

## Family Treatment & Recovery Services Division Heals Lives and Strengthens the Community

Vicki will never forget the worst day of her life: "I came home and found Child Welfare Services waiting for me and watched as they took my children away."

Through her tears, Vicki was devastated and shocked, but she shouldn't have been. As a 28-year-old mother of two young children, she had been abusing drugs for a decade. She had recently become addicted to methamphetamine and her life was spiraling out of control.

Looking back six years later, Vicki says losing her children was the best thing that could have happened. After her children were put in foster care, she knew she had to change. Fortunately, she found her way to Vista Hill and spent two years turning her life around thanks to the remarkable array of services provided by the Family Treatment and Recovery Services division.

Vicki's story is a good example of just how critical it is to provide multiple services in addressing the issues facing substance-abusing mothers and their families. She first entered the Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center, which helped her get clean and taught her parenting skills she had never developed. She learned about health and nutrition and was equipped with vocational skills to train her for the job market. She then entered the division's Incredible Families program, which

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## Gayle and Tom Allen's Passion for Vista Hill Leads to Decades of Hands-On Involvement

If you ever wondered how to help a non-profit organization whose cause you believe in, just look at Gayle and Tom Allen's passionate involvement with Vista Hill, and you will learn everything you need to know.

The Allens' relationship with Vista Hill is truly something special. For nearly 25 years they have not only been generous donors, they have volunteered countless hours serving on the Friends of Vista Hill Board and the Vista Hill Advisory Board, chairing the annual gala and serving on numerous committees.

They've also attracted others to become involved with Vista Hill. They persuaded their dentist to donate dental care to substance-abusing moms in the ParentCare programs, they've recruited corporate sponsors, and Gayle even leveraged her employer, Northern Trust, by using the company's employee matching donation program to maximize her contributions to Vista Hill.

If that wasn't enough, the Allens have accomplished something else that is truly unique: They actually helped create a partnership between Vista Hill and San Diego Police Department that is diverting hundreds of juvenile offenders each year into the Vista Hill Bridges Early Intervention program that helps



*Gayle and Tom Allen*

keep teens out of the juvenile detention system and on a safe path in life.

For all they have done, Tom and Gayle will receive Vista Hill's Ambassador Award at the gala October 14, along with co-honorees Barb and Charley Crew and Debra McGinty-Poteet and Larry Poteet.

"There are others who do much more for Vista Hill than Tom and I do, but we nevertheless are grateful to be recognized with the award along with our co-honorees who are tremendous supporters themselves," Gayle says. "This kind of recognition really serves to spotlight the kind of devotion Vista Hill inspires in its many supporters."

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# Gayle and Tom Allen *continued from page 1*

## So why are the Allens so devoted?

"There are many reasons Gayle and I love Vista Hill, but foremost is that they're doing critically important work in our community by helping people who face the most challenging problems possible," Tom says. "It is gratifying to help an organization we see making a transformational difference in the lives of thousands who struggle with substance abuse, mental illness and other disabilities."

That Gayle and Tom have been able to give so much time to Vista Hill is amazing, given that they raised two daughters and both had busy professional careers until retiring in the past few years. The two, who went to different high schools growing up in East County San Diego, met at a dance, began dating and were soon inseparable.

Gayle's career in financial services started with Home Federal Savings and Loan, and by the time she retired from Northern Trust in 2015, she had become one of the most successful and respected wealth advisors in the County. Tom was a brilliant Cornell-trained engineer who worked for IBM, Litton Industries and the Titan Corporation, compiling 14 patents along the way for manufacturing system innovations.

Their involvement with Vista Hill began almost by chance in the mid-1990s when Gayle called on the Development Department to outline the financial services her company offered. She was recruited to serve on Vista Hill's Trust and Estates Committee, and once she became aware of the organization's mission, she was hooked.

