

PORTALS Partnership Means New HOPE for Homeless People Living with Mental Illness

Project emphasizes PORTALS' focus on recovery, housing, employment, and rehabilitation

PORTALS Mental Health Rehabilitation Services recently joined Los Angeles' Homeless Opportunity Providing Employment project – also known as LA's HOPE – which is a federally-funded initiative aimed at ending chronic homelessness in the next ten years. One of only five projects of its kind in the country, LA's HOPE has partnered with PORTALS to provide a model of service delivery that will support the needs of individuals with mental illness.

"There is a tremendous need for services that address the unique needs of homeless individuals who suffer from mental illness," said

ness, according to Siri Khalsa of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA).

LAHSA estimates that of the approximately 80,000 men, women and children that are homeless on any given night in Los Angeles County, about one in ten are chronically homeless.

"Chronically homeless individuals are those thought of as the hardcore homeless," Khalsa said. "They have been homeless for a year or more, or have cycled through homelessness at least four times within the last three years, and suffer from a physical or mental disability, including substance abuse."



Low-income individuals who cannot afford mental health treatment are more susceptible to prolonged homelessness, hospitalization and incarceration. Comprehensive services, like Portals AB2034, can reduce recidivism to less than two percent.

Once enrolled in PORTALS' AB 2034, participants will be provided with permanent housing, vocational development and a comprehensive mental health system of care as the three primary tools for successful recovery.

Jim Balla, President and CEO of PORTALS. "Being a part of LA's HOPE allows us to educate the public about these needs and to reach out to some of the most vulnerable members of our society."

The \$3.9 million in federal funding for LA's HOPE is one of several new efforts by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to address the issues of long-term homeless-

"These individuals are generally considered the hardest to serve," Khalsa added.

PORTALS is meeting the challenge head-on and will begin by enrolling 25 chronically homeless individuals with serious mental illness into its Homeless Case Management (AB2034).

Once enrolled, participants will be provided with permanent housing, vocational development

and a comprehensive mental health system of care as the three primary tools for successful recovery.

The confluence of services in the Homeless Case Management (AB 2034) program is designed to help members make the kinds of long-term life changes that will keep them from returning to the streets.

LA's HOPE is a multi-agency collaborative made up of POR-

TALS Mental Health Rehabilitation Service and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority; Shelter Partnership, Inc.; Goodwill Industries of Southern California; San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Center; and South Central Health and Rehabilitation Program.

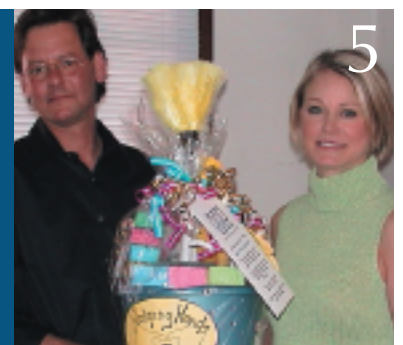
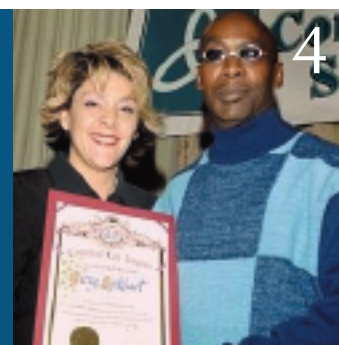
For more information on LA's HOPE, please call (213) 351-0425.

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Message from the President & CEO



Jim Balla

As PORTALS approaches the celebration of its 50th anniversary of providing quality mental health care in L.A. County, we are mindful of the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead of us.

The current state and local budget crisis continues to threaten the mental health delivery system and its services to the homeless and mentally ill. While the final impact of anticipated cuts will not be known for some time, PORTALS must continue expanding its sources of revenue, paying particular attention to private sector philanthropic revenues.

