Afrocentric visual, interactive and performing art. The complex is home to several respected Bay Area performing arts organizations and resident art associations.

After London Breed was elected District 5 Supervisor in November 2012, Executive Director Kimberly Hayes currently leads AAACC toward her vision of a dynamic, artistic, and Afrocentric destination for not just the surrounding community, but for all of San Francisco.



Martial arts instructor Jim Larkin with students during a training session. Photo by Jennie Butler.

"We have so much potential," Hayes said about the complex. "I am working hard to establish some robust programming here. I want this place to be bustling with events, and I want there to be things going on all the time."

In her capacity as the executive director, Hayes plans to bring in more programming that showcases

youth and African American talent and cultural expression.

AAACC's after-school programs provide youths with a place that is alternative to school and the home where they can discover their strengths and build relationships with their peers. The programs are interactive, and participants ben-

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Seniors are active! They labor to solve social issues



SDA members, many of whom have been actively volunteering for 20 years or more for the organization, which was previously known as the Senior Action Network. Photo by Breana Rae Flores.

By Julie McCoy

San Francisco-based Senior and Disability Action — SDA — is an organization that works to improve the lives of seniors and people with disabilities and to fight for their rights. It ensures that these groups of people are valued and that their voices are heard in the local community.

Located in Suite 400 at 1360 Mission St., SDA was formed in September 2012 when the Senior Action Network — SAN — merged

with Planning for Elders in the Central City — PECC.

SDA's goals include empowering, organizing and educating seniors and people with disabilities to take action on a variety of issues, including housing, healthcare, public transportation and pedestrian safety. Both groups are underserved in the local community.

Executive Director Jessica Lehman said, "We're in the process right now of trying to figure out — what does it mean to be a disability

organization in addition to a senior organization? We're trying to educate ourselves on the disabled and the history of the disability community."

SDA has a computer lab and provides a computer training program through which seniors and people with disabilities can learn how to do such things as set up an email account and use email, Lehman added.

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Health and Wellness

“There is hope — just do it!”

By Erik Peper, Ph.D.

“That I was able to self-heal myself. I didn't need anyone else to do it for me.”

“I was surprised that I actually succeeded and had some really great results.”

“How much control I really had over being able to change several of my habits, when I previously thought that it was impossible.”

“That I actually have control.”

... Students who have practiced stress management at SFSU.

Having low energy, being tired, depressed, having pain, insomnia, itching skin, psoriasis, nervously pulling out hair, hypertension and other are symptoms that affect our lives. The cause of the disorder often does not have an identifiable biological cause. Currently, 74% of patients who visit their healthcare providers have undiagnosed medical conditions. Most of the symptoms are a culmination of stress, anxiety, and depression. In many cases, healthcare professionals treat these patients ineffectively with medications instead of offering stress management options. For example, if patients with insomnia visit their physicians, they are most likely prescribed a sleep-inducing medication — which if taken nightly for few years can increase the death rate by more than 25%. If, on the other hand, the healthcare professional takes time to talk to the patient, explores the factors underneath the insomnia and teaches sleep hygiene methods, 50% fewer prescriptions are written. Obviously, if you are worried about money, job security, struggles with your partner or problems with your children, the medication does not solve the problem. Learning problem solving and stress management techniques often does!

Self-regulation skills are offered as part of a semester-long holistic health class at San Francisco State University, where students can begin learning these skills without even having to define themselves as sick. When these students practiced stress management and self-healing skills, 82% reported improvement in achieving benefits such as increasing physical fitness, healthier diets, reducing depression, anxiety, and pain or eliminating eczema. One student with trichotillomania reduced her hair pulling from 855 to 19 minutes per week [Peper, et. al., 2003; Bier, et. al., 2005; Ratkovich, et. al., 2012].

Major factors that contributed to the students' improvement were:

- Daily monitoring of subjective and objective experiences,

which facilitates awareness.

- Practicing during the day stress management skills.
- Sharing subjective experiences in small groups, which reduces social isolation, normalizes experiences and encourages hope. Usually, a few students will report rapid benefits such as aborting a headache, being able to fall asleep, or reducing menstrual cramps, which helps motivate other students to continue their practices, such as writing a reflective paper that integrates and provides a reflexive perspective. The important step is to identify the trigger that initiated the illness producing pattern and then do something different such as transforming internal dialogue or modifying body posture. This interrupts and diverts the cascading steps that contributed to the symptoms [Peper, et. al., 2003].

This process is illustrated in the Biofeedback journal article “There Is Hope: Autogenic Biofeedback Training for the Treatment of Psoriasis.” The article reported the detailed process by which a 23-year-student who had psoriasis over the last five years whose skin totally cleared. Psoriasis causes red, flaky skin and is currently the most common autoimmune disease affecting approximately 2% of the US population. Many people afflicted with this disease use steroids, topical creams, special shampoos, and prescription medication. Unfortunately, the disease can only be suppressed, not cured; many people with psoriasis feel damaged and have a difficult time socially. Stress is often the trigger that makes one's psoriasis worse. In this case study, the 23-year-old student suffering from the disease for five years, learned how to train his mind/body to not give into stress, feelings of anxiety, self-doubt, or even the need to physically touch his affected skin.

The student was trained in stress management and biofeedback techniques that included relaxation, stress reduction, and desensitization. He learned how to increase his confidence by changing his body posture while sitting and standing. He also took time to stop and refocus his energy when he felt the need to fall back into old habits. What did he really do?

The moment the student became aware of sensations, he would:

1. Stop, take a deep breath into his abdomen and slowly exhale.
2. Assess how he was thinking—having negative and hopeless thoughts.
3. Change his thoughts.
4. Breathe deeply.

5. Imagine as he exhaled feeling heaviness and warmth in his arms and feet.

6. Talk to his body by saying, “My skin is cool, clear, and regenerative; I am worthy.”

Most of the time, just to stop was extremely difficult. The student had to stop focusing on the task in front of him and to put all of his energy into regaining his composure. This is very challenging because people are normally captured by whatever they are doing at that moment.

The student stated: “Breaking this chain behavior was by far the hardest things I've ever done. It didn't matter what situation I found myself in, my practice took precedence. The level of self-control I had to maintain was far beyond my norm. I remember taking an exam. I was struggling to recall the answer to the last essay question.

“All I wanted to do was finish the exam and go home. I knew that I knew it, it was coming to me; I began to write ... Yet in that same moment, I felt my right elbow start to tingle [the location of one of the psoriasis plagues], and my left hand started to drift towards it. Immediately I had to switch my focus. Despite my desire to finish I dropped my pen. I paused to breathe and focused

standing, sitting, and talking to other students. As he stated: “I hadn't realized how my collapsing posture was effecting my self-image until I began practicing a more powerful posture. In class I made myself sit with my butt pushed back against the back of the chair instead of letting myself slide forwarding into a slouch.

“Just like the urge to itch I had to stay conscious of my posture constantly. At work, at school, even at home on the couch, couch I practiced expanding body posture. The more I was aware of my posture the better my posture became, and the more time I spent in power pose the more natural it began to feel. The more natural it felt the more powerful I felt.”

After three weeks, the student's skin had cleared, and it has stayed this way for the last year.

There are many diseases and ailments that require the use of medication for appropriate treatment, but when stress is a factor in any diagnosis, or when a diagnosis cannot be found, it is important for stress management to be offered as a viable option for patients to consider. As shown by the student with psoriasis, learning stress management skills and then actually practicing them can play a huge factor in the health of an individual. Do it and there is hope.



Dr. Peper explains concepts of healing at health seminar in Holland. Photo courtesy of Erik Peper, Ph.D.

upon my positive thoughts. Moments like this happened daily, my normal functions were routinely interrupted by urges to scratch. Sometimes I would spend significantly more time doing the practices than the task at hand.”

