New Vision At Next Step Shelter

Next Step Shelter fully converted into a housing focused, low barrier shelter in February 2017. Director of Homeless Services, Jason Espero, conceived of the idea of turning Next Step into a housing focused, low barrier shelter while he was participating in a Housing First boot camp training in the spring of 2016. Hawaii Community Foundation sponsored the Housing First boot camp training, which was facilitated by renowned international expert on homelessness, Iain De Jong. Only 8 nonprofits who serve the homeless were invited to participate in this exclusive training and the information that Jason obtained at the training proved to be a game changer for the Next Step Shelter.

Jason had a new vision for Next Step Shelter with a goal of placing more people into housing, and reducing the length of time a person is in Next Step Shelter. People experiencing homelessness are in a crisis, and Jason knew that Next Step Shelter needed to act with urgency in order to support these clients. With the full support of Waikiki Health’s CEO, Sheila Beckham, Next Step Shelter began making changes to its operation in the summer of 2016. Among the changes that went into effect immediately was modifying Next Step Shelter’s intake application by reducing it from 6 pages to 2 pages—removing about 20 questions from the application. Next Step Shelter also removed the intake requirement of having people submit an updated TB test with their application. By removing barriers to enter Next Step Shelter, the average time it took a person to be admitted into the shelter was reduced from 1 week to a couple of days.

Next Step Shelter staff understood that in order to build trust and rapport with clients, the shelter needed to shift its culture from being punitive to being more supportive, caring, and accommodating. As a result, Next Step Shelter reduced its rules from 7 pages to only 1 page. Also, Next Step changed its admissions packet by reducing it from 15 pages to 5 pages. In an effort to be more housing focused, Next Step Shelter wanted to ensure that rules strictly pertained to safety, sanitation, or housing needs.

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Letter From the CEO

Housing ASAP, involving eight homeless service providers, was an amazing experience over a 3-year period. As the CEO of a federally qualified community health center, my focus has been on medical care (including dental and behavioral health) with social service support. Though I’d overseen homeless service for many years, I did not have hands-on experience myself. A requirement for participation, however, was that the CEO/ED attend and participate in all meetings.

I was truly humbled by all the knowledge my colleagues from these 8 agencies possessed. I was very familiar with Jason Espero’s abilities and track record but I had no idea before being a part of Housing ASAP how comprehensive these services are; how many requirements must be simultaneously met to achieve housing first.

I am thankful for the experience to have made even a tiny difference and will forever count all of these experts as my friends.

Sheila Beckham, MPH
Chief Executive Officer, Waikiki Health

Youth Outreach Talks “Wahine Talk”

Waikiki Health’s Youth Outreach (YO!) is currently involved in an innovative pregnancy prevention program (ITP3) called “Wahine Talk,” funded through Texas A&M University and the Office of Adolescent Health. The program is being evaluated by the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and is progressing into year two. Here’s how the program works:

“Wahine Talk” is a technology-based program that addresses the shortfalls of other traditional teen pregnancy programs designed for homeless youth. Other programs ignored current technologies that are preferred by youth, such as texting; used outdated curriculum not relevant to street youth; used intimidating adults, rather than peer mentoring; and didn’t address the real and/or perceived financial benefit pregnancy offered street youth.

Our peer mentor at YO!, Courtney Fukuda, has been very successful at engaging participants through our Wahine Talk Instagram. “Imagine entering a place full of young teens who experienced some kind of trauma in their life. They’re going to be guarded and untrusting at first, but being their peer mentor is an amazing opportunity,” Courtney says. “They’ve got to get to know me, and see that I’m someone they can trust. They have someone close to their age they can connect with on a personal level, and that’s honestly something that should be strived for. Every teenager just wants to be heard and most importantly, understood.”

Additional program components include YO! services that meet the Wahine Talk participants’ basic needs, including nutritious meals, counseling, shelter assistance, hygiene facilities, educational and job training opportunities.

MISSION AND VISION

The mission of Waikiki Health is to provide quality medical and social services that are accessible and affordable for everyone, regardless of ability to pay. Waikiki Health provides compassionate healing and expert care that result in improved health and quality of life for all in our island community.