Over the years, PORTALS has established an impressive internal strength by developing program and administrative infrastructures. The agency's future will be built on this important foundation as well as the strength of its staff, the quality of its programs and the leadership of its committed volunteers.

To guide the agency during the next three years, I am pleased to announce the presentation of PORTALS' Strategic Plan. The plan provides the direction the agency's leadership will take as we make important organizational decisions to successfully navigate in an environment of increasing demand for mental health services and for public and private sector resources.

The plan calls for the agency's leadership to reach out to institutions and individuals to build

constituency support and form collaborations that will generate financial support. This support will enable PORTALS to address the unmet program and facilities needs to help counter any cut in public funding.

The strategic plan establishes that mandate and creates the blueprint to make significant progress in the delivery of quality mental healthcare, while increasing the agency's important base of community support.

At the heart of our efforts, as has been true for nearly five decades, is the belief that persons with mental illness can and will recover to lead full and productive lives through the provision of supportive services that include mental health, employment and housing.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we wish to acknowledge the significant contributions of the taskforce – the Strategic Planning and Resource Committee (SPARC) – comprised of members of the Board of Directors and staff, plus many local business and community leaders. Their participation lead to a successful strategic planning effort. We also wish to acknowledge NPO Solutions, a manage-

ment consulting firm specializing in institutional planning in the nonprofit sector, and the leadership provided by Warren Riley and Gail Guglielmino.

As we approach our 50th year, our focus will remain on member services and our past legacy in pioneering the successful psychosocial rehabilitation model of mental health service that has been replicated throughout the country. PORTALS' continuum of care will not deviate from its proven methodology, incorporating best practices and outcome driven mental health services with housing and employment support to our members.

This edition of our newsletter is dedicated to our new vision and strategic direction, and fittingly features a new and revitalized format that reflects the commitment and energy of the organization.

In this issue you will be introduced to PORTALS' new housing director and will learn more about PORTALS' current philosophy and direction in growing its housing services. You will also learn about how we're addressing social enterprise by enhancing business opportunities and employment services through our expanded Workforce Unlimited program. Both housing and employment services are integral components within PORTALS' three-year Strategic Plan.

Sharing in the President's vision to provide services to the



chronically mentally ill, as presented in the New Freedom Commission on Mental Health Report released last July, our cover story features PORTALS' participation in the LA's Hope project, one of only five federally backed initiatives to address chronic homelessness.

Lastly, we will be sharing with you information on special events related to our 50-year Celebration, which will culminate with a gala in October of 2005. This celebration will recognize the five decades of accomplishments and the individuals and organizations that helped PORTALS to its prominent position today in the behavioral healthcare and mental health fields.

I hope that we can continue to count on your support in this time of fiscal challenge and unlimited possibility. I invite you to join in our commitment to ensure PORTALS' next 50 years are as innovative and successful as the past.

Thank you.

PORTALS Thanks the Members of its Strategic Planning and Resource Committee (SPARC)

Jayne Check, PORTALS Board of Directors
SPARC Co-Chair

Richard Dominguez, PORTALS Foundation Member
SPARC Co-Chair

Jim Balla, President & CEO, PORTALS

Chief Ron Banks, PORTALS Board of Directors

John Brekke, Ph.D., Professor of Social Work,
University of Southern California

Russell Chung, PORTALS Board of Directors

John Davis, Retired, Department of Mental Health

Mike Dunn, Executive Vice President,
Charles Dunn Company, Inc.

Cathy Finley, Vice President of Marketing, Guidance, Inc.

Jack Farrell, Service Coordinator, PORTALS

Farzaneh Johartchi, PORTALS, Board of Directors

Cindy Jones, Formerly with Trust Company of the West

Barbara Kekich, Esq., Board Chair, PORTALS Board of Directors

Cynthia Lundie, Dir. of Development & Communications, PORTALS

Peter Manzo, Executive Director, Center for Nonprofit Management

Laura Pancake, Director of Programs, PORTALS

Jim Smith, President, Ground Zero Advertising

Warren Riley, Principal, NPO Solutions

Gail Guglielmino, Principal, NPO Solutions

thank you

PORTALS Focuses on the Future with Three-Year Strategic Plan

The past few years have been an exciting time of growth for PORTALS. In addition to new and ever-expanding programs, the organization continues to earn high praise as a local leader in quality mental health services.

