“A Time for Reflections”

2019-2020 Annual Report

Promoting stronger communities through mental wellness.
Dear Friends of CHAC,

This annual report’s theme of reflections suits both the season of Thanksgiving and my grateful look back at CHAC’s ongoing impact throughout my 37 years as a school board trustee. In the 47 years since three local moms decided around a kitchen table to form CHAC as a homegrown, community-supported mental health agency, CHAC has succeeded because at CHAC, improving the mental health of local students and families is personal, just as it was for those caring moms.

Please read the accounts on page 9 of the individual life-changing successes CHAC’s therapists have achieved for our students through CHAC’s direct involvement in our schools. Imagine the anxiety and despair parents feel when their child, who once attended school eagerly, is suddenly rendered emotionally incapable of attending and becomes another victim of school avoidance syndrome, a socially and academically paralyzing phobia than can last for years. Now imagine their relief when CHAC therapists gently guide that child to enjoy school activities again, as in the case of Lila.

Reflect upon the joy that the parents of Eddie, whose emotions at school had silenced his voice, felt when CHAC therapists helped to restore it. Put yourself, for a moment, in the mindset of a parent of an autistic child like Henry, whose autism left him unresponsive to the social cues necessary for making friends, but still longing to have a best friend. You might justifiably worry that your child would have to go through life without a friend, until the day that he came home and proudly announced that he had a best friend, and you knew it was because of CHAC.

As Chairperson of CHAC’s board, as a school board trustee, and on behalf of the parents of the Lillas, Eddies, Henrys, and all the other students CHAC has helped over the years, I thank you wholeheartedly for your support of CHAC. These stressful times make CHAC’s personal care more important than ever before, and likewise your support for those services more important than ever.

Gratefully,
Phil Faillace, CHAC Board Chair, FY20-21

Reflections on...
Past, Present, Future

Dear Friends of CHAC,

Thank you for believing in what we do. I am so happy and grateful to share this report with you, our supporters, who make it possible for us to continue to strengthen the agency and provide counseling and mental health services to thousands of people during these challenging times.

One significant accomplishment for CHAC in FY19-20 was the approval a new five-year Strategic Plan, which strengthens our roots and focuses us more deeply on our longstanding programs. Over the next five years, we will meet the changing needs of our communities and enhance excellence in school services and our substance use disorder treatment program. We will meet the specialized needs of our Latino and LGBTQ+ communities with evidence-based programs and expand much-needed family services to ensure that CHAC is where you turn to strengthen families in need. And importantly, we will build capacity and infrastructure to support client needs and ensure the fiscal health of the agency.

We continued to upgrade our infrastructure to provide more technically sophisticated tools to support our clinicians. With the help of funding from Santa Clara County, we expanded our HIPAA-compliant electronic health records system to allow clinicians to access confidential client records remotely. We provided a long-overdue phone system enhancement that allowed clients convenient, direct access to their therapist, and we welcomed 90 MFT and PhD/PsyD therapists in training—our largest intern staff to date. An often-unrecognized service of CHAC is our program which advances well-trained, licensed clinicians into our local area to increase access to mental health service providers.

It was fortuitous that these improvements were underway when the pandemic hit to help our staff ensure continuity of care for our all our clients by immediately pivoting to tele-health services. With the support of emergency funding from community partners, we provided enhanced training on tele-health skills—particularly for reaching children, who, when their world was abruptly turned upside-down, experienced an even greater need for CHAC’s caring therapists to be there to help them navigate their feelings.

While moving forward with changes to meet 21st century needs, we never lost sight of our most important work: To provide mental health services to schools and community members and to be there when critically needed. Early this year brought a tragedy of death by suicide to our local community, and I am so proud of the excellent work of our staff. Licensed therapists responded to the need within hours, and through their skill, deep commitment, and ongoing work throughout the year, the danger of a suicide contagion was averted. Reaching students requires speaking their language, and this year we partnered with My Digital TAT2 to provide our clinicians with extensive safe social media training to better connect with the “always-on” generation and combat the increase in online toxicity and bullying. Our Teen Advisory Council helped expand our social media presence to reach more students with cogent messages of care, concern, and guidance.

The pandemic has amplified the plight of at-risk individuals and families in our underserved communities, who have been disproportionately affected by COVID and the effects of systemic racism in our society. At CHAC we are taking up the challenging work of ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion for everyone in our community and the CHAC family, and as our contribution to our societal awakening, we will continue these efforts for as long as it takes.

All these challenges underscore that accessible and affordable mental health services MUST continue to be made available. As you review what we accomplished last year, I remind you that through our commitment to continuous improvement and finding ways to meet the needs of our changing society we are growing to be a proactive, agile, and responsive agency. And with your ongoing support, CHAC will be well-positioned to effectively serve EVERYONE who needs our services well into the future, with an eye towards continuing to strengthen our communities through mental wellness.