Similarly, whenever the student observed his body posture “collapsing” and “hiding” — thus falling into a more powerless posture — he would interrupt the collapse and shift to a power position by expanding and being more erect. He did this while

The article “There Is Hope: Autogenic Biofeedback Training for the Treatment of Psoriasis” can be found at <http://biofeedbackhealth.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/published-article-there-is-hope.pdf>.

The website for the Institute for Holistic Health Studies at San Francisco State University is <http://www.sfsu.edu/~ihhs/>. Dr. Peper can also be contacted at by sending an email to epeper@sfsu.edu, or by calling 415.338.7683.

SF News Briefs



Market Street at dusk. Photo via Cast-SF.org.

By Sam Felsing

SF Sketchfest

Everybody needs to laugh once in a while. Once a year, San Francisco residents might find a good laugh at the SF Sketchfest. This year's comedy festival will happen from Jan. 23 to February.

Improviser David Owen and comedians Cole Stratton and Janet Varney started SF Sketchfest in 2001. It was originally meant to showcase the talents of six local comedy groups, but its scope grew massively over the forthcoming years.

Though its name implies that it only involves comedy sketches, SF Sketchfest is an all-encompassing comedy festival. The festival features stand-up performances, comedian interviews, comedic films, television tributes and musical acts.

The full schedule and line-up of the SF Sketchfest can be found at: <http://sfsketchfest.co/x/>.

Mid-Market Artists

The Mid-Market area has seen drastic changes in the last few years. Since the San Francisco Board of Supervisors had approved in 2011 a 6-year payroll tax holiday for companies willing to move to the area, Twitter, Dolby and Zendesk have all relocated to the neighborhood. However, Mid-Market artists have been struggling due to the high rents these companies have brought to the district. Now there is an organization that can help these artists.

The recently formed nonprofit, Community Arts Stabilization Trust — CAST, is a partnership of the Kenneth Rainin Foundation, the Northern California Community Loan Fund and the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development. Its mission is to help San Francisco artist groups purchase properties to house their organizations. CAST purchases the properties first, and then helps the artists groups raise the money to assume ownership of them.

One of the group's first acts was to purchase two buildings — one in the Central Market area and the other in the Tenderloin area — to help house local artist communities previously endangered with losing their studio spaces.

The Central Market building houses the Luggage Store Gallery, "a nonprofit artist-run multidisciplinary arts organization," according to <http://www.luggagestoregallery.org/>. The organization had been in danger of losing its space to investors wanting to buy its building, but the CAST action will allow it to remain in its headquarters and ultimately take ownership of it.

The second building CAST purchased is an old adult theater at 80 Turk St. CAST will hold onto the building until CounterPULSE, an organization that provides space for emerging artists and cultural innovators, is able to take ownership of it.

To find out more about CAST, go to <http://cast-sf.org/about/>.



Majestic waterfall is part of tribute to Martin Luther King Jr. at Yerba Buena Gardens holding granite inscriptions in 13 languages and African and Arabic dialects of King's powerful messages to humanity. Photo via Google Images.

Eyes off the Phone

Mayor Lee and District Attorney George Gascon want people to be safer while riding Muni. They have partnered with the San Francisco Police Department — SFPD — and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency — SFMTA — on the new "Eyes Up, Phones Down" safety awareness program.

The campaign — which rolled out in October/November 2013 — includes both a micro and macro approach to fighting crime on Muni. Transit employees are now approaching inattentive passengers on smart phones to inform the passengers of the dangers they face by keeping their eyes only on their mobile devices. More SFPD officers are patrolling transit trains and buses, making sure potential criminals stay away from vulnerable phone users. Muni riders are also being subjected to a citywide advertising campaign telling them to be more attentive

to their surroundings while on the city's transit system.

While the purpose of the "Eyes Up, Phones Down" program is to reduce overall crime on Muni [incidents of robbery and larceny on Muni did drop during the first month of the program], its emphasis is to reduce smart phone thefts. More than 50 percent of all robberies in San Francisco are of smart phones. Most phones are snapped out of their owners' hands when they are not paying attention to anything else but the phones.

For more about the program, go to: <http://www.sfmta.com/eyesup>.

MLK Day

Had his life not ended tragically on April 4, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. — widely known by the acronym of MLK — would turn 85 on January 15. Though he is no longer with us, his legacy certainly lives on. As is traditional in San Francisco, residents will gather across the city to celebrate Dr. King's life on MLK Day on Jan. 20.

The day's festivities will begin at 8 a.m. with the San Francisco Labor Council's Labor & Community Breakfast. The

taking place throughout the day at Yerba Buena.

The Northern California Martin Luther King Jr. Community Foundation sponsors the majority of San Francisco's MLK celebrations. For 23 years, Cecil B. Williams of Glide Memorial Church oversaw the city's MLK festivities, but he decided to pass on the responsibilities to a new generation in 2009. That new generation then created the foundation.

A full list of MLK Day events can be found at <http://norcalmlkfoundation.org/Events.html>

Family Friendly

On Jan. 1, San Francisco's Family Friendly Workplace Ordinance has gone into effect. The new ordinance allows employees of city-based companies with 20 or more people to ask for, and receive from their employers, flexible work schedules. The schedules will allow the employees to take care of dependent children, parents or family members.

Under the new law, eligible employees will now have the right to ask their employers to modify their work start and end times, arrange for them to attend to their caregiver responsibilities during the workday, and give them advanced notice of their upcoming work schedules. Employers can deny their employees' requests if they can prove the flexible schedules will increase business costs, negatively impact customer demands, or put an undue burden on other employees.

San Francisco has a major family problem. It has the lowest percentage of children of any major city in the United States. Families are leaving in the droves, with several thousand having left since the last census. In part, to help make family life in the city easier, Supervisor David Chiu introduced the ordinance in June 2013. In October 2013, it was passed unanimously by the Board of Supervisors and signed into law by Mayor Lee shortly afterwards.

To find out more, go to: <http://sfgsa.org/index.aspx?page=6305>.



San Francisco family friendly workplace ordinance went into effect Jan. 1. Photo via Google Images.

Nonprofit News

The 5 Keys Charter School offers chance to win social redemption



[Top]: Steve Good working on lesson with 5 Keys student. [Below]: Administrative group meeting. Photos by Leland Fox.

By Thomas Figg-Hoblyn

In 2003, Sheriff Michael Hennessey co-founded the Five Keys Charter School within the city's jail system — FKCS — offering inmates a path toward higher education by obtaining a high school diploma.

FKCS required a state waiver to allow for the enrollment of adults, and it was the first charter school in the nation to operate from inside a county jail.

"At a time when prisons and jails are seen primarily as a place for punishment and retribution, this department takes a longer view and believes that government can do better than blindly releasing thousands of drug addicts and violent men back into society, knowing that new victims await their return," said Hennessey, who was sheriff from 1980 through 2012.

The San Francisco Sheriff's Department Five Keys Charter School is a small charter management nonprofit that operates three public charter schools within the jail system. It is different from traditional charter schools in that Five Keys primarily targets adults who are either in County Jail or on probation or parole; who are court-mandated; who are living in a residential treatment facility; or who are enrolled in a workforce development program in partnership with a community based organization.

The school's values and its name are based upon the role of five keys to an inmate's success: education, employment, recovery, family, and community.

Carrying on the tradition of working toward actual rehabilitation and the lowering of recidivism put forth by Hennessey is the current San Francisco Sheriff, Ross Mirkarimi.

"Where incarceration is the intersection of so many wrongs in an inmate's life, historically, within the system, opportunities proved few in providing the ex-offender hope through a working skill. The San Francisco

Sheriff's Department's Five Keys Charter School innovates a common sense and compassionate approach toward effective reentry," Mirkarimi said.