In order to maintain the upward trajectory, the PORTALS management team and its Board of Directors has recognized the need for a strategic plan that can continue to guide organizational leadership as the demand for mental health services grows and public sector funding dwindles. To that end, the organization launched efforts last fall to align its mission and vision with the needs and realities of the future.

The result is an impressive strategic plan for the next three years that focuses on member recovery through the integration of mental health, employment, and housing services. At the heart of PORTALS' work is the core

The result is an impressive strategic plan for the next three years that focuses on member recovery through the integration of mental health, employment and housing services.

belief that together these services can help individuals with mental illness improve the quality of their lives and live independently and productively in the community.

PORTALS Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2004-2007 was created using the Resource Development System planning model, a proven approach widely used in the non-profit sector. A special task force, the Strategic Planning and Resources Committee (SPARC), carried out the planning process with the assistance of professional management consultants from NPO Solutions. The task force was commissioned by the Board

of Directors and is comprised of members of the board, PORTALS staff, and local business and community leaders.

Over the past six months, SPARC members met for a series of five three-hour sessions, during which time they carefully laid out a blueprint for the agency's future. Following a thorough resource audit – a rigorous assessment of PORTALS' internal operations and of the optimal operating environment – a number of strategic actions were proposed to preserve thriving assets and respond to new

challenges. These recommendations were presented to the Board of Directors for review, discussion, and adoption as the new three-year plan.

With the support, excitement, and commitment of its staff and volunteer leadership, PORTALS is confident in its ability to reach the goals prescribed by this new strategic direction. We invite you to join in our renewed commitment to quality mental healthcare.



A New VISION at PORTALS

As part of the new strategic plan, PORTALS has redefined its vision to ensure that members receive supportive treatment, live in safe and affordable housing, and are productively employed. Here's what we see for the future:

- >> PORTALS envisions a world in which all persons with mental illness and serious emotional disturbance are able to recover and live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities.
- >> PORTALS envisions a comprehensive mental health system of care that is focused on recovery and wellness and facilitates the development of resilience to face life's challenges.
- >> PORTALS envisions closing the gap between research and practice, leading to state-of-the-art treatments, therapies, and medications.

Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2004-2007

To support its new strategic direction, PORTALS has set performance goals in 10 areas ranging from programs and funding to everyday operations. Anticipating continued program growth, PORTALS will focus on strengthening its infrastructure to expand, enhance, and integrate mental health, employment and housing services. PORTALS will increase its outreach to insure that programs are at capacity and cost-effective and address significant facilities needs. To raise visibility, a greater emphasis will be placed on building relationships with institutions and individuals that can provide financial support to carry the vision into reality. The following table provides an outline of the performance goals for the next three years.

Area	Strategic Goals
Existing Programs	To continue a tradition of providing excellent member-centered and family-focused services through a commitment of continuous improvement, use of evidence-based practices, outcomes, staff training and development and linguistic/cultural competency
Financial Soundness and Sustainability	To ensure the long-term financial soundness and sustainability of the agency by maximizing contracts, managing resources carefully, attracting new streams of revenue, and increasing the asset base by acquiring real estate and developing the PORTALS Foundation Endowment Fund
Board Leadership and Committees	To increase and strengthen the agency's volunteer leadership by attracting and engaging members from targeted industries and with specialized expertise to serve on the Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, Board of Governors and affiliated committees and task forces
Resource Development	To implement a comprehensive resource development strategy that systematically, effectively, and aggressively attracts individual and institutional constituents to support the important work of PORTALS
Organizational Development	To devote organizational resources – on a systemic and sustained basis – to fully develop staff through training and professional development initiatives
Facilities	To upgrade the agency's facilities to promote the delivery of high-quality services and to create the capacity for expansion in the future
Social Enterprise	To expand the agency's social enterprise operations – including Workforce Unlimited and other promising and appropriate services – that create work for its members, foster strategic alliances, elevate the agency's visibility, and produce a positive social and economic return on investment
New Programs	To identify and pursue opportunities for new programs consistent with the agency's mission to meet emerging community needs
Communications	To raise the public's awareness of PORTALS and its positive impact on the lives of the members served
Knowledge Development and Dissemination	To expand the knowledge base about effective mental health services and disseminate important findings