"What originally sparked my interest, and which is still my passion, was ParentCare and its amazing success in turning around the lives of addicted mothers who have had their children taken away," Gayle says. "Year in and year out, ParentCare moms' babies are born 100 percent drug-free

and these women are given the tools they need to turn their lives around. Imagine if the level of success of this program could be duplicated in every community across the country.

Tom became more involved when he started attending Vista Hill's galas with Gayle and then agreeing to join the Friends of Vista Hill Board, on which he has served for a decade. A highlight came several years ago when Tom, a Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (R.S.V.P.) member with the San Diego Police Department (SDPD), was on a ride-along with a patrol officer when they responded to a call about a convenience store theft.

"A 12-year-old boy was at risk of being prosecuted for theft that escalated into an assault in an incident that began with a stolen pack of gum." Tom recalls.

Aware that Vista Hill has a successful teen diversion program, Tom asked for a meeting with the SDPD Division Captain, and along with the Vista Hill Program Director Claudette Allen persuaded them to send young offenders through the Vista Hill diversion program as an alternative to juvenile hall and prosecution.

"Connecting Vista Hill and SDPD is one of the things I'm most proud of because it's been such a huge success and changed so many young lives," Tom says. "It's since been expanded to a second SDPD division and today we have 600 kids being diverted into the program each year, avoiding a criminal path."

Success stories like that are what motivate Gayle and Tom to remain actively engaged with Vista Hill, and they foresee many more years of involvement.

"Over the years we've been excited to see Vista Hill evolve into one of the most effective and important social service agencies in San Diego," Gayle says. "We've always been impressed with their dedicated, hardworking staff, their integrity and fiscal responsibility. Their unique ability to combine compassion, expertise and innovation in helping our community's hardest-to-serve residents is truly remarkable."

Gayle adds, "Making a donation to an organization like Vista Hill is critical to its continued success and seeing the results of your efforts beyond writing a check is very gratifying and rewarding. We encourage everyone to become a Vista Hill Ambassador."



*Ambassador Honorees: (L to R) Charley and Barb Crew; Larry Poteet and Debra McGinty Poteet; Gayle and Tom Allen.*

## Honoring Jim Brown & Vista Hill's 60th Anniversary

In honor of Vista Hill's 60th Anniversary and Jim Brown's retirement from the Vista Hill Board where he served for over two decades, an American flag which has flown over the Capitol Building in Washington D.C. is now flying in front of Vista Hill's Main Office. A new flagpole has been erected, and at its base are special bricks. You are invited to join the celebration by dedicating a brick to a friend or loved one. Small bricks are \$250; larger bricks are \$500. Please contact Rachel Peniche 858.514.5151 or [rpeniche@vistahill.org](mailto:rpeniche@vistahill.org) for more information.



## Family Treatment & Recovery Services *continued from page 1*

provided her with mental health and support services that eventually enabled her to get her children back nine months after they were taken. She then was able to use the pre-school and childcare services of the Lipinsky Therapeutic Learning Center as she continued to get her life back on track.

Today, Vicki's life could not be more transformed. She is now employed by Vista Hill as a parent partner for Incredible Families, has given birth to another daughter and is confident she has a great future ahead of her.

"I'm truly a completely different person now," Vicki says with a huge smile. "Without Vista Hill and everything they did for me, I'm pretty sure I would be in jail or dead by now. They taught me how to be a mom and a woman. I learned how to be responsible and make healthy choices. I'm working and I couldn't be happier and more grateful to all the people at Vista Hill who supported me and showed me there was a much better way to live."

The help Vicki received represents only a portion of the wide array of services Vista Hill provides to 3,500 clients in need each year (see box below for a closer look at division's efforts). Family Treatment and Recovery Services has undergone significant growth over the past 10 years, partly because the needs of families in crisis continue to expand in San Diego, but also because Vista Hill has the expertise, experience and passion to create programs to address those needs.