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Honoring the Legacy of Healthcare Giants

At Waikiki Health’s 50th Anniversary “Reach for the Stars” Fundraising Gala, we celebrated Healthcare Giants who blazed medical paths – each in his own way – to advance patients’ rights, healthcare quality, and medical education. All were active, dedicated WH Board members. Here is a quick look at the GIANTS:

Dr. Max Botticelli: Physician & Academic Medicine Pioneer

As a practicing physician, also a professor at the UH John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM), Dr. Botticelli influenced the education and training of generations of physicians in Hawaii. His leadership was central to the advancement in the quality of healthcare in the state because of the training offered at JABSOM and through partnerships with teaching hospitals. Nearly half of all practicing physicians in Hawaii were trained at the University of Hawaii’s medical school, including Dr. Kalauawa, our CMO. In 1996, Dr. Botticelli began serving as CEO of University Health Alliance (UHA).

Dr. Irwin Schatz: Courageous, Lone Critic of Tuskegee Study

Dr. Schatz joined the faculty of the University of Hawaii in 1975 and was the Chairman of Medicine and a professor at the JABSOM. Dr. Schatz was the only medical professional to protest the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment. His 1965 letter was ignored, but it was discovered in 1972 by an investigator, and publicized by “The Washington Star” and “The Wall Street Journal.” Discovery of Dr. Schatz’s letter helped frame a national debate over patients’ rights that generated new standards for research involving human subjects. In 2009, the Mayo Clinic recognized Dr. Schatz with a Distinguished Alumni Award.

Dr. Neal Winn: Co-founder of Waikiki Health

In 1967, Dr. Winn helped establish Waikiki Drug Clinic to tackle the community’s substance abuse challenges. With Dr. Winn as Director, the clinic evolved into Waikiki Health Center – now Waikiki Health. Dr. Winn’s co-founding of Waikiki Drug Clinic had a major impact on the state’s community health and substance abuse services, and influenced the establishment of Habilitar, a residential drug treatment program. For 23 years, Dr. Winn ran a successful medical practice at Kapi’olani Medical Center. He was a passionate advocate for patient safety and quality care. He also co-founded Ho’okele Personal Health Planners.

New Vision At Next Step Shelter

(Continued from page 1)

In the fall of 2016, Next Step Shelter converted into a 24 hour facility. Previously, Next Step Shelter would close daily at 8:30 am and reopen at 5:30 pm. By staying open all day, clients had more time and access to staff to get support with their housing needs. In February 2017, Next Step Shelter doubled the amount of Housing Navigators on the payroll from 2 personnel to 4 Housing Navigators. Housing Navigators started practicing a new model of case management called Recovery Oriented Housing Focused Case Management. This model helps more clients achieve fuller integration with the broader community, improves quality of life, enhances wellness, and promotes a sense that the future is brighter.

During the first 12 months of Next Step Shelter’s redesigned operation, total permanent housing placements increased by 36 percent, family permanent housing placements increased by 54 percent, and the length of time a person is in Next Step Shelter before being placed into permanent housing was reduced by 48 days compared to the previous 12 months.

Waikiki Health’s innovations at the Next Step Shelter has contributed significantly in Hawaii’s efforts to ending homelessness.
Mahalo to everyone who helped make our second annual National Health Center Week Wellness Fair at the Ohua Clinic on August 15th such a wonderful success.

Special thanks goes out to our generous sponsors who all provided $500 or $750 cash donations to participate including ‘Ohana Health Plan, UHA Health, HMSA, AlohaCare, UnitedHealthcare, Centene Corporation and Athena Health.

Other in-kind donations were provided by Jamba Juice (100 frozen smoothies), HTFCU (magnifying light readers), HDS (toothbrush kits) and Project Connect (free cell phones for eligible clients). A warm mahalo also goes out to our super-duper Waikiki Health staff of MAs, PSRs, care coordinators, nutrition specialists, HEIS/HIV team, smoking cessation team, M&D staff and leadership who provided the staffing for the wellness station activities and the event logistics support. Together, we made a difference in many people’s lives that day—helping others with compassionate healing and expert care—that’s what we do!

It’s Biki!
Honolulu’s New Bike Share Program

The Biki bike sharing program offers 100 stations with 1,000 bikes across Waikiki and central Honolulu, and Waikiki Health is offering a pilot program reimbursing staff for renting Biki bicycles during non-working hours, effective 8/1–10/31/2017.