Board Member Profile: Barbara Kekich

Barbara Kekich's relationship with PORTALS goes back to the late sixties when she joined the organization as a VISTA volunteer. Today, she is the Chair of PORTALS' Board of Directors and has served on the governing body since 1998. A respected litigation attorney with the firm of Davis & Fox, Ms. Kekich has been admitted to the U. S. District Court, Central and Southern Districts of California; U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit; and U.S. Supreme Court. What makes such an accomplished attorney devote her time and energy to mental health services? We asked her to find out:



Q: Why did you join PORTALS' board, and what fuels your continued participation?

A: I joined the board because I wanted to get re-involved in the field of mental health. I find it very rewarding to work with the enthusiastic and dedicated staff that works here. It's quite a different experience for me than my daily work as a litigation attorney. I feel like I'm making a contribution to something that really makes an important difference to people, and that makes me feel good.

Q: As a lifelong Angeleno, what community issues are you most concerned about?

A: I am most concerned about the homeless issue and AIDS research and services. I see people on the streets that appear to be the kinds of members who were receiving services from PORTALS when I worked there in 1969 and 1970. As services for mental health were cut, this population just seemed to be thrown out on the streets. With the tremendous wealth that we see all around Los Angeles, it is shocking that the community has not been able to seriously address the issue.

AIDS services interest me because I believe this population,

like the mentally ill, is misunderstood and shunned by most of the general public and needs the support of caring individuals.

Q: What would you like to see PORTALS accomplish over the next three to five years?

A: I would like to see PORTALS become more visible so that we can begin to educate the public about the need for services and the benefits that both our members and the community gain by providing these services. I would also like to see PORTALS expand its housing services and develop some vehicle for maintaining contact with "graduates" of our programs so we can follow-up and see how they are doing.

Carmen Hill: Director of Housing



With its reinvigorated emphasis on supportive housing programs, PORTALS is proud to welcome its new Director of Housing, Carmen

Hill. Carmen brings with her more than 30 years of experience in real estate sales, financing, development and management. Prior to joining PORTALS, she developed the housing program for Tri-City Mental Health Center and her "Fresh Start" program is widely considered to be the model system for offering housing opportunities to people with mental illness.

Carmen will lead Doors to Dignity, PORTALS' new housing solution under its three-year plan (see page 3). In addition to managing PORTALS' housing inventory, she will develop new housing projects and work with landlords to secure housing for PORTALS members.

"I'm currently looking for 25 studio apartments in the Wilshire Center & Koreatown area," Carmen said. "We can guarantee rental income for single unit apartments or master-leased buildings."

To contact Carmen, email her at : CarmenH@portalshouse.org, or call (213) 639-2511.

Bruce Rosen: Social Enterprise Manager

Bruce Rosen, a consultant and social enterprise expert from the Center for Nonprofit Management, has joined the PORTALS team on a part-time basis to develop and manage new social enterprises aligned with the three-year plan.

Bruce has worked extensively with many L.A.-based nonprofits and co-authored the report *The Southern California Social Enterprise Initiative: An Initiative to Support Social Purpose Business*, which emphasizes the potential of nonprofit business enterprise in supporting job creation. PORTALS' Corporate Cookie and Workforce Unlimited programs are cited in the report as examples.