With warm regards,

Marsha Deslauriers, Executive Director
A Year Like No Other

A Cancelled Event
Planning began in earnest in January for CHAC’s annual fundraising event, Changing Lives Together, to be held at the end of March. We had a great program lined up, “Through the Eyes of Our Teens: The Youth Voice on the Mental Health Crisis and Their Vision of the Future.” Of course, with just a few weeks to go, shelter-in-place started and regrettably, we had to cancel. We thank LinkedIn for their efforts to host the event and look forward to holding a virtual event in 2021.

A Quick Pivot
CHAC’s conversion to a HIPAA-compliant electronic health records system last year was key to facilitating the agency’s swift pivot to providing tele-health services through video and phone; this occurred within days of the shelter-in-place ordinance coming down. Our staff of 120 clinicians responded with amazing speed to the need for adaptations to legal requirements and specialized training that enabled them to continue to provide services via tele-health. Since then, the entire organization has successfully pivoted to this platform for phone and video counseling and group sessions for individuals, couples, and families.

An Expression of Solidarity
In the wake of George Floyd’s death and the resulting pain and civil unrest within our communities, CHAC responded with an unequivocal statement:

CHAC’s mission is to provide culturally responsive mental health services to improve lives and strengthen communities. Our communities cannot be healthy until everyone has access to health care, including mental health care, and everyone feels safe enough to access that care. The discrimination our Black brothers and sisters experience every day cannot be tolerated. Systemic and institutionalized racism needs our collective voice to dismantle.

CHAC stands with our Black colleagues, clients, and entire community. #BLACKLIVESMATTER

A Fiscal Impact
CHAC had to absorb the costs associated with purchasing HIPAA-compliant phone and video technology and specialized clinician training during a time where income from service fees decreased. Many counseling clients who normally pay based on an income-based sliding fee scale were unable to pay even a portion of their already-reduced amounts due to layoffs or family care needs. CHAC was able to honor our commitment to serving all who need services, regardless of ability to pay, thanks to those individuals, local governments, and foundations that generously provided CHAC with funding during this time.

An Online Giving Event
In June CHAC’s Board of Directors, Staff, and supporters helped spread the word about CHAC within their own networks and made their own gifts where possible. This online giving event, called “Moving Forward Together” kicked off with an $8,500 match from our sponsors, and, in addition, raised more than $23,000 to help the agency continue to serve individuals, couples, and families.

A Focus on Family & Children
In reaching out to our school children and their parents, CHAC’s therapists observed an unprecedented need for mental health support. The stressors on parents, who were required to adapt to an extraordinary number of new roles during shelter-in-place, necessitated coaching to provide them with tools to help them maintain patience with their children. In this way, CHAC’s therapists worked to prevent the escalation of stressful family situations into domestic violence and child abuse.

Because CHAC’s existing student clients expressed a need for continued counseling services over the summer, CHAC offered these services free of charge until school reopened. Over the summer, CHAC served 197 students.

Some Clinical Reflections
“Tele-health allows me to think about how to refocus my treatment plan with my clients in a home setting. Together, we can explore their feelings and inner world from their natural habitat. Although the inevitable technological issues are challenging and different from the work done in the therapy room, I have learned to trust the process and go with the flow. If anything, I feel a lot more connected with my clients amidst the various disruptions.”

“I have a client who suffers from depression. She was doing very well but once COVID ‘attacked,’ all her advances were stopped. Since she is in a high-risk group and in a hard state financially, she requested her regular sessions be moved to weekly check-ins. Although we spend only 15 minutes on the phone, she waits for our calls eagerly, and they help support her through this period.”

A Community Convo
On May 29, CHAC hosted its first online community conversation, called “Coping & Thriving During a Pandemic” to update our community regarding the mental health resources being offered by CHAC and its partners during this difficult time. During the hour-long interactive discussion, a panel of CHAC clinicians fielded questions from the audience related to their general observations regarding how their clients were coping with the new service delivery platform, what we might expect in terms of mental health service needs going forward, and how we could best take care of ourselves and our families during shelter-in-place and into the future.
Reflections on...

**FY19-20**

Through our in-house clinic, 568 individuals of all ages benefitted from 12,673 hours of emotional support.

CHAC's caring and skilled clinicians have been a positive influence for thousands of individuals, couples, and families over the years. Clinical services are provided via tele-health during COVID and always on a sliding scale fee payment plan.

“I had lost the love of my life, my job, a dear family member, and my will to move on. I heard about CHAC from a friend and decided to give myself a ‘last chance’ by agreeing to see one of their counselors. I credit the fact that I’m still alive to that experience. While I’m still navigating my life and seeking further personal growth, there are many positives and I have much more self-motivation to connect with conscious communities and seek support from others when I’m down. What CHAC does makes a huge difference in the community—it certainly made a huge difference in my life.”