"Vista Hill learned long ago that just helping people with their addiction isn't nearly enough," says Angela Rowe, Senior Director of Family Treatment & Recovery Services. "These are individuals and families whose problems are the result of many challenging issues, whether it's mental illness, domestic violence, poverty, homelessness or child abuse.

We've succeeded because we provide services that tackle as many of the problems parents face as possible. That's the only way to give them a fresh start and an opportunity to become productive, contributing members of society."

When that process is completed, it results in a community-wide impact that extends far beyond the children and parents whose lives are changed, according to Robert Dean, Vista Hill President and CEO.

"When people like Vicki turn their lives around—and you multiply that by thousands of similar stories—there is a powerful ripple effect," Dean says. "Millions in resources are saved when babies are born drug-free, when law enforcement isn't needed, and mental health services can be avoided. Revenue actually increases because these people are working and paying taxes. Vista Hill sees its programs as a compassionate investment that pays wonderful dividends for the families and results in a stronger and healthier community. And that benefits all of us."



*Top (L to R) Angela Rowe, Sr. Program Director; Orfa Gutierrez Rios, Program Manager CalWORKS; Bottom (L to R) Charley Aperule, Program Manager ParentCare East; Elle Black, Program Manager Incredible Families; Marisa Katzman, Program Manager PCM; Christina Gomez, Program Manager ParentCare Central*

## VH Family Treatment and Recovery Services Division

### **Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center (East) and ParentCare Family Recovery (Central)**

– The ParentCare Centers provide intensive, daily, alcohol and drug treatment to women and their families. Its extensive service array also includes parenting training, vocational training, therapeutic childcare, psychiatric care and more.

**Sober Living Apartments** – These apartments in Lemon Grove offer ParentCare families low-cost housing in a supportive recovery community.

**Incredible Families** – Provides mental health treatment and support services to foster children and families involved in Child Welfare Services. The program includes evidence-based parenting classes, supported visitations with a family meal, and trauma-informed therapy for the children.

**CalWORKS Case Management Services** – Supportive services for CalWORKs (welfare-to-work) participants to help them overcome alcohol and drug, and/or related problems, and transition to gainful employment.

**Perinatal Case Management (PCM)** – Provides county-wide case management services for "high risk" mothers and pregnant women, including connections to prenatal care, chemical dependency counseling, housing and other resources.

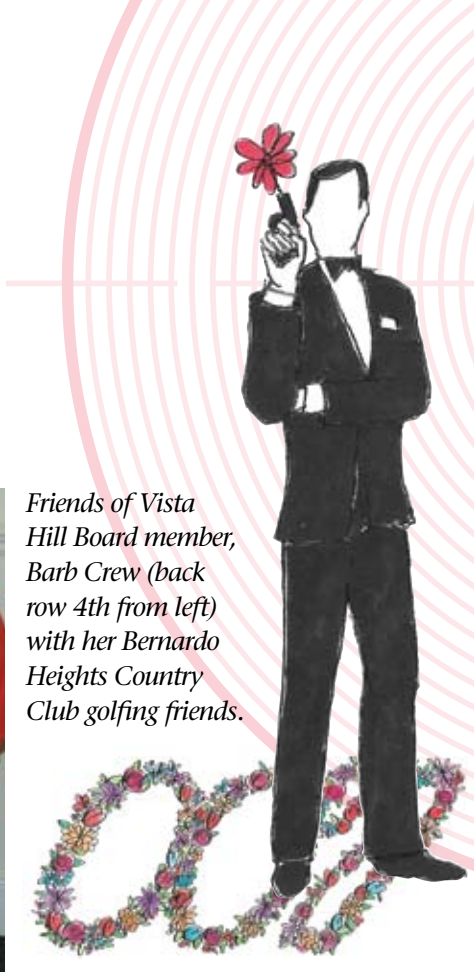
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# Double Oh Siete Fashion Show was a BONDing Experience



*Friends of Vista Hill Board member, Barb Crew (back row 4th from left) with her Bernardo Heights Country Club golfing friends.*



*(L to R) Barbie Spinazzola, Dee Ammon, Maureen Sage and Maggie Watkins*



*Hats off to these lovely ladies for never missing a Vista Hill Fashion Show!*



*The hardworking and fun loving Fashion Show Committee members with Rita Coolidge (center)*

Vista Hill's 26th Annual Fashion Show Luncheon was a great way to celebrate our 60th "Diamonds are Forever" Anniversary. The theme was a fusion of James Bond and Cinco de Mayo, hence the title "Double Oh Siete" and date, which was on Friday, May 5th.