Bruce will focus on designing a new vocational services strategy that will empower members to make a transition from supportive jobs with PORTALS to competitive community-based employment. He is also leading the development of a new product for the Workforce Unlimited program targeted at owners of residential properties (see page 5).



"PORTALS has a wide range of members, with different skill sets and vocational interests. The challenge is developing a strategic continuum for social enterprise that will address all of their needs."

- Bruce Rosen

Bruce says that PORTALS has been an eye-opening experience. "Most nonprofits tend to serve rather homogeneous groups," he said. "But PORTALS has a wide range of members, from those who are highly challenged to those who need only limited assistance. The challenge is developing a strategic continuum for social enterprise that will benefit all of them."

The successful implementation of the new social enterprise solution is expected to attract funding that will allow PORTALS to hire staff to oversee the vocational services division fulltime.

To contact Bruce, email him at: BruceR@portalshouse.org.

From Recovery to Role Model: PORTALS' Gerry Lockhart Honored

The Association of Community Human Service Agencies (ACHSA), which represents nonprofit agencies providing child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice services, honors distinguished community leaders each year. This year, the ACHSA decided to recognize the accomplishments of some of the people who have been helped by its affiliated agencies, and who serve as examples to others. At its annual luncheon last fall, ACHSA honored PORTALS employee and former member Gerry Lockhart

as one of the five finalists for its first-ever Inspiration Award.

Gerry survived years of living on the streets, involvement with drugs and time spent in the criminal justice system before turning his life around. Today, he works as crew chief of the PORTALS' Workforce Unlimited Sidewalk Maintenance Crew, serving as trainer, mentor, and role model to more than 150 members. He has been an integral and indispensable part of the vocational training program since its inception and is credited with much of its success.



Ressie Roman (left), Mental Health Deputy for Supervisor Mike Antonovich, presents award to PORTALS employee Gerry Lockhart

Doors to Dignity Offers Members Foundation for Recovery

PORTALS' new Housing Director Carmen Hill has a unique way of describing the agency's residential program *Doors to Dignity*, part of PORTALS' focus on supported living as a tool for recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

"It's like driving school for housing," she says.

The description may sound a bit unusual, but as Hill continues, the analogy lines up perfectly. "It's virtually impossible to learn to drive a car unless you have access to a car," Hill explains. "You can't learn everything about driving a car just by reading about it. You have to get behind the wheel and give it a try. It's the same way with teaching people how to maintain an apartment."

Doors to Dignity makes use of

In addition to being provided with basic shelter, members are surrounded by a spectrum of services that teach skills that will lead to greater independence.

the "driving school" idea by providing homeless men and women recovering from both mental illness and substance abuse with an actual apartment to learn in. At the program's core are the larger goals of building self-esteem, fostering family reunification and social supports, teaching good tenant skills and encouraging self-sufficiency.

Doors to Dignity is sometimes referred to as "tenant college" because in addition to being provided with basic shelter, members

rounded by a spectrum of services that teach skills for greater independence. Members participate in workshops on topics like getting along with neighbors, cooking on a budget and managing money. When you add in mental health services, access to vocational opportunities and a setting that allows for setbacks, you have a strong environment for recovery.

While there is no limit to the amount of time members can stay in the program, the aim of



Dignity is to make members confident enough to move to permanent housing in a 1-2 year time-frame.

Doors to Dignity reflects the philosophy of PORTALS' new strategic direction, which recognizes housing as an essential part of mental health treatment and the basis for securing and sustaining employment.

PORTALS New Social Enterprise Initiative Offers *Helping Hands* to Property Owners

By putting the proper tools and knowledge into the hands of tenants, property owners can significantly lower the costs of maintenance calls for clogged sinks and toilets while, at the same time, providing a vocational opportunity for PORTALS' members.