The Hawaii Bicycling League is offering a Biki Bicycling Basics course to acquaint riders with Honolulu’s brand new bike sharing program.

During the two hour class, you will receive an overview of how the bikeshare program works, how to access the Biki bikes, pricing, bike safety tips, participation in an obstacle course with drills, and you’ll hit the open road with your Biki class.

During the “Bicycling Basics” or bike safety portion of the class, the importance of helmets is covered, along with tips on how to stay visible to motorists when biking. You’ll learn the “Rules of the Road”; cyclists are encouraged to consider themselves as operators of “human powered vehicles,” subject to the same laws as motorists.

Critical information about lane positioning is covered and some tips on how to be sure you are a safe distance from parked cars (3 ft.) and how to keep your eye out for drivers who may pull out suddenly or open their car door.

The workshops are free and are offered at various locations; to sign up for your class, go to https://www.hbl.org/bikibasics/. Or, for more information about bike laws in Honolulu, visit https://www.hbl.org/bikelaws/.

Next Step Launches Computer Training

Thanks to a $5,000 grant from Cooke Foundation, Ltd., Waikiki Health recently introduced a pilot program at Next Step Shelter – “Computer 101” – to help homeless job-seekers add to their marketable skills. Many adults who are homeless lack computer literacy; this entry-level program is expected to open up more employment opportunities for our homeless clients.

Waikiki Health contracted SuperGeeks to provide the “Computer 101” course four times, from August through December. Each course meets once a week for two hours and lasts for three weeks. The first course drew eight participants, who attended on August 2, 16 and 23. The trainer is SuperGeeks’ COG (Chief Operating Geek), Tim Caminos, who has provided trainings to other groups in the community.

Jason Espero, WH Director of Homeless Services, worked with the SuperGeeks trainer on the course curriculum, which includes: Class #1 - Overview of using a PC; backing up data; learning about the internet and safe surfing; Class #2 - How to send and receive email and documents, and document storage; Class #3 - Free software and how to use it, including free resume templates. Trainees receive a certificate of completion, their resume saved on a storage drive (USB) and a $10 Walmart gift card.
Twenty Waikiki Health Employees rallied at 6:45 am and walked 5.25 miles on May 20 through Waikiki to raise money for Hawaii’s charities. Staff enjoyed treats and beverages along the way. Some favorites were the fried rice, watermelon, musubi and passion juice. Team Waikiki Health raised $880! A big mahalo to our CEO, Sheila Beckham, for sponsoring the first 20 employees who signed up.

Waikiki Health’s Development Specialist Julia Davies received $5,500 from the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association for our participation in the 2017 Visitor Industry Charity Walk.

For the past few years, Rainbow Family 808, a nonprofit helping LGBTQ youth in our community, has brought a “Holiday in July” party to Youth Outreach. This year’s event was held on July 28, and the organization donated full turkey dinners with all the fixings, along with backpacks full of goodies and survival supplies. The CEO who runs Rainbow Family 808, Carolyn Martinez Golojuch, organizes the event annually with help from former Youth Outreach program Manager Carla Houser. Mahalo Rainbow Family 808!!

Two big truckloads of linens, pillows and hygiene care products were donated to Next Step Shelter by the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association’s (HLTA) Housekeeping Advisory Council. This year’s donors were Prince Waikiki, Hilton Hawaiian Village, Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort, Embassy Suites by Hilton Waikiki Beach Walk, Westin Moana Surfrider, Aston Waikiki Sunset, and ALSCO, a linens supply company. The linens will be used to cover shelter members’ cubicles, and to have fresh clean bedding and towels.

For the past 10 years, HLTA Housekeeping Advisory Council’s Community Services Chair, Mr. Gary Nushida, Executive Housekeeper at the Prince Waikiki, has coordinated the donation drive and delivered the items with his team to Waikiki Health service sites. WH applauds the work of Gary and his Prince Waikiki crew, and Next Step’s Paul Samiano, Garrett Koshiba, and Troy Moreno, who helped unload the items.

Mojo Barbershop and New Hope Oahu provided more than 30 haircuts and many gift bags to the residents at Next Step Shelter on August 20.