

SHOUT OUT!



The Grand Prize winner this month was Sarah, DA (Sonora), “you are a great team player!”

Our second runner up was Stacie, Receptionist (Sonora), “thank you for being so kind and patient with our patients and for helping in medical and always having a smile”.

First runner-up was Marie, Receptionist (Sonora) “thank you for always making sure patients are checked in”.

From the Desk of

John Alexander
Executive Director

Social Work and what it means to MACT patients is the theme of this month’s newsletter. Take a look at the improved benefits MACT patients can receive if they are interested!

MARCH IS SOCIAL WORKERS MONTH

MACT is helping celebrate this year’s Social Work Month with the theme “The Time is Right for Social Work” to highlight how social workers have enriched our society for more than a century and how their services continue to be needed today. Our Native American Services (NAS) Department and our Behavioral Health Departments both provide services considered to be Social Work. Our goal is to have one NAS specialist and at least one behavioral health provider at each site to better serve our patients’ needs.

The services of these two wonderful departments became increasingly important during the Covid-19 pandemic. To this day, social workers continue to work on the frontlines throughout the pandemic, helping clients get the health care they need and helping loved ones overcome grief and loss.

Each day, MACT BH providers and NAS staff empower hundreds of Native Americans so they can live life to their fullest potential. Our staff members also work in communities and in politics to improve living conditions for all. During Social Work Month we urge you to learn more about our amazing professional staff, and thank the employees in your lives, and help support their chosen profession.

Our Native American Services (NAS) Department is pleased to announce TWO new members to serve you moving forward:

Lisa Schendel is a member of the Ohlone tribe in California, and has been serving the community since she was 15 years old. She began her career with MACT in September of 2019, where she started as a receptionist at one of our busiest sites. Lisa had to leave MACT for a short period of time while she battled a very serious health condition, but her inner strength and determination paid off and she returned to us in August of 2021. Recently she has been promoted to fill our Native American Services specialist position in Sonora. Lisa’s eyes sparkle and she smiles widely as she says “I feel so grateful to be finally working in this type of position, for the Native Americans.”

Collette Howard is the new Native American Services Case manager for the San Andreas office. She is a Native American descendent of the Mi Wuk tribe from the Murphys area. She is 5th generation Calaveras County born and raised. For the last four years she has been a full time student at Columbia College pursuing her education and working towards a degree in Nursing. In the spring she will be graduating from Columbia College with an Associate Degree in Social and Behavioral Science and will be continuing on with her educational goals. As part of the Native American Services team here at MACT, she will assist in supporting quality health care for our patients through the NAS program and all that it has to offer. She adds “I look forward to getting to know all our patients as I continue my career with the MACT Health Board.”

MACT's Behavioral Health Program Updates

MACT's behavioral health program has some exciting new changes. We have new counselors in Jackson and Sonora. Our goal is to do our best to meet the various and diverse mental health needs of the population of our beautiful mountain communities.

In Jackson, Christy Hobgood, ACSW has been with us since this summer and has specialized training in substance use counseling. Christy Hobgood has lived in Calaveras County since the age of five and been an active member of the Tri-County areas. She values the importance of honoring her roots and giving back to the communities she grew up in. "When a person leaves an encounter with someone, it is important to leave them in better condition than you found them". This is the heart behind Christy's personal and professional endeavors and why she is honored to become part of MACT team. Christy earned her MSW degree graduating with Honors through California State University Stanislaus. She has specialties in Addictions, Aggression Replacement Therapy, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

Cherie Morton, ACSW will be working at Sonora and Lone, providing mental health counseling. Cherie was born and raised in Sacramento, Ca and recently planted in Amador County in February 2019, Cherie accepted a clinician position with MACT Health in October 2021. After learning more about MACT Health, it did not take much time for Cherie to accept the incredible offer made to move forward in her professional life's endeavors with MACT Health. Cherie continues to challenge herself and is currently studying for her Law and Ethics to attain and finalize as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker next year.

Sunni Gessel is a Psychiatric nurse practitioner joining us in Sonora, and providing care in Lone and Mariposa once a month. Sunni will be prescribing medication for mental health disorders and comes to us with vast knowledge and skills. We are fortunate to have her.

Sunni Gessel is ANA certified as a PMHNP and licensed in CA as an Advanced Practice RN. Sunni has a Bachelors degree from the University of Washington in Psychology, a Bachelors of Science in Nursing from California State University Bakersfield and a Masters Degree in Nursing from Gonzaga University. She is a veteran of the United States Air Force and has been a local resident for over 4 years.

Sara Ray, LCSW
Behavioral Health Director



Christy
Hobgood,
ACSW

Cherie
Morton,
ACSW

Sunni Gessel,
Behavioral
Health Nurse
Practitioner

Kitchen Sink Stir-Fry

Ingredients:

- Bag of frozen stir-fry vegetables
- Wilting vegetables from the sitting on the counter or in the fridge
- ½ can of coconut milk
- 1 ½ tsp of curry paste or powder
- 1 tsp of olive oil
- Pepper, garlic, ginger (fresh is best!) to taste
- Add protein if you'd like
- Bag of frozen cauliflower rice



Instructions:

- Pre-heat oven to 450. Lightly oil pan, spread cauliflower evenly. Sprinkle pepper & garlic on top. Bake for 15 minutes, then flip to crisp other side. Once cooked, mash cauliflower to rice like consistency.
- Meanwhile, heat olive oil to medium-high heat, add vegetables. Once frozen veggies thawed, stir in fresh veggies, curry, coconut milk, and seasonings. Add baked protein to dish, if desired.
- Serve & feel satisfied those wilted vegetables got eaten!

Upcoming Events & Holidays

March 13

Daylight Savings

Move clocks forward one hour

March 17

St. Patrick's Day

Our offices will be open