“We are so blessed to have TLC!”

A life-changing place for kids
When mothers succumb to substance abuse, among the most immediate and tragic victims are their children. As their moms struggle, the children's lives are turned upside down, they often live in fear and they are frequently separated from their family when the County’s Child Welfare Services intervene.

Fortunately, thanks to Vista Hill’s Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center, moms not only get the treatment they need to achieve sobriety, but there’s an important program just for their children that keeps the kids safe and healthy as their moms recover.

At first glance, with happy, smiling kids engaging in a variety of activities, ParentCare’s Lipinsky Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC) looks just like a traditional day care center. But it is so much more, according to Beth Reynolds, who has been TLC’s coordinator for the past 25 years (see story on page 3).

“TLC is a very special place because it was created and licensed specifically to address the many challenges that children of substance abusing mothers face,” Reynolds says. “Over the years, we’ve seen the lives of hundreds of youngsters transformed because of the supportive and nurturing environment we’ve created to help babies and toddlers develop much of what they have been deprived of, including self-esteem, socialization skills and improved learning readiness.”

TLC, which is available for children up to age 5, has locations at both ParentCare East in La Mesa and ParentCare Central in San Diego.

Many times TLC children have obstacles to overcome because they have had to endure child abuse, domestic violence and homelessness. Those children are identified through a screening and assessment process that uncovers the child’s needs and arranges for on-site professional counseling or therapy.

“Because their mom’s substance use disorder can cause neglect, the children we see at TLC often have difficulty with everything from speech and behavior to fine and gross motor skills,” Reynolds says. “The great thing about TLC is thanks to the early intervention we provide, most of the learning deficiencies we see can be addressed so that the kids are ready for kindergarten when they leave here.”

ParentCare moms are thrilled with TLC because they have access to low-cost child care in the same building in which they are receiving treatment. The facility is also available to ParentCare graduates who have gone on to jobs or school. TLC provides nutritious meals, exercise and a variety of educational and recreational programs, including yoga (see page 3).

“We are so blessed to have TLC available for our family,” says Meghan, a ParentCare mom (pictured on cover) who has had her daughter in the program since she was a toddler.

Vista Hill was honored at the Annual CHEERS Gala on October 25 as a 2019 National CHEERS Foundation grant recipient. The National Cheers Foundation believes in “Celebrating Life through Life’s Celebrations.” Their mission is to empower women to live life with vitality, free from the five primary health threats: heart disease, mental illness, cancer, osteoporosis and autoimmune diseases. They raise funds in support of organizations that endeavor to help women improve their lives through care, health, education, empowerment, research and support.

Vista Hill is proud to have received their largest grant to date of $20,000 to support the holistic mental health needs of the women in the ParentCare Family Recovery program. These funds allow Vista Hill to provide wellness programming such as yoga and stress education classes, as well as a new Zen garden, which are part of critical wrap-around services that significantly enhance the quality of life and help aid the women’s recovery. Cheers to CHEERS from all of us at Vista Hill!
Yoga Class for TLC Youngsters Provides Healthy and Healing Activity for Kids Facing Challenges

Child care centers can be chaotic and noisy places, but every Wednesday morning a peaceful calm descends upon the children at the Lipinsky Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC) as they enjoy 30 minutes of yoga instruction.

“It’s really amazing to see how children who are only two to five years old become so excited about learning the various yoga poses and deep breathing techniques,” says instructor Rebecca Cummings. “It’s become such a part of their lives they even practice it at home and some of them try to teach their parents the techniques.”

Yoga is particularly appropriate for TLC kids because many of them have experienced trauma while their moms struggled with substance abuse (see story on page 2).

“Because many of our TLC children have experienced abuse, witnessed domestic violence, been homeless or placed in foster homes, they are sometimes overwhelmed with a flood of negative memories of their lives before they were reunited with their moms,” says Cummings, who also teaches yoga to the moms. “Yoga can be a powerful tool in emotional regulation that helps the children move back and forth from feelings of fight or flight to rest and digest, so they can begin to feel a difference in their bodies and attain a healing focus that enhances their ability to relieve stress and learn.”

Cummings says in the six years she’s been teaching the TLC kids and moms, she’s seen how yoga helps create a consistent, safe and nurturing environment that enhances the recovery process.

TLC Manager Combines Expertise and Love to Help Give Children and Moms New Lives

To help a child recover from trauma and neglect while assisting that youngster’s mom get off drugs and become a caring parent could only be achieved by a person with immense skill and a deep passion for helping others.

Beth Reynolds not only possesses both, she’s been using them to change the lives of families for 27 years at ParentCare’s Lipinsky Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC), a specialized day care facility at Vista Hill’s Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center, a treatment program for women with substance abuse disorders.