That's the thinking behind PORTALS' latest social enterprise, the *Helping Hands* Tenant Welcome Basket, a renter gift basket containing useful tools for everyday apartment maintenance.

The concept for the basket came from PORTALS' SPARC member Cindy Jones, who along with her husband, owns and manages several residential properties. Jones says that routine maintenance calls for simple things - like clearing a stopped toilet or sink - are some of the most costly business expenses for landlords. The idea blends Jones' personal commitment to PORTALS' social enterprises with a product that will be valued by property owners and tenants alike.

Each welcome basket contains useful information for new tenants and 12 to 15 household items, including a bucket, sponges, batteries, kitchen towels, latex gloves, and other products that can assist tenants with day-to-day upkeep. At its center

is a plunger and proper instructions on how to clear various plumbing obstructions.

The welcome baskets will sell for \$25 apiece, with our profit being used to reinvest in this program and other PORTALS' social enterprises. The baskets will be primarily marketed to property managers.

"The *Helping Hands* Tenant Gift Basket can provide a real cost-savings tool for the managers and owners of residential rental property," says Bruce Rosen, PORTALS' Social Enterprise Manager. "The tenant gift contains many essential tools and products to keep an apartment in good repair, and by having the tenant address plumbing clogs immediately, you can prevent the more serious problem of water damage caused by overflow."

The baskets also provide valuable employment experience for PORTALS' members, who will be hired through Workforce

Unlimited to assemble the welcome baskets. Items will be artfully arranged in a 10-quart bucket and presented in a decorative wrapping of cellophane and ribbon. Information about

that the landlord is a caring and charitable individual," says Rosen. "This kind of good will gesture creates an environment that can lead to faster lease signings and strong tenant relations."



SPARC member Cindy Jones and PORTALS' new Social Enterprise Manager Bruce Rosen, display *Helping Hands* Tenant Welcome Basket.



PORTALS will be included in each basket to help property owners show that they are socially responsible members of the community.

"Placing a *Helping Hands* basket inside a vacant apartment lets prospective tenants know

In addition to *Helping Hands*, PORTALS' social enterprises provide other tailored services for apartment and office building owners including janitorial services, outdoor cleaning and maintenance, and grounds keeping.

Help Us Reach Our Goal!

The response to our year-end appeal this past winter has been tremendous! Thanks to the support of our donors – board members, volunteers, vendors, staff, and friends in the community – we've reached 55% of our fundraising goal for the current fiscal year which ends June 30, 2004. We still need your help to reach our goal!

You will have another opportunity to lend your support as we will be mailing our spring appeal letter this May. In it, you will meet one of our members whose transformative recovery was made possible, in part, by the generous contributions of our donors. Your support will help us ensure that the men and women we serve receive the support they need to lead independent and productive lives.

Thank you for supporting PORTALS!

Please take time this spring to establish a new or renewed commitment to PORTALS by making a special donation! Thank you!

PORTALS Recognizes First Federal Bank for its Generous Donations and Continued Support



Portals Board Chair Barbara Kekich (right) and Jim Balla, President & CEO, receive a \$5,000 check presented by Farzaneh Johartchi, Vice President at First Federal Bank and a member of Portals Board of Directors for over 7 years.

A Heartfelt 'Thank You' to our Donors

PORTALS invites you to meet some of the people and organizations that are ensuring that PORTALS' members receive mental health, housing, and employment services. The following list includes gifts made between July 1, 2003 and April 1, 2004.* Please join these special friends by making a generous gift to PORTALS today. Thank you to all of our donors!

Individuals

Ms. Tizebt Taye Alemayehu
 Ms. Diane Amenus
 Ms. Lynn Angel
 Ms. Sally Angel
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*While every attempt is made to be accurate in this listing, we apologize for any unintentional mistakes and hope that you will contact us for corrections.