Event Chair Kamaya Jane, along with Co-Chair Lora Sandroni, together with their "Bond Girls" (also known as the fabulous Fashion Show Committee), created quite the fiesta. Together the committee assembled 16 boutique vendors and over 30 opportunity drawing items. Our *GoldenEye* Honorary Chair Merrilee Neal, along with the Honorary Committee, supported the event by bringing friends and shopping 'til the Skyfalls. The *For Your Eyes Only* fashion show was

produced by Gretchen Bergman of Gretchen Productions.

Vista Hill's Advisory Board member and longtime friend, Carol LeBeau, flew in from her new home in West Virginia to share her story of resiliency and perseverance enduring many decades of depression.

President and CEO Robert Dean addressed the 500 attendees letting them know that "Vista Hill is midway through its 60th anniversary year acting like "Tomorrow Never Dies" and I am proud to report that we are as strong and stable an organization as ever. Our programs for children, teens, adults and families reached over 27,000 people throughout San Diego County last year. We provide care and services in the areas of mental health, substance use disorders and



*Mistress of Ceremonies Carole LeBeau and Fashion Show Chair Kamaya Jane*



*Stein Education Center "Bond Girls" and "Secret Agents" paraded on the runway*



*Four Generations: Shari Cairncross (center) with (L to R) Liz, Chloe and Gillian Copley*



*Fern Murphy, Jim Mulvaney and Barbara Brown are all longtime Vista Hill supporters.*



*Ingrid Hibben and Barbara Kjos are generous fashion show sponsors.*

intellectual and developmental disabilities. It's an unwavering commitment since 1957."

Throughout the event Vista Hill clients participated in several aspects of the day. ParentCare Family Recovery Center graduates and current clients promoted opportunity drawing tickets. These brave ladies, who have re-built their lives, stabilized their families, are now in school and training or working hard to become productive members of society, gave back to Vista Hill by volunteering at the fashion show.

The other two groups of developmentally and intellectually disabled students and adult clients from our Stein Education Center campus and adult program sites walked the

runway and enthusiastically waved to the guests. This is where we find the "ability" in each and they were thrilled to be a small part of the show. They certainly remind us to *Never Say Never Again!*

The highlight of the day was our special guest, two-time Grammy winner Rita Coolidge, who performed "Higher and Higher." She had recorded "All Time High," the theme song for the James Bond thriller "Octopussy," in 1983.

We were on a mission to exceed previous fashion show net profits to benefit all of Vista Hill's programs and services, and thanks to our sponsors, underwriters and many generous donors we proved *The World Is Not Enough* and raised a record \$100,000—Ole!

## Vista Hill Participates in NFAR's Race for Autism

For many years, Vista Hill's Stein Education Center has been proud to partner with the National Foundation for Autism Research (NFAR). NFAR's mission is to help in the development, expansion and support of autism programs and services that improve the quality of life for children and young adults with autism.

Each spring, Vista Hill participates in NFAR's largest fund (and fun!) raiser, the Race for Autism held in Balboa Park. This year's Race, held on March 25, attracted a record number of enthusiastic racers and walkers, including our own "Stein Puzzle Solvers" team. Led by Team Captain Christine Skurnac, this year's team was 78 members strong—our largest team to date!