Remarkably, Reynolds has even more impact because she has more than one job: She’s coordinator of the TLC, she teaches parenting classes, and she’s a licensed drug and alcohol counselor. Colleagues like Maxine Willey, her Lead Development Specialist, marvel at how much Reynolds is able to accomplish.

“Beth is not only a caring and nurturing person, she’s an amazingly talented and respected professional who is loved by both clients and staff,” Willey says. “Over the years, she has had an unbelievable impact in turning around the lives of hundreds of families by giving them the skills to escape addiction and neglect and become healthy contributing members of our community.”

Reynolds, who graduated from San Diego State University with a degree in child development, sometimes is amazed herself. She turned a job that started as an eight-hour-a-week, part-time teaching position into being the leader of a special facility that assists several dozen families in two different locations. Beth is also a mom herself to her two adopted children.

“I’ve always enjoyed working with children who have experienced turmoil, the kids others shied away from,” Reynolds says. “There’s no question what we do here is challenging. But when you see how much influence we can have on turning lives around, and see how appreciative the families are, it’s hard not to love what you do.”
As we look back on 2019, we are pleased to report that Vista Hill enjoyed another successful year of carrying out its mission of enhancing and improving the lives of 27,000 San Diego County residents through a wide variety of mental/behavioral health, educational and social services.

With Vista Hill ending the year with a surplus, our organization is on an extremely stable footing financially. And despite increasing minimum wage requirements and the end of our Incredible Families program, we were able to find new jobs for every staff member affected. Overall we are fortunate that we have been able to avoid layoffs throughout the organization.

While our numbers make Vista Hill the 23rd largest among all non-profits in the county, they don’t fully tell the story of the actual impact we are having on families and individuals of all ages.

Look a little deeper behind the statistics and you will see a mom with substance use disorder getting sober and being reunited with her children, and a developmentally disabled girl learning how to clothe and feed herself. You will see a teenage boy gain the skills to stay away from drugs and gangs, and a new mom learn how to deal with severe postpartum depression.

We are proud to say there are literally thousands of similar stories playing out in a similar fashion every day in the many programs we offer at Vista Hill, even as we are constantly looking to see how we can make our services even more effective and deliver them to more people.

Toward that end, we added a number of new programs last year that are already off to strong starts: SmartCare BHConnect is an innovative program that provides tele-health behavioral health services to those who have challenges engaging in traditional services. Another new program, ADAPT—Accessible Depression and Anxiety Peripartum Treatment—enables us to provide timely, convenient and holistic mental health treatment to individuals and family members who screen positive for peri or postpartum anxiety and/or depression.

We also added the Poway Unified School District to the many school districts for which we provide mental health treatment to individuals and family members who screen positive for peri or postpartum anxiety and/or depression.

In this issue we hope you’ll enjoy coverage of our Fashion Show and Mental Health Luncheon. These major events over the years—along with our Family FUNdraiser—have been extremely successful in raising money and increasing awareness of Vista Hill programs and services. We believe these “friend-making” events are a form of positive advertising that help keep Vista Hill’s name in the public eye with donors, influencers, volunteers and those who may need our services. We hope to see many of you at the next Family FUNdraiser this coming February 8 at the New Children’s Museum.

As we look forward to a prosperous 2020, we want to express our appreciation to the approximately 525 dedicated Vista Hill employees who tirelessly carry out the challenging work of serving our clients. We also want to thank our many donors, volunteers and board members whose contributions are vital to our success. Working together we are privileged to be involved achieving Vista Hill’s important mission of creating “Stronger Families . . . Brighter Futures.”

Cecil Steppe  Robert Dean
Chair  President & CEO

Combined Statement of Financial Position
At September 30, 2018 (in 000s)

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The financial information in this report represents a condensed version of fiscal year 2017-2018 audited financial statements. A complete set of audited financial statements, with accompanying notes and report from AKT LLP is available at Vista Hill’s main office.

Cecil Steppe (left) and Robert Dean, along with the entire board, work together to carry out Vista Hill’s mission.
Finding Yourself by Finding Community Highlighted at Mental Health Luncheon

This past October 16, approximately 200 guests attended the Vista Hill Council on Mental Health annual luncheon. This year’s speakers were Leah Smith and her husband, Dr. Joe Stramondo, featured in the documentary, Far From the Tree. The documentary was an adaptation of Andrew Solomon’s 2012 bestseller Far From the Tree: Parents, Children and the Search for Identity. The film, shown prior to the luncheon, is a deep dive into the lives of six compelling families, each coping with their own differences. Leah and Joe shared their experiences and taught us that no one has to “suffer” from a disability, but rather can find themselves by finding community. Thank you to the wonderful Council on Mental Health Committee, led by Chair Elyse Sollender, for its tremendous efforts to produce this very successful event. With gratitude, we applaud luncheon Presenting Sponsor Sheila Belinsky Weinstock, along with Premier Sponsors Elyse Sollender and Mark Lohkemper; Luncheon Sponsors Judy and Larry Belinsky and Phyllis and Dan Epstein; and Community Sponsor UC San Diego Health, for their support. The more than $60,000 raised at this event will benefit the critically needed behavioral health programs at Vista Hill. The luncheon was held in memory of Molly Belinsky, a young and wonderful friend to Vista Hill.