Member Councils Give Voice to Member Views

The vision and experience of many specialists go into designing and implementing the programs that PORTALS offers its members. But the most valuable source of feedback is the members themselves. That is why it is part of PORTALS' philosophy to have members openly share in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of services through Member Councils.



Member Councils function as advisory groups, focusing on the quality of existing services, the need for new services, program events and other activities.

These councils also provide members, who might not otherwise have the chance, the opportunity to develop leadership skills and to participate actively in the decision-making process. Many members express a greater sense of ownership in their programs because they recognize that their opinions are valued and that their comments lead to constructive action.

Councils Plan 1st Annual Member Recognition Awards Ceremony

Celebrating Success! Opening One Door at a Time

Honoring our members' accomplishments over the past year.

Wednesday, May 12th, 2004

For more information, call (213) 639-2519

A Night of Magic and Wonder at Cirque du Soleil



It's a place where anything is possible, a world where life is rediscovered. . . As much as it may sound like PORTALS, we're actually talking about the magical land of Varekai, as featured in the new Cirque Du Soleil performance of the same name. PORTALS members and staff had the opportunity to see this breathtaking and imaginative production during the show's recent tour to Los Angeles, thanks to a generous donation of 175 tickets from the Cirque Du Soleil headquarters in Montreal.



Portals members and staff enjoy a magical night in Cirque du Soleil's Varekai

Member Spotlight: Daniel Noble

It's certainly not unusual to have butterflies in your stomach when making a presentation to friends or coworkers. But what happens when your fear of public speaking begins to interfere with your ability to do your job? Daniel Noble is a PORTALS member whose social anxiety disorder and depression often stood in the way of his personal and professional goals.



"I am happy to say that today I am sober and have remained out of the psych hospital for the longest time in over three years. I thank all of you for your help and I intend to get as much out of this program that I possibly can. I am grateful to Portals

for this opportunity to really change my life. Thank you."

Born in Hollywood and raised in the San Fernando Valley, 44-year-old Daniel always had ambitious plans, despite his suspicions from childhood that he was somehow "different." His youth featured several auspicious accomplishments, including a NASA internship, obtaining his pilot's license at age 19 and admission into UCLA as a pre-dental major. But when faced with a class assignment that included speaking to a group, he was unable to move beyond his fear, dropped out of school and entered the work force.

His strong skills in math, science and computers helped him gain a variety of professional positions, but each ultimately ended when he was called to lead meetings and make presentations. Recognizing a pattern, at age 30 he finally looked to counseling for guidance. But by that time he had also developed a drinking problem. Over the next 12 years, Daniel was in and out of institutions and occasionally homeless.

He eventually found hope and help thanks to intervention by PORTALS team member Victoria Onwualu. Here, in his own words, is Daniel's story of recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration:

"When I met Victoria at the Hollywood Hospital in Van Nuys for the first time, I saw her only as a person who could help get me out of the hospital for yet another time. Upon discharge, I was transported to the ACT program where the consent for services form was given to me to sign with a careful explanation from Victoria: 'Daniel, I cannot change you, I can only provide you support and a means to turn your life around. But change will have to come from you.'

"I didn't think about what I signed or her words. I was focused on the hotel room that was provided to me and on getting back to my room without anyone telling me what to do. I did, however, take advantage of the break-

fast and lunch that was being provided by the program. Within two to three weeks of my hospital discharge, when my check for the month of May came, I stopped going to the ACT office. Within days my money was gone and I had overdosed on all of my medication in another futile suicide attempt. I was then admitted to Ingleside Hospital."

"At Ingleside Hospital I was very surprised to see Victoria show up because I had not contacted her. Once again, without any blame, she still gave me hope and encouragement and asked that I allow my team to help me. When I came back this time, I was ready for change. I willingly turned over my SSI checks to the team to help me manage my money and also made a commitment to treatment. Here I am today ready to move into my own apartment after a long battle with homelessness and mental illness."