**Programs, Philosophy, Impact**

CHAC provided 3,408 hours of culturally competent psychotherapeutic care to 207 Latinx individuals.

At CHAC we routinely ask ourselves how we can best serve diverse communities, especially during a worldwide pandemic that is impacting communities of color in disproportionate ways. Our Latinx program specifically focuses on providing culturally competent counseling, parenting skill-building, and support services that address the social and emotional needs of the Latinx community. Bilingual/Spanish services are provided in our CHAC clinic and school programs. In addition to our Latinx program, CHAC offers services in 13 languages.

In the fall 2019, CHAC Latinx worked with a Mountain View elementary school to develop a Newcomer’s program for students who had recently immigrated into the US. The program helped the 28 participating students—who had experienced significant trauma during or before the journey—learn about the new culture of the U.S. and their school and build connections with other students.

During the early days of shelter-in-place, CHAC saw an increased need for translation and consultation services for the Latinx community. The Latinx program’s bilingual therapists stepped up to break barriers to treatment and help enroll students in the new tele-health services, tripling its capacity to provide more than 60 consultations/translations a month.

“CHAC’s Latinx/Multi-Cultural Initiatives serve some of our most vulnerable community members. They have supported many who have gone on to feel empowered to make important differences in their own lives and in our community.”

With 1,026 hours of therapy, CHAC helped 58 individuals with substance use disorders develop the resiliency and skills to allow for healthier choices and successful recoveries.

CHAC is the only community-based youth counseling program in Northern Santa Clara County that employs a “harm reduction” model for treating alcohol and other dependencies. Harm-Reduction Therapy (HRT) does not require abstinence from substance use; rather, it facilitates gradual reduction in substance use within a multi-dimensional healing model that incorporates recovery principles and family systems approaches and spotlights parent and youth group support, relapse prevention, and individual/family psychotherapy. HRT is particularly suited for youth with co-occurring psychiatric disorders and histories of trauma.

90 future mental health practitioners trained, learned, and grew at CHAC.

CHAC’s reputation for excellence makes it a sought-after placement for Marriage Family Therapy (MFT) Trainees and Associates and Doctoral-level Clinical Psychology Interns and Practicum students. Under the supervision of our highly skilled and experienced clinical staff, participants are trained to use various theories and modalities at both school campuses and CHAC’s in-house clinic. Through our weekly didactic training and clinical supervision, we are committed to providing culturally sensitive services to our clients.

“CHAC’s Training programs provide clinicians with an opportunity to gain invaluable experience in the field working with exceptional folks.”

CHAC clinicians helped 49 individuals gain insight and empowerment through over 737 hours of psychological assessment.

Psychological assessments pinpoint the nature of learning disabilities, attention deficits, and emotional struggles. Once the root issue is identified, the therapist can guide the individual or family to the most appropriate tools that will help facilitate success in school and in life. CHAC’s Assessment Clinic uses best-practice models and evidence-based testing measures.

CHAC’s Family Resource Centers helped more than 9,000 families build and maintain healthy parent/child connections.

In collaboration with FIRST 5 Santa Clara County and other community partners, CHAC’s Family Resource Centers (FRCs) offer classes, events, and individual consultations to help parents/caregivers understand the importance of physical and social-emotional development in early childhood. CHAC’s FRCs also strengthen communities by training dedicated volunteers to carry out our vision to encourage further involvement.
In FY19-20, CHAC therapists supported the psychological and emotional well-being of 4,651 students in grades K-12 in 35 school districts with 54,000 hours of group and individual counseling or Social-Emotional Learning programs.

CHAC’s school-based approach has a ripple effect: healthier children lead to healthier families, classmates and teachers, and ultimately, healthier communities. All CHAC school programs are provided free of charge to students and their families.

CHAC therapists take an “integrated care” approach to ongoing counseling for students with behavioral and emotional challenges, providing them with coping tools and support that facilitate academic success, increase attendance, decrease tardiness, and improve social relationships.

In times of crisis, CHAC’s counselors are poised to support school personnel—both on-site and out of our clinic— with additional staff and resources.

CHAC offers innovative social-emotional learning (SEL) programs targeted to help students succeed during their elementary and middle school journeys. Research shows that SEL improves academic achievement and increases prosocial behaviors such as kindness, sharing, and empathy; improves student attitudes toward school; and reduces depression and stress among students.

CHAC’s school-based services are by no means mutually exclusive. Of the total number of students CHAC served in our schools in FY19-20, 438 were able to benefit from multiple CHAC programs by applying the skills and confidence they acquired in counseling to a group setting with their peers via CHAC’s SEL groups.

Who Are CHAC’s School Clients?