Five Keys offers a standard-based curriculum of the core subjects that includes language arts, math, social science, science, workplace readiness training, and basic technology training.

The charter school operates from inside the County Jail in San Bruno, with several satellite locations in San Francisco and Los Angeles for released inmates who want to keep attending class.



The flagship site at San Bruno handles approximately 475 students daily, and has been in operation since the school's inception. In addition to a traditional high school curriculum, class offerings include a truck-driving academy, computer skill training, a reading lab, restorative justice and customer service fundamentals.

To accommodate short sentences, classes are offered in year-round intensive, 5-week semesters, allowing students to earn credits more quickly.

According to school officials, over 600 high school diplomas, certificates of completion or equivalency diplomas have been earned since the school opened. Officials say that they have tracked their graduates — finding that the recidivism rate for Five Keys graduates after being out for a year is 44 percent, compared with 68 percent of other inmates.

The school officials equate the 24 percent gain as saving San Francisco \$1.5 million in incarceration expenses.

In addition to academic courses, students are also offered drug treatment and/or violence prevention counseling that is designed to help them stay out of jail upon release.

Anthony Taylor, 22, and Frederick Releford, 49, each received their diploma during a 2013 graduation ceremony as their proud mothers looked on. "Something good — not bad — is coming out of this," said Releford, who is serving a four-year sentence.

Incarcerated students from different generations have shared the same stage receiving high school diplomas.

The charter school's Executive Director Steve Good said that he has many fond memories of students' success, but perhaps the fondest was a father and son graduating together, both onstage receiving their diplomas.

"FKCS is to me about providing dignity to those that were not able to finish their education," Good said. He believes in the ability of people to change and restore themselves to give back to their communities.

Good also said that he also realizes that the FKCS community of students is the most disenfranchised in San Francisco — who have overcome incredible barriers to be able to re-engage in education — and he noted that when a high school or middle school student drops out of school, multiple systems have failed that student, including the school system and their family system.

"Teenagers don't want to be uneducated and spend their days hanging out on the streets. When that happens, it's not a choice they made, it's a choice that was made for them by the system failing," Good stated.

When asked what is in store for the school's future, Good said that he wants to continue to fill the tremendous need for providing education for those who were unable to finish their high school

diplomas or complete the GED; he also looks for new partners for creating internships and vocational training tied with education that leads to real and permanent employment.

According to Good, Five Keys will continue to work with and develop relationships with community-based organizations throughout San Francisco to leverage shared expertise to provide the wraparound services necessary to help other students succeed.

The bottom line for Good is that virtually every study on the topic of education and poverty shows that there is a direct correlation between education and economic levels and crime. As a community's education level increases, poverty and crime decrease.

"It really is that simple," Good said. "It costs \$8,000 a year to provide an education, and nearly \$50,000 a year to send someone to jail. Society would actually be better sending a person to Stanford than to jail, but we as a society are not that evolved yet."

Additional information about the Five Keys Charter School can be obtained from the website at www.fivekeyscharter.org/, or by contacting the following:

Main Office
70 Oak Grove Street
San Francisco, CA 94107
Phone (415) 734-3310
Fax (415) 734-3314

Student Enrollment
Kelli Villa
(415) 575-6454
kelliv@fivekeyscharter.org

Executive Director
Steve Good
(415) 734-3310
steveg@fivekeyscharter.org

Director of Operations
Elyse Graham
(415) 410-8530
elyseg@fivekeyscharter.org

Director of Education
Lisa Stringer
(415) 424-3850
lisas@fivekeyscharter.org

Assistant Director of Education/
SF Site Director
Terese Bravo
(650) 266-7606
tereseb@fivekeyscharter.org

Assistant Director of Education
for Transitional Aged Youth
Kenneth Hsu
(415) 730-3218
kennethh@fivekeyscharter.org

Assistant Director of Education/
LA Site Director
Clarece Campbell
(415) 424-3975
clarecec@fivekeyscharter.org

Director of New Initiatives
Sunny Schwartz
(415) 819-7070
sunnyschwartz@mac.com

Nonprofit News

CompassPoint offers training to nonprofits helping to guide youths

By Thomas Figg-Hoblyn

Since 2005, CompassPoint Nonprofit Services has developed and guided leaders of Bay Area nonprofits towards working with transition-age youths — TAY — through its Leadership Development Program for Managers and Executives Serving Transition-Age Youth — TAY Leadership Program.

Transition-age youths — TAY — are young people between the ages of 16–24 who are in transition from state custody or foster care and are deemed “at-risk.”

The signature leadership program — developed in 2005 by CompassPoint with funding by a grant from The California Wellness Foundation — addresses the changing needs of leadership professionals serving TAY, and to date nearly 100 TAY professionals have gone through the program.

“I have not only learned concrete skills to be a better supervisor, manager and administrator, but I have learned how to think about my work to make myself a more effective leader,” said Toby Eastman, chief of programs at Larkin Street Youth Services.

According to Senior Project Director Michelle Gislason of the TAY Leadership Program, all nonprofits benefit from investing in their leadership.

“We believe that nonprofit organizations and leaders need relevant support that builds on their strengths, experiences and achievements — and that those individuals and organizations that invest in increasing their leadership and management capacities are better poised to achieve progress,” Gislason said.

The leadership program is grounded in the realities of developing stronger personal and professional practices in the context of limited organizational resources.

Now in its eighth year, the TAY Leadership Program for Managers recently received its latest round of applications from senior organizational leaders, and 12 of the applicants will be selected to enroll in the 12-month leadership program for training in how to be more effective in leading oneself, others and within networks.

The CompassPoint TAY Leadership Program effectively trains the trainers — the leaders — so that they can then train and lead their staff more efficiently and effectively.

“The goals of the program are to support leaders serving the TAY population to learn new leadership skills, meet professional development goals,

network and share resources,” Gislason said.

The next training program is scheduled to begin in March. Applicants must be senior-level leaders within California 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organizations that work with TAYs. They must additionally have at least two years of nonprofit experience, show a demonstrated commitment to social change, and also have a history of working for community development.

According to Gislason, the TAY population is an extremely vulnerable one, and TAY youths often fall through the cracks of systems of care and support. CompassPoint’s entire mission is focused upon intensifying the impact of fellow nonprofit leaders and organizations toward social equity.

The March session will begin with a 3-day kick-off retreat at the Beach House in Half Moon Bay, California.

Leaders in training will have substantial time commitments and participation requirements. Aside from learning key concepts, they will have six facilitated peer coaching calls that will allow participants to sustain connections and to share real-time goals and challenges which they are experiencing in their organization.



There will be 90-minute facilitated webinars to delve deeper into the content presented at the seminars. A 360-degree feedback will provide insights into the way others perceive a participant’s leadership skills.

Followup in-person meetings and a final alumni meeting are designed to encourage and support a growing, sustainable network in the TAY field.

The funder — California Wellness Center — was created in 1992 as an independent, private foundation, with a mission to improve the health of the people of California by making grants for health promotion,



[Above]: Nonprofit leaders attend an Executive Director 101 Leadership Training class. [Below]: Jeanne Bell, CEO, at left; and Byron Johnson, senior project director, at right. Photos courtesy of CompassPoint.

wellness education and disease prevention.

Sandra Martinez of the California Wellness Center said that it is strategic to support CompassPoint because they have the knowledge, skills and track record in developing leadership and building the capacity of nonprofits, particularly in communities of color.

CompassPoint strives to intensify the impact of fellow leaders, organizations and net-



works, with a goal of achieving social equity.

The leadership program gives nonprofit organizations and leaders relevant support that builds on their strengths, experiences, and achievements. It makes sense that organizations investing in increasing leadership and management capacities are better poised to achieve progress.

For more than 35 years, CompassPoint has worked with guiding nonprofits to become better managed, more adaptive, and achieve higher impact.