Proceeds from the Race will benefit hundreds of local programs. Among these is Vista Hill's Stein Education Center (SEC), this year honored with both a community project grant and a teacher's grant from NFAR. These funds are supporting several exciting projects at SEC, including the activities of our newly launched Helping Hands Parent Support Group and the creation of a lovely meditation cubby in the Speech Therapy room. Thank you, NFAR, for all you do for children and families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders in San Diego!



## Vista Hill Welcomes New Board Member

Steven H. Wimmers, a top Certified Public Accountant (CPA) who owned a successful practice in San Diego for more than 25 years, has been appointed to the Vista Hill Board of Directors. Wimmers, who retired in 2016, had a long and distinguished career in San Diego that started in 1973 as a staff accountant with Touche Ross & Co. after he graduated cum laude from The Ohio State University. Wimmers also worked as controller for California Minicomputer Systems before he opened his practice in 1979. Wimmers was an active leader in his profession, serving as Chair

of the California Society of CPAs and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants Board of Directors. He received numerous honors, including a Distinguished Service award from the California Society of CPAs, Accountant Advocate of the Year by the Small Business Association, and he was named one of the Top 100 Most Influential Practitioners by CPA Magazine. He has also been active in his community, serving on the boards of Ocean Beach Community Center, the Ocean Beach Childcare Project and the Samaritan Center.



## Staff Members Honored by SDPD for Service to San Diego Teens

Two staff members in Vista Hill's Bridges Teen Recovery Center, Program Manager Patricia Ulloa and Diversion Coordinator Tonantzin LeGerrete, have been recognized by the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) for improving relations between SDPD and teens in the community. The two received a certificate of appreciation for the volunteer efforts Vista Hill provides in the community. Vista Hill's support for SDPD includes diversion programs such as Truancy Sweeps, Youth Court and curfew sweeps.

**Improved relations between SDPD and teens**



*Tonantzin LeGerrete with Patricia Ulloa*

## Senior Director Honored by County and Escondido Union School District

David Taylor, Ph.D., Senior Director of Vista Hill's School-Based and Integrated Behavioral Services, received two honors recently for his outstanding contributions to the community. Dr. Taylor was honored as Program Manager of the Year at the annual Behavioral Health Recognition Dinner in June. The Escondido Union School District recognized Taylor at its Season for Nonviolence Commemorative event this past spring for his contribution in establishing and expanding mental health services in Escondido schools. Through Dr. Taylor's leadership, access to mental health services for thousands of youth has been provided.



## Volunteer Fern Siegel Honored with County Behavioral Health Award

Fern Siegel, one of Vista Hill's longtime volunteers, received the prestigious Volunteer of the Year Award at the annual Behavioral Health Recognition Dinner in June. Siegel, who also received Vista Hill's Mental Health Advocate Award in 2016, is one of the founders of Hope Village/Chesed Home. She also provides support for Vista Hill's Stein Education Center. Siegel currently serves as the co-chair of the Behavioral Health Committee at Jewish Family Service and volunteers with a number of organizations that are addressing mental and behavioral health issues.





Friends of Vista Hill Foundation

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**Save the Date**



**Thursday, August 24, 2017**

Vista Hill Council on Mental Health & Hope Village San Diego/Chesed Home present a luncheon program: "The Role of Media in Portraying Mental Illness," with reporter Megan Tevrizian 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Hyatt Regency La Jolla  
Event Chair: Sheila Belinsky Weinstock

**Saturday, October 14, 2017**

Vista Hill's 28th Annual Gala 60th Anniversary Celebration—"Rise Up!" Ambassador Award Honorees: Gayle & Tom Allen, Barb & Charley Crew, Debra McGinty-Poteet & Larry Poteet Pendry Hotel  
Event Chair: Vicki Hamilton

For more information about sponsorship and underwriting opportunities or to contribute, **visit [www.vistahill.org](http://www.vistahill.org) or call Rachel Peniche 858.514.5151**

Please help us **celebrate** Vista Hill's **60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** **in 2017!**