Vista Hill is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization
Some Vista Hill programs are funded all or in part by the County of San Diego, HHSA.
www.vistahill.org
Vista Hill’s 28th Annual Fashion Show Luncheon was one of the most successful in the history of the event, netting a fantastic $170,000 that will be used to support critically needed programs for more than 27,000 San Diego County residents each year.

The theme of this year’s show—chaired by Clarice Perkins—was “America’s Finest Fashion Show: A Salute to San Diego’s 250th Anniversary.” And quite the salute it was, as there were many highlights of the event attended by more than 400 guests at the Town and Country on May 31.

Guests were cheerfully greeted as they entered the hotel by clients from the Stein Education Center’s Adult Services program. After our guests shopped their way through the many boutique vendors, the program kicked off with a delicious lunch and opening remarks from Clarice.

CEO Robert Dean then shared with the audience that for more than 60 years Vista Hill has been providing important services to those most in need in our community: the children, teens, adults and families challenged by substance use disorders, mental health issues and intellectual and developmental disabilities. He highlighted the Vista Hill Bridges Teen Center and introduced a local family whose lives were positively impacted and improved by the wonderful services at the Teen Center.

A video told the story of Diana’s journey from addiction to recovery and highlighted her bright future and dream of becoming a doctor. Among the most emotional moments of the day was hearing from Diana’s father, Joel. He shared the impact these challenges had on their family, and how grateful they are that Bridges Teen Center was able to help put their family back together.

Then the fashion show, produced once again by Gretchen Bergman of Gretchen Productions, started off with a parade by the Stein Education Center’s Adult Services clients enthusiastically waving their San Diego kites made during their Art Therapy sessions. The kites, which showed off their favorite places in San Diego, were a wonderful lead-in to the tribute of the many sites, sounds and neighborhoods of our beautiful city.

Special thanks go to our “Beach” sponsors Lora and Bob Sandroni, The JMS Fund and Virginia Napierskie. We were deeply saddened by Virginia’s passing just weeks before the fashion show. Virginia had been a presenting sponsor of the fashion show for well over a decade and generously supported Vista Hill for nearly three decades. Thanks also to our two “Surf” sponsors and Friends of Vista Hill Board members Patti Holmes and Barb Crew. On top of that, “Barb Crew’s Crew” was nearly 70 friends strong attending the show.

We appreciate the help of all our amazing sponsors, underwriters and guests, this was truly the finest Fashion Show ever!
(from left): Sima Paradise, Muffy Walker, Patti Holmes, Jenn Buckner

Eliza Hamilton, Judy Burt, Vicki Hamilton and Sarah Kannenberg

Event Chair Clarice Perkins, Honorary Chair Arlene Esgate

Friends Dee Ammon, Connie Conard, Maggie Watkins, Donna Morgan

North San Diego County Alumnae of Pi Beta Phi Members with Barb Crew (center)

Bridges Teen Center (BTC) Program Manager Patricia Ulloa and BTC client Diana (center) pose with Diana’s family.

Jim Mulvaney and Lyndell Werling (in black) with Miss Rancho Bernardo, Mrs. California and Miss Teen Rancho Bernardo
Dear Friends,

You attend our events, contribute financially, volunteer your time, make in-kind donations and tell your friends and associates about our important work. We hope you know how much we appreciate all you do and how grateful we are for your loyalty and commitment. We thank and applaud YOU!

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sincerely apologize for any unintentional errors. Please feel free to notify
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Save the Date

**Vista Hill Family FUNdraiser**
“A Million Dreams”
Saturday, February 8, 2020 5:30 – 10:00 pm
The New Children’s Museum
**Co-Chairs:** Heidi Dorman and Kimberly and Lauren Rubidoux
**Honorary Chairs:** Mary Alice and Ron Brady

**Vista Hill Fashion Show**
“Be A Vision: Fashion in 2020”
Friday, May 8, 2020 10:00 am – 3:00 pm
Town and Country Hotel
**Chair:** Clarice Perkins
**Honorary Chair:** Arlene Esgate