TAY Leadership Program Alumni can take their experi-

ences and offer their learning back to society by utilizing the practical help and tools that they received.

The next cohort of leaders was finalized in 2013. Each participant’s organization pays \$250 upon acceptance into the program to secure their program spot. The small participation fee represents an investment by the participants and their organizations to take part in the program.

Funds collected are used to support the program and in assisting those agencies for which this fee may be a hardship.

All other costs, including travel and accommodations, will be subsidized by the program, which is funded by the grant from California Wellness Foundation and is estimated to be valued at over \$12,000 per participant.

“This is a wonderful, and much needed, opportunity for executive directors to come together to relax, learn, and reflect on common issues and concerns,” said Tony Vaughn — the executive director of A Home Within, and founder of the Children’s Psychotherapy Project.

“This program is in its eighth year and we are so proud to be part of the leadership journeys of the more than 90 leaders across the state we have worked with. We fell very closely connected to the work they do and are cheering each of them on as they work to serve the TAY population,” Gislason concluded.

More information can be found about CompassPoint by visiting the website at <http://www.compasspoint.org/> or by sending an email to info@compasspoint.org.

Fillmore Women's Clinic offers free or reduced fee healthcare

By Julie McCoy

Low-income women and their children are receiving access to free health services, thanks to the San Francisco-based Women's Community Clinic.

Located at 1833 Fillmore St., the Women's Community Clinic provides sexual and reproductive health services, such as breast exams and mammogram referrals, pregnancy testing, birth control, prenatal care in collaboration with University of California at San Francisco — UCSF, pap smears and pelvic exams, acupuncture, sexually transmitted infection checks, and menopausal care.

The Women's Community Clinic will soon provide primary care as well, according to Hansen.

As Executive Director, Hansen oversees the clinic and supports the organization in achieving its mission. "It is a great job," she commented. "I love my work at the clinic and feel very passionate about what we do. I do a wide variety of things — representing the clinic in the community, supporting our wonderful staff, fundraising, program planning, working with our Board and most importantly, putting our clients at the center of our work."

The majority of the clinic's clients fall below the fed-

Most of the women the clinic serves are between the ages of 20–50. Some are as old as 70. The children the clinic serves are 12 years of age and older.

The Women's Community Clinic has delivered care to more than 20,000 women since its inception in 1999. More than 95 percent of clients rate the clinic's services as excellent.

"All of the anxiety that I felt coming in the doors went out the window, and by the end of the visit I was smiling and happy, and I was telling one of my friends, 'Why didn't I know about this place earlier?'" a client said in a video on the clinic's website.

outreach to homeless and/or marginally challenged women and girls. The program meets women literally where they are — on the streets, in single room occupancy hotels, and in jail — to provide services using a client-centered harm reduction approach. The program currently has two projects: Ladies Night and Condom Ladies.

With Ladies Night, the clinic partners with local service agencies in the Mission District, including the Homeless Youth Alliance, BART, Care Through Touch Institute and Mission Neighborhood Health Centers.

The goal of the collaboration is to enhance the physical, social, emotional, and economic health of women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in San Francisco's Mission District.

Condom Ladies volunteers hit the streets and in single-room occupancy hotels to provide nutritional support, hygiene, safe sex supplies, and safe drug use supplies, as well as referrals and social support.

The Women's Community Clinic serves 5,000 women and girls annually, which equates to 7,500 visits, according to Role. "We see clients from all over the city," she said. "We're able to see a large number of clients."

The clinic, which provides healthcare for the community by the community, is staffed by a number of female volunteers.

"We have a pretty robust (volunteer) training program," Role said. Many volunteers go on to careers in the healthcare profession.



[From left]: Outreach/Enrollment Coordinator Ayana Walker; clinic Executive Director Carlina Hansen; Workforce and Outreach Director Kemi Role. [Below]: View of clinic seating area. Photos by Claire Kirschner.

Additionally, the Women's Community Clinic offers an integrated mental health program that provides short-term counseling for clients.

A clinician can refer a woman to one of the clinic's counselors if she has experienced such issues as: depression, moodiness, anxiety, domestic violence, sexual assault, relationship problems, substance abuse or addiction, suicidal thoughts or attempts, sleep problems, sexuality issues, eating disorders, stress and grief.

Counselors see clients for up to 10 sessions. They can also make referrals to other mental health agencies if a client would benefit from long-term counseling.

"The clinic provides an access point for them, listening to their story and meeting them where they are," commented Executive Director Carlina Hansen.

"The clinic's services can be life saving; from keeping a homeless woman safe from a violent situation, to helping a young woman get access to prenatal care to have a healthy baby, to screening women for cancer," Hansen said. "We are extremely proud to serve the Western Addition community and are grateful to our partners who have been so supportive of our services."

eral poverty level in terms of income. They also do not have health insurance. There is a great need for the clinic's services, given that there are more than 50,000 uninsured women in San Francisco.

When the Affordable Care Act is implemented in 2014, the clinic will see more people who have health care, pointed out Kemi Role, Director of Workforce and Outreach.

Currently, 90 percent of the clinic's clients are eligible for the Family Planning, Access, Care and Treatment — PACT — program, according to Role.

Administered by the California Department of Public Health's Office of Family Planning, the Family PACT Program provides comprehensive family planning services to eligible low-income individuals who are under 200 percent poverty level.

"Because we're able to enroll most of our clients in that program, we're able to provide services free of charge," Role noted.

The 10 percent of clients who are not eligible for the Family PACT Program pay a small fee for services, according to a sliding scale model. The clinic never turns anyone away due to their inability to pay, Role emphasized.

The clinic provides career training and development programs and has strong community outreach programs, including outreach and education in the Western Addition, and outreach to homeless women in the Mission District.

The Health Worker Program is a volunteer entry-level health careers training program designed for Bay Area women.

The Western Addition Health Training — WHAT — program, which was created in 2007, is a 2-year health career paid learning program. WAHT concentrates on three main areas: health career development and training, professional mentorship and community outreach and collaboration. Eighty percent of women in the WAHT Program are women of color, Role said.

Additionally, the outreach program — which is based in the Mission District — provides



In July 2013, staff from the Women's Community Clinic participated in the San Francisco AIDS Walk. The team raised more

continued on page 10

Neighborhood News



By Thomas Figg-Hoblen

Alamo Square

Community feedback for WalkFirst, Nov. 25–Jan. 16

The Alamo Square Neighborhood Association is working with the SFMTA on the WalkFirst Investment Strategy. They are hoping to get as much community feedback as possible about how the City should prioritize funding for pedestrian safety improvements. The outreach phase is scheduled to last until Jan. 16, and they want to make sure that there is widespread participation.

Visit the WalkFirst interactive online tool at <http://walkfirst.sfplanning.org/index.php/home> to learn more about WalkFirst, pedestrian safety, and to give your feedback about what the City should fund. Visit www.alamosq.org for more information.

Weekly Alamo Square Play Group, every Tuesday 10 a.m.–12p.m.

Families with infants and toddlers can join the play group, which is held at the Alamo Square Park playground (just west of Steiner and Grove Streets). Contact playgroups@alamosq.org.

Yuck will be performing on Wednesday, Jan. 19 at 7:30 p.m.

The Indie Rock band Yuck, originally from London, will be playing at the Independent in January, dropping their alternative sounds, 628 Divisadero St., San Francisco, CA 94117, 415.771.1421.

Bayview Hunters Point

Figure drawing with live model, Wednesday, Jan. 8, 6–8 p.m.

Come one, come all, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month to enjoy drawing from a live figure model at the Bayview

Opera House classroom. All skill levels are welcome. Charcoal and newsprint are available, or bring your own. We meet inside in the downstairs classroom.

Guidance from BVOH Teaching Artist Danielle Satinover. A \$5 donation is requested. The location is at 4705 Third St., San Francisco, CA 94124. Visit info.bvoh@bvoh.org, or call 415.824.0386.