"Initially, there were times

when I considered leaving the program, but because of the team's understanding, and Victoria's compassion and problem-solving skills, I stayed. I am happy to say that today I am sober and have now remained out of the psych hospital for the longest time in over three years. I thank all of you for your help and I intend to get as much out of this program that I possibly can. I am grateful to Portals for this opportunity to really change my life. Thank you."

Daniel has been a member of PORTALS for two years and lives at Park View Apartments, PORTALS' newest independent living facility. He currently works for the Mental Health Association of Los Angeles County and is doing what he once thought he never could: leading and participating in group meetings at PORTALS ACT program.

Still ambitious and driven, he is in the process of securing financial aid that will allow him to return to college for his paralegal certificate. He would like to one day pass the Bar Exam, practice law and combine legal work with mental health advocacy. Daniel was also recently reunited with his parents, his college-aged twin daughters and other members of his extended family. He is looking forward to spending more time with them.

PORTALS Prepares to Celebrate in 2005!

Many people dread turning 50. At PORTALS, we couldn't be happier to celebrate half a century of outstanding services that mean a better quality of life for thousands of men and women recovering from mental illness.

Among the most notable events marking our five decades of service will be the 50th Anniversary Gala scheduled for October 2005. The Gala will celebrate the legacy of PORTALS from its beginning as a halfway house for mentally disabled veterans of World War II, to the multi-location agency it is today, focused on providing services in mental health, housing and employment to individuals from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

To throw a party worthy of such a history requires a lot of planning and preparation. PORTALS invites you to take an active part in the festivities and is looking for volunteers who are interested in serving on the 50th anniversary planning committee, or in helping out in other ways. We invite you to call Cynthia Lundie, PORTALS Director of Development and Communications, at (213) 639-2519 to learn more about opportunities that are available.

It is an exciting time for reflecting on the past, acknowledging the present and looking to the future. We hope that everyone will join in as we celebrate this important milestone in PORTALS' history!

From the Editor

If you've enjoyed PORTALS' quarterly newsletter in the past, you've probably noticed a number of changes in this edition. Inspired by our new three-year plan, we felt that our renewed focus and direction deserved to be reflected in the pages of our newsletter. In addition to the new name PATHWAYS – which recognizes the journey that our members make on the road to recovery – we've expanded our size to include more articles and images, organized stories around specific topics and created a whole new look and feel through a redesigned, four-color layout. Each of these changes was made as part of our commitment to sharing the ongoing success of the agency with our friends, donors and members. We would love to hear your feedback on the new look of our publication and we look forward to sharing our latest news with you this summer.

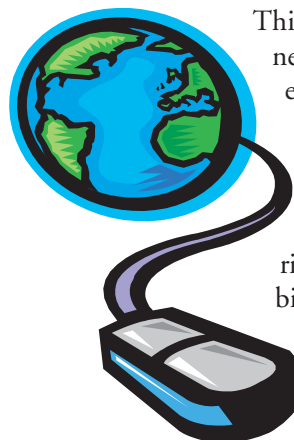
Sincerely,

Cynthia Lundie
Director of Development &
Communications



You can help PORTALS prepare for its 50th Anniversary! We're looking for volunteers who can lend their time, talents and energy to help us plan and carry out our gala event. If you are interested, please call Cynthia Lundie, PORTALS Director of Development and Communications at (213) 639-2519.

PORTALS Online



This May, PORTALS will launch its newly designed website featuring updated program information, news and events, donation opportunities and links to community resources. Join us online at www.PortalsHouse.org to see inspiring member success stories, more information about our rehabilitation services and opportunities to lend your support.



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We would love to hear from you. Please address your comments to PORTALS' communications and resource development departments at: 679 S. New Hampshire Ave., 5th Floor, Los Angeles, California 90005-1355.

If this publication has reached you in error and you wish to be removed from our mailing list, please call Cynthia Lundie at (213) 639-2519.

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