CHAC’s therapists are a welcome and much-needed presence in our schools whose work with individual students—thoughtfully targeted and adapted to best meet their individual needs—can span several years. Your ongoing generosity enables CHAC to continue to serve at-risk students for as long as needed, students like:

“Eddie,” a nine-year-old ESL student who was referred to CHAC for selective mutism that began in second grade and was triggered only at school. His CHAC therapist used physical activity and games on the playground to elicit sounds, counting, and eventually words. Eddie began speaking in CHAC sessions, and by the end of the term was able to have several speaking interactions with peers on the playground. Eddie will likely need emotional support services through fifth grade, but as he builds confidence his therapist will continue to work with him to move him “up a ladder” to other verbal interactions.

“Henry,” a third grader who had been identified as a person “on the autism spectrum” by the school and who told his CHAC therapist his goals were “to have friends” and “to have a best friend.” Understanding that rigidity experienced in people on the spectrum can reduce awareness of social signals, his therapist used a “circle of communication” technique and role-playing to help Henry develop interactive conversational skills. Henry came to his therapist just before the end of the fall term and “screamed, ‘I have friends now! I have a best friend!’”

“Mary,” 13, referred to CHAC for crisis and grief counseling after the sudden death of her mother. She gradually began to use her therapy sessions as a place to process, release, and integrate painful emotions. Her therapist supported and encouraged her to explore both the effects of grieving on her life and the continued spiritual connection she feels with her deceased mother—a connection that has helped Mary re-engage with her studies and make healthy and positive decisions.

“Juan,” six, whose emotional issues included problems making friends and controlling his temper. When he first came to CHAC for therapy, he incorporated themes of death and dying into his play sessions. After months of therapy focused on improving his self-esteem and general interest in life, Juan no longer talks about dying or hits or kicks others when frustrated. He enjoys play sessions, where themes have shifted to becoming more interactive and light-hearted. He especially likes making tactile art/science experiments and even shows interest in becoming a “scientist/artist” in the future.

“Terry,” a fourth grader who shared with his CHAC counselor that “I have seen six therapists and some who are professionals.” His counselor replied, “Hey wait a minute, I’m a professional!” To which Terry responded, “No, no…people who have been working for like, 40 years. And none of them have helped me the way you have. I have actually gotten better with you.”

Healthy Students, Classrooms, Communities

“Our kids have really appreciated participating in Tween Talk (SEL Program). Thank you for doing a very important job.”

“I just wanted to say thank you for conducting the online meetings. Meg was very happy and content when she got off the phone with you today!”

“Our district would not be able to provide mental health services to as many students without the support of CHAC. It is an amazing organization that helps us provide a safe, welcoming, and supportive place for all students.”

— Rachel McGillis, Sunnyvale School District School Social Worker and Counseling Coordinator

“Over the years, CHAC has helped many of my students become socially/emotionally ready at school. Sometimes students are experiencing trauma at home, sometimes they are having behavioral challenges at school, and sometimes they are struggling to find friendships. No matter the struggle, CHAC has been a great resource to help me bridge that gap with my students.”

— Fifth Grade Teacher

“Lila,” whose sometimes debilitating anxiety prohibited her from participating in many school activities when she was in third grade. With support, encouragement, and mindfulness techniques, Lila has gradually learned to more effectively tolerate and navigate anxious thoughts and feelings. Now 13, Lila finds much more enjoyment in daily activities as her anxiety levels have significantly decreased and her sense of self-worth has grown.

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We know that there are many causes that are worthy of your support. When you give to CHAC, you are making a personal investment in the mental well-being of your community. On behalf of the individuals, couples, and families who are now better able to cope, or choose to stay together, or have the tools that they need to move forward in a positive direction, the Staff and Board of Directors at CHAC thanks you for your generosity.

Reflections on...

Gratitude

$2,500-$4,999
Sandy & Eric Bergan
George & Susan Crow
Ron Pilato & Ron Fouts
Kim & Susan Graham
Dan & Rory Kaplan

$1,000-$2,499
Anonymous
Robert & Mona Armstead
Lyn Balistreri
Lane Bess
Laura Blakely
Sharon Chen
Jeral Poskey
Christ Episcopal Church of Los Altos
Covenant Presbyterian Church
Lakshmi Yendapalli & Prasanth Dangeti
Bruce Barsi & Suzanne DeLaCruz
Marsha & Rick DelSauriers
Phil & Sheila Faillace
Robert Reay & Judith Fan
Bryan Johnson & Jocelyn Goldfein
Gita & Prabandham Gopal
Cindy & Stan Gum
Janet & Sam Harding
Dotty & Terry Hayes
Bill Heinz & Monique Kane
Jere Hitz

$25,000+
Bella Vista Foundation
El Camino Healthcare District
First 5 Santa Clara County
Los Altos Community Foundation
City of Mountain View
Sand Hill Foundation

$10,000-$24,999
City of Los Altos
Los Altos