Vinyasa flow yoga with Armando Luna, Thursday, Jan. 2, 4:30–5:40 p.m.

Yoga with smooth movements synchronized to the breath at the Bayview Opera House Ruth Williams Memorial Theatre, all levels welcome. A \$10 donation is requested, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds. The location is at 4705 Third St., San Francisco, CA 94124. Visit info.bvoh@bvoh.org, or call 415.824.0386.

“3rd on Third” Arts & Music Festival, Thursday, Feb. 20, 5:30–9:00 p.m.

A FREE community-wide arts celebration for the whole family, including pop-up galleries, food trucks, a beer and wine garden, a special children’s zone with free art-making activities, and the “Stern Grove on the Road” stage featuring Bayview talent. Go to 3rd Street and China Basin St. to join the festival. Visit www.3rdonthird.com, or call 415.742.1753.

Fillmore

Fillmore farmers market, Saturdays 9 a.m.–1p.m.

The Fillmore farmers market is back for another great season of fresh and seasonal fruits and vegetables — and great family fun. Go to Fillmore Center Plaza, 1475 Fillmore St. Visit www.pcfma.com/fillmore for more information.



“16 Cowries: Voices of the Divine” — Tuesday–Saturday, 12–5 pm through Thursday, March 6.

In West Africa, there exist multiple systems of divination using cowry shells ranging in number from 8–21, with the most common being 16 shells. The exhibition showcases art inspired from cowry shell divination at the Sargent Johnson gallery, First Floor at the African American Art and Culture Complex, 762 Fulton St. Visit www.aaacc.org for more information.

Volcano Choir will be performing on Tuesday, Jan. 21 at 7 p.m.

Along with the choir, a full venue of Indie rock bands, the Volcano Choir, guitarists and acoustic bands will be performing at the Fillmore in January. Located at 1805 Geary Blvd., more information can be found on the website, www.thefillmore.com, or by calling 415.346.6000.

Hayes Valley

Rickshaw Stop’s 10-Year Anniversary Party, Jan. 7–12

From Jan 7–12, Rickshaw Stop will celebrate 10 years of entertainment by throwing a mini-festival, featuring musical acts that have graced the stage at some point in the club’s decade of service. Headliners include Mikal Cronin, Cool Ghouls, and Cocktails. Rickshaw Stop is located at 155 Fell St.

For more information, visit www.rickshawstop.com, or call 415.861.2011.

San Francisco Bisexual Discussion Group, Thursday, Jan. 16

A mixed-gender peer-led support group for bisexuals will be held at the LGBT Community Center located at 1800 Market St on Jan. 16. Call 415.865.5555 for times and details. A small donation is requested.

“The Book of Mormon” — a play; daily except Monday through January 19, various times

Ben Brantley of The New York Times calls it “the best musical of this century.” Entertainment Weekly says it’s “the funniest musical of all time.” From South Park creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone, it is “The Book of Mormon,” showing at the Orpheum Theater at 1192 Market St. Visit www.shnsf.com, or call 415.551.2000 for more information.

Japantown

The 13th World Children’s Haiku Contest, 2013–2014, Feb. 15 deadline

Open to children up to age 15, the 2014 theme is “Dreams.” Originating in Japan, haiku is one of the finest and shortest

forms of poetry in the world. In a brief descriptive verse, haiku captures a moment in the poet’s life, or simply expresses the beauty of nature. Haiku is now enjoyed in many countries around the world. For entry information visit www.jccnc.org.

Oshogatsu Matsuri, Saturday Jan. 11, 11 a.m.–3 p.m.

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach — APILO — celebrates Japantown’s annual Oshogatsu Matsuri — Year of the Horse. Activities include arts and crafts for children; a children’s art contest; traditional mochitsuki — New Year rice pounding; food and cultural performances, including odori, kendo and taiko; and much more! Bring a plain light-colored T-shirt and have it screen printed with the Oshogatsu logo.



For more information about the festival, please contact Dean Ito Taylor at 415.567.6255. Location: JCCNC Nisei Community Hall gymnasium. Free and open to the public.

NoPa

SFPD Park Station Community Meeting, Tuesday, Jan. 14, 6–7:30 p.m.

This monthly meeting is open to the public to discuss new or ongoing issues. Captain Greg Corrales generally presides at the meetings, held at the Park Station at 1899 Waller St. Meeting information can also be obtained by sending an email to sfpdparkstatio@sfgov.org.

Divisadero farmers market, every Sunday in January, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

The Divisadero farmers market will continue in 2014 for another great season of fresh and seasonal fruits and vegetables. The market is located on Grove Street between Divisadero and Broderick Streets. Visit www.pcfma.com/divisadero for more information.

Panhandle Park community workday, Saturday, Jan. 11, 9–11 a.m.

Meet at the bulletin board near the playground, and be part of something good. Start the New Year off right!

Community Voices

Help Save Marcus Books

By London Breed

Marcus Books is where I bought my first book. It's where I learned to love reading. It is how I recognized — perhaps for the first time — that I was part of a community and a culture bigger than just the housing project where I lived, or even San Francisco. Raye and Julian Richardson, and the store they ran for decades, helped me understand what it means to be African American.

And what is amazing to me is that I am among perhaps the fourth or fifth generation of San Franciscans who have been so impacted by this building and the businesses it has housed, whose lives and community have been enriched because it was there. Because it stood strong.

Now it is our time to keep it strong.

Erected in 1893, the Marcus Books building originally sat at 1690 Post St. It first housed a café/pool hall, which served as a community gathering place for the Japanese American community. Later it hosted Nippon Drugs, which served Japantown's health care needs.

After World War II, the building became Jimbo's Bop City, a world renowned jazz club, and a cultural institution that helped the Fillmore earn its reputation as the "Harlem of the West." Jimbo's Bop City attracted musicians such as Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, John Coltrane, Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker and Miles Davis.

When the City's Redevelopment Agency threatened to raze the Fillmore and Japantown communities, members of the nascent historical preservation movement coalesced to save this and several other historic Victorian buildings. The Marcus Books-Jimbo's Bop City building was lifted off its foundation and trucked two blocks around the corner to 1712 Fillmore St., where it became part of a "Victorian Village," a small collection of refugee buildings that escaped Redevelopment.

Since its move, the building has housed Marcus Books, the oldest Black-owned and Black-themed bookstore in the nation and a center for Black intellectualism, culture, empowerment and activism. Over the years, Marcus Books has hosted Rosa Parks, James Baldwin, Eldridge Cleaver, Maya Angelou, Malcolm X, and Oprah Winfrey.

Marcus Books, Jimbo's Bop City, and their building are a part of our history, part of who we are as San Franciscans. Yet, as you likely know, the build-



ing was sold in foreclosure last spring, and soon thereafter Marcus Books and the Johnson/Richardson family faced foreclosure and eviction.

I am proud to say that an inspiring group of community members and activists have rallied together to save Marcus Books, including groups such as: NAACP; Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment — ACCE; Westside Community Services; and the San Francisco Land Trust, along with authors, teachers, Japantown activists, and my office. Together we are fighting to keep Marcus Books and its historic building in the hands of the Johnsons and the Fillmore Community.

After unanimous approval at the City's Historic Preservation and Planning Commissions, we are on the brink of having the building designated an official San Francisco historic landmark. And the team of activists and supporters has come to a settlement agreement with the building's new owners that gives our community a unique opportunity: to buy the building back!

It is a \$2.6 million deal in which Westside Community Services will provide \$1.6 million and the San Francisco Land Trust will try to raise the remaining \$1 million. If they succeed, the building will stay protected under the Land Trust and Marcus Books will remain their tenant for good. This is where you come in ...

The \$1 million deadline is February 28. Please make a contribution at www.supportmarcusbooks.com.

For the Fillmore, for Japantown, for our history and our future, please join our final push to keep Marcus Books where it belongs — in the community.

Midgett's Corner

Time, health, wealth and wisdom: What do these words mean to you?

Time: As in stressing about it constantly. If you don't enjoy your job, then you definitely are a clock-watcher. We spend most of our waking hours working. Do you know how to relax at home or on vacation? Are you a clock-watcher while doing fun or mundane tasks? What task or activities do you partake in that do not require time watching?

Health: Health is money in the bank. Why? Medical expenses are astronomical. When you are healthy, you are active, carefree and feel good about yourself, hopefully. Mental and physical health go hand in hand. If the body is in good shape, then the mind will follow. Do you worry about being sick? Why? Because that is the quickest way to set yourself up mentally to go downhill. Is exercise on your agenda? Did you join a gym and are now worrying about how you're going to pay the fee? Walking is cheap, and meeting new people can be stimulating. Try 15–20 minutes a day. Also, try getting a walking group together on weekends or on the job.

Wealth: I describe wealth as being fluid because it moves in many directions. Possibly, here today and gone tomorrow. Do you have a budget? We know money moves in and out of our reach. It is not a stable commodity. On many levels, you have control of your finances. You can choose to use it sensibly or to abuse it. Today one does not stay on a job for 20 years. You're lucky if your retirement is available when you retire. Some companies have an extended retirement age.

The word "wisdom" describes experiences and how you use them. It is the power of understanding, judgment or some type of decision-making.

I discovered through social security information that I could make as much money as I wanted at the age of 70. I also found out that Uncle Sam wants my money; if I make over a certain amount, then it is taxed. So at age 77, I am paying back taxes and I am not a happy camper.



I will continue to work because I enjoy my job, even though I retired at the age of 70.

Wisdom: The word "wisdom" describes experiences

and how you use them. It is the power of understanding, judgment or some type of decision-making. Although these words can apply to any age, 40-year-olds and baby boomers are more readily in these categories, and these words would have an effect upon them.

How do any of these words apply towards your New Year's journey?

I am not a time watcher. My day starts at 6:30 a.m. After breakfast, I am at my computer, either writing my column, lesson plans or my third book. Writing brings me pleasure. So during this time, I am on a natural high. I do not take my health for granted. I exercise and eat well. My body is my jewel; I keep it polished.

Economically, I am comfortable today. My money is very fluid in my life. When I have it, sometimes it flows towards streams of income or pleasure. At this time in my life, wisdom is knowledge from the experiences I have gathered for 58 years. Nineteen of those years I was at home gaining knowledge from mom, dad, friends and the community.

Mary Midgett is the author of *New York Flavor* with a San Francisco Beat and *Brown on Brown, Black Lesbian Erotica*. She can be viewed on Facebook, Older Women's Issues. She can be contacted by email at midgettscorner@aol.com.

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Community Voices

Marcus Books — a literary cornerstone of black history



“When we do accomplish this — and we will accomplish this — it will be a rare victory for retaining cultural diversity in our city at a time of increasing economic displacement.”
— Attorney Julian Davis



[From Left]: Karen Johnson and her daughter Tamiko Johnson at the bookstore. [Below]: The Bookstore occupies a classic Victorian at 1712 Fillmore St. Photos by Mike Griffin.

By Jennie Butler

Fillmore natives are used to seeing their neighborhood change. Those who stayed in the area through 1960's redevelopment have spent the last 50 years watching businesses come in and out of the Fillmore corridor. Very few of them have upheld the genuine African American culture of the historic Fillmore District — except for Marcus Books.

For more than 50 years, Marcus Books has been a vital source for information on civil rights, historic black figures and African culture. The bookstore provides historical nonfiction, poetry, novels, and children's books — all written from an African American perspective. Marcus Books is the oldest black bookstore in America and the city's only source for exclusively Afrocentric literature.

The customer base at Marcus Books is multigenerational. Western Addition residents — many of whom learned to read in the bookstore — come to find historical non-fiction written by African Americans for African Americans, a perspective often different than what is taught in school.

“People have, for so long, come to Marcus Books when they need to find books on the Civil Rights movement, on the history of African Americans, or how African American culture is developing, influencing and shaping American culture,” said the bookstore's long-time customer and friend, Karen Kai.

However, this year has been a rocky chapter in the chronicle of Marcus Books. After owners Karen and Greg Johnson could not pay off predatory loans, their property was sold in bankruptcy court to real estate investors, Nishan and Suhaila Sweis.

After being evicted from their home above the bookstore, the Johnsons were given until June 18, 2013 to find a new location for their businesses.

When word got out that the bookstore would have to relocate, community members immediately materialized the “Save Marcus Books” campaign. For six months, the bookstore's supporters held weekly meetings, stood before the board of supervisors, organized streetside protests and displayed picket signs outside both the Sweis home and their church.

Kai and other community members organized an independent support group for the building, the Johnsons and Marcus Books. They agreed that this neighborhood could not afford to lose another institution reflecting the Fillmore's history and culture.

“Marcus Books is about the literature, the music and the real soul of this community. The spirit that's here is truly extraordinary,” said Kai. “If we lose this, we lose a piece of our soul.”

Marcus Books' unique selection of literature and their status as one of the few authentic black businesses left on Fillmore are not the only reasons the bookstore is symbolic, according to Kai. The bookstore's location at 1712 Fillmore St. represents the Fillmore's rich African American

and Japanese American history.

Before it was Marcus Books, the lavender Victorian housed one the city's most popular jazz venues — Jimbo's Bop City. The club was an intimate space for Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday and other big-name musicians to jam for a mostly African American audience. The property was saved from demolition by community activists during reconstruction, and it was later purchased by Karen Johnson's parents and founders of Marcus Books, Julian and Raye Richardson.

Marcus Books recently began a promising new chapter in its fight to stay at 1712 Fillmore St. The bookstore is no longer in financial trouble. In September, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to award the property San Francisco historic landmark status.

After private negotiations, the Sweis family agreed to sell the property to San Francisco Community Land Trust at market price, or \$2.6 million. Once the property is in the hands of the SFCLT — a nonprofit organization for affordable real estate acquisition —

the Johnsons will be able to rent the building under strictly affordable rates.

With a \$1.6 million loan from Westside Community Services, Marcus Books is well on

its way to buying the property back from the Sweis family. The bookstore and the SFCLT must raise the remaining \$1 million in investments by February 28, 2013. If they fail to reach this goal, the Sweis family will retain ownership of the property and Marcus Books will be forced to relocate.

The Johnson family and their attorney, Julian Davis, are confident that San Franciscans will recognize the significance of the property and invest in their bookstore.

“When we do accomplish this — and we will accomplish this — it will be a rare victory for retaining cultural diversity in our city at a time of increasing economic displacement,” said Davis.

Those who want to invest in Marcus Books can do so at the SFCLT's online fundraising platform, www.fundraise.com.

The stakes are high, but an enthusiastic group of people are behind the Johnsons and Marcus Books. Even the new property owners' son, Joseph Sweis, claims that he and his parents are “rooting for Marcus Books” and “hope they reach their goal.”

At this final point of negotiations, the Johnson family and Marcus Books' supporters can only stay positive — something they have done since the bookstore's troubles began.

“Anything is possible; that has been our credo,” said Greg Johnson. “We recognize that a million dollars is a lot of money. But again, it is only money.”

The website for Marcus Books is www.marcusbookstores.com/. The telephone number for the bookstore is 415.346.4222.



Nonprofit News

AAACC continued from page 1

efit from specialized, hands-on instruction. The young boys and girls who participate in the complex's weekday programs build a second family with each other and with the AAACCs enthusiastic staff. In general, the youth programming acts to promote creativity and peer communication, as well as self-discipline and personal well-being.

Youths age 4–17 meet three days a week at the complex for an hour of kicks, punches, strikes and dodges. The classes teach disciplines from both karate and judo, and the participants are grouped separately according to their rank and experience.

There is more to the class than simple instruction of the Japanese art of self-defense. The martial arts instructors — brothers Jim and Henry Larkin — carefully weave in basic lessons in self-discipline, nutrition, respect for superiority and healthy relationship building.

"It's helped my daughter avoid a lot of catty situations in school," said Jasmine Morrison, whose 10-year-old daughter named Heaven has been coming to the karate and judo class for three years. "It teaches them how to respectfully disagree, and that's a skill not even some adults can master."

Youths who come to the AAACC also have the option to physically express themselves

through the complex's dance troupe — Talent Allstars.

Talent Allstars gives these youths the opportunity to train and perform jazz, hip-hop, and ballet. In dance competitions, the group has earned 10 local titles and one national title. Talent Allstars meets four days each week for an intensive hour-long class led by Nitty Thomas.

Thomas, 31, has dedicated his life to dancing. He grew up taking classes at the AAACC, and he later moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in dance. Thomas travels from Los Angeles every week to stay involved in Talent Allstars.

"It's not easy to make the trip, but I do it because I love this," Thomas said. "Talent Allstars gives the girls something to call their own."

Youths who come to AAACC also have a free space to write, record and produce their own music at the complex's entertainment-industry-themed program — Project Level.

Every weekday, Project Level provides a space for youth age 12 through 18 explore their creativity through different media including song-writing, mixing music, photography, video production, radio broadcasting, and graphic design. Project Levels executive director, Richard "Big Rich" Bougere Jr. defined the

program simply as, "a fully-functional recording label run by youth."

Through talent and collaboration, teenagers at Project Level produce completely original, multi-dimensional work. The young artists have the opportunity to master various forms of production while they discover their own creative calling.

Eighteen-year-old Beronica Zelaya has spent 1 ½ years at Project Level, where she has been exploring her niche: singing and songwriting. According to "Big Rich" and other instructors, Zelaya "has the incredible ability to spill her life story on track."

Soon, Zelaya will no longer be eligible for the AAACC's youth programs. Despite this, Zelaya plans to become an instructor for Project Level in order to stay close to her family there.

"I want people to experience what I experienced here," said Zelaya. "The love and support is consistent."

Project Level and martial arts give youths the opportunity to work toward mastering their own craft. All AAACC successful youth programming serves the center's objective: to empower youth and adults through art, education, free expression and compassion.

AAACC Administrator Michelle Parker strongly feels that empowered youths take on a different role in society.

"When kids come to the AAACC they begin to understand that there are other adults who care about what happens to them," Parker said. "When you know that, you behave differently."

Parker believes this is what makes AAACC so crucial to the youth in San Francisco. The complex's enthusiastic devoted administrators and instructors make anyone who enters AAACC feel like there is a place for them there, and that they have something unique and exceptional to offer.

"I think at our core, all of us as people — whether we're young or old — want to feel valued and important," Parker said.

July will mark 25 years since the AAACC first opened its doors to the community.

More information about AAACC youth programs can be found at <http://www.aaacc.org/youth-afterschool.php>, by calling 415.922.2049, or by sending an email to info@aaacc.org.

Come and attend a free Health Care Reform Seminar at Kaiser Permanente and take charge of your health.

The Affordable Care Act -- also known as Health Care Reform (HCR) -- is bringing some big changes. By 2014, everyone can get health coverage, which means you have options. Deciding on a plan can be stressful and confusing, but we can make help make it easier for you. You'll get the simple answers you need to make a better choice when you join us for this important gathering.

We'll help you:

Understand how health care reform affects you.
Gain peace of mind to make a smart choice in a short time.
Discover ways to get financial help, if you qualify.

Saturday, Jan. 11, 2014

10 a.m. - 12 p.m. (Noon)

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2238 Geary Blvd. - 3rd floor
San Francisco, CA 94115

Also enjoy free of charge:

Free refreshments
Children's activities
Facility tours by Kaiser Permanente physicians
Free giveaways
Free health screenings

Reserve your spot now at: kp.org/healthcarereform/event
Seating is limited, but you don't have to RSVP to attend.

KAISER PERMANENTE thrive

Fillmore Women's Clinic continued from page 6

than \$8,000. Thanks to a special initiative of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, \$8,000 went to the SF AIDS Foundation, and \$8,000 went back to the clinic.

The Women's Community Clinic is one of two safety nets in the Western Addition, with the other being Maxine Hall Health Center, Role noted. She stated that the clinic "embodies the civil-rights era vision of what a safety net, community-based center can be.

Operating on a budget of \$2.7 million, the Women's Community Clinic receives money from foundations, government grants, fees for clinical services, in-kind services and individual contributors.

The Women's Community Clinic is part of the Tides foundation, which works with individuals and organizations to provide financial and management solutions that work to improve a number of issues, including economic disparity and AIDS treatment and prevention.

The clinic is located at 1833 Fillmore St, San Francisco, CA 94115. For more information about the Women's Community Clinic, call 415.379.7800.

CLINIC SERVICES

We provide accessible and affordable services to women, the transgender and gender variant community, and girls age 12 and older who live in San Francisco, San Mateo, Alameda, or Marin County and either:

- Have no health insurance;
- Have inadequate health insurance; or
- Need confidentiality from someone who shares their insurance policy.

Our clients come from all walks of life, but many are low-income and face barriers to accessing health care. 95 percent of our clients are uninsured.

Nonprofit News

LHT — SF landmark theater presents award-winning performances



[Above]: Artistic Director Anthony Jones has brought award-winning performances to the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre.
[Below]: A rapt audience attends a reading of "Detroit 67." Photos via lhtsf.org and blog.lhtsf.org.

By **Lindsay Adams**

Steven Anthony Jones is a believer in magic.

"I always say that people that work in the theatre are the last magicians. We perform magic," Jones declared.

Having worked his entire professional life — spanning 40 years — in American theatre, Jones is still under the spell of what he calls an exciting,

an active member of the Bay Area theatre community for 30 years — stepped forward in 2011 and assumed his current title of Artistic Director.

"The primary reason I stepped in was I that I did not want to see the theatre close," Jones explained about his decision to take on the responsibility. "We are moving the theater toward stability and away from crisis."

cess of the program, LHT anticipates 16 to 18 readings, expanding the venues to include the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the Brava Theatre Center, and Oakland's Eastside Arts Alliance.

The readings, which are free to the public, are beneficial to both the audience and the LHT Company. With its no-cost admission, BATA is a way to bring theatre to a wider range of people and expose them to an art form that they might not necessarily have the means or enough interest to see. In return, the readings serve as an inspiration for Jones, who believes that they help him to identify which plays should be brought into full production. As the artistic director, Jones is constantly on the lookout for new material.

"We receive 2-5 submissions weekly, which I and other [company members] read and review. I'm constantly being introduced to new people. I keep up with New York theater. I keep up with theater in the Bay Area. I recently saw "Follow Me to Nellie's" at Cal State East Bay," Jones said, when listing how he gets ideas for new productions.

LHT's core mission is to promote the performing arts, and, in the process, present plays by America's foremost African-American and multicultural playwrights. The company has produced over 130 plays, including West Coast and world premiers.

"We're named after the playwright Lorraine Hansberry, who wrote the famous "Raisin in the Sun," Jones stated. "We emphasize the work of African American playwrights. We're looking for either the most excit-



dynamic art form. "The theatre is different from television and movies in the way that we tell a story," he said. "As humans, we all love a story and a story that says things about our lives and the human condition."

Jones is the artistic director of the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre — LHT — Northern California's premier African American theatre. Named after the first African American playwright to have a play produced on Broadway, the theater was founded in 1981 by the late Stanley E. Williams — founding artistic director — and the late Quentin Easter — founding executive director. After both directors passed away, Jones — who was already closely involved with LHT and had been

With LHT in the midst of its 33rd season, Jones, with the help of the rest of the company, is living up to his word. One of LHT's most successful projects, Bringing the Arts to the Audience — BATA — has not only enabled their grant to be renewed, but also increased their audiences. BATA is the theater's series of staged readings presented by the LHT actors.

In its previous season, LHT performed 12 different readings, including readings at the Museum of the African Diaspora — MoAD; the African American Art and Culture Complex — AAACC; the Eastbay Center for the Performing Arts in Richmond; the Oakland School for the Arts; and the Joyce Gordon Gallery.

This season, due to the suc-

ing young and new writer or a well-established writer from early theater."

LHT's schedule for its 33rd season is already booked for the following presentations in 2014:

1. "Storefront Church," by John Patrick Shanley; Directed by Joy Carlin, featuring Carl Lumbly [Until Jan. 11]
San Francisco Playhouse
450 Post Street, San Francisco
2. "The House That Will Not Stand, by Marcus Gardley
Directed by Patricia McGregor, featuring S. Epatha Merkerson
Jan. 31 — March 16
Berkeley Repertory Theatre
Thrust Stage, 2025 Addison Street, Berkeley
3. "Fences," by August Wilson
Directed by Derrick Sanders
April 10 — May 4
Marin Theatre Company
397 Miller Avenue, Mill Valley
4. "The Suit," based on "The Suit" by Can Themba, Mthobisi Mutlootse, and Barney Simon
Direction, Adaptation, & Music by Peter Brook, Marie Hélène Estienne, Franck Krawczyk
Apr il 23 — May 18
American Conservatory Theatre — A.C.T.
415 Geary St., San Francisco
5. "Pen/Man/Ship" by Christina Anderson
Directed by Ryan Guzzo Purcell
May 21 — June 15
Magic Theatre, Fort Mason Center, Bldg. D, 3rd Fl., San Francisco

LHT currently has an office location at 777 Jones St. in San Francisco, but will be making 950 Market St. their permanent home by 2018.

"We are thriving and look forward to our future in Oakland and the San Francisco Bay Area. It's an exciting place to be doing theater," declared Jones.

Yes, Jones is a believer in magic. With the recent and anticipated success of the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, he may just be right!

More information about the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre can be found at www.lhtsf.org.

Nonprofit News

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According to Lehman, much of SDA's work centers on housing displacement of seniors. "People are getting pushed out of housing in a number of ways," she said. "Evictions are a big part of it, or landlords will harass them until they leave."

Some seniors have used SDA's computer lab to document their experiences when fighting eviction, Lehman pointed out.

One such person was Joy Abounds, who used the lab in 2012 when she was running into problems with her landlord. "I was being harassed and they were trying to evict me," she said.

Abounds used the computer lab to send documents to her landlord's lawyer. "They allowed me to use their computers on a regular basis," she stated. "I did the printing, the faxing, and writing letters there at their facility. I was in there every single day writing letters. When you don't have money, you can't afford an attorney."

If it weren't for Senior and Disability Action, she would be homeless, Abounds added. "I would be on the street! I am a single woman. I have no family. I'm a senior, and I'm disabled, and I've lived in my apartment for 20 years."

Abounds emphasized that she does what she can to help Senior and Disability Action, since it helped her. "Because the organization did so much for me, I want to give back," she said. "I don't want to forget that they did a lot for me."

"Housing is a big issue for the organization to address," Abounds added. "A lot of people are faced with these problems, other than myself. They were very empathetic to my circumstances of what was going on in my life. As soon as I walked in, they said, 'Oh, go do it.' They help a lot of seniors."

Abounds further noted, "They are all about raising the bar for seniors and disability people.



Tony Robles, SDA housing organizing director. Photo by Breana Rae Flores.

I'm very impressed with what they do. Anything that affects the lives of a senior or people with disabilities, they are there. They advocate for poor people. There's a lot of us around."

According to Lehman, SDA represents the interests of seniors and people with disabilities at City Hall and community forums. SDA also works to ensure that transportation dollars from the city are being allocated in a way that helps seniors and people with disabilities.

"We're supporting a charter amendment working with the Board of Supervisors to bring in funding for an equitable transportation system," Lehman said.

Additionally, SDA is looking at the Affordable Care Act, which presents a number of challenges for seniors and people with disabilities. It has also worked on the California Domestic Workers Bill of Rights.

SDA works with many other community organizations to explore policy changes, including the following:

- Housing Rights Committee
- South of Market Community Action
- Aging and Disability Resource Center
- API Legal Outreach
- ARC San Francisco
- California Alliance of Retired

Americans —CARA

- In-Home Supportive Services Consortium — IHSS
- Independent Living Resource Center
- Jobs with Justice

SDA also provides the Senior and Disability Survival School — with classes about community resources available to seniors and people with disabilities, how they can tap into those resources, and information about disability rights and advocacy.

SDA also maintains the Senior and Disability University — with housing and community organizing classes about issues that affect the senior and disability communities.

In October 2013, the Senior and Disability University held a rally in partnership with the Bill Sorro Housing Program — BISHOP; the Housing Rights Committee; SOMA Time; and the Living Ain't Easy Walk of Shame. The purpose was to draw attention to the rise in evictions and rents in San Francisco, according to Tony Robles, the SDA housing organizing director.

"Evictions in general are reaching epidemic proportions," Robles said. "Seniors are particularly vulnerable because they have been in these units the longest."

Robles pointed out that San

Francisco has some of the highest rents in the country, which is especially difficult for seniors, who are on fixed incomes and Social Security. "It's a major crisis, and seniors are getting hit the hardest," he said. "They're getting hit very hard."

As a writer and storyteller, Robles has published two children's books with stories about housing and gentrification in San Francisco. In 2011, he was nominated for the Pushcart Literary Award for his story, "In My Country." He also runs POOR Magazine, which focuses on the criminalization of poverty. His work experience includes working with tenants through the Mission SRO Collaborative.

Lenny Reiter, 77, has been a volunteer with Senior and Disability Action for 20 years. He currently helps with the organization's newsletter and also teaches in the computer room.

"It's very enjoyable volunteering there," Reiter said. "The people are very pleasant and very considerate, too. They help everybody. It's just very pleasant to be there and helping them. They contribute so much politically and personally to seniors and disabled people. They are always helping seniors and people with disabilities solve their problems. They're a very good organization."

"I think it's so important for different communities to work together," Lehman summarized. "There's just so much more work we need to do. We're only going to get it done if we do it together."

Those who are interested in becoming involved with Senior and Disability Action can fill out an application on the organization's website, www.sdaction.org. Membership is \$20 a year, or according to an individual's means.

Information can also be obtained by sending an email to info@sdaction.org, or by calling 415.546.1333.

MarketPlace

Lindsay Adams — Writer
lindsaychristineadams@gmail.com

Jennie Butler —
Writer & Photographer
jrosebutz@gmail.com

Ivonne Calderon — Designer
IvonneC88@gmail.com

Joe D'Arcy — Designer
joedarcy1@gmail.com

Sam Felsing — Writer
samfelsing@hotmail.com

Thomas Figg-Hoblyn — Writer
scooptfh@gmail.com

Leland Fox — Photographer
lelandfox2@gmail.com

Breana Rae Flores — Photographer
breanaf@sbcglobal.net

Michael Griffin — Photographer
michaelgriffinphotography@gmail.com

Claire Kirshner — Photographer
cgkirshner@gmail.com

Mike McCoy — Photographer
mmccoy912@aol.com

Julie (Gordon) McCoy — Writer
Juliegordon111@comcast.net

Frank Vaugn — Writer
f.vaugn@comcast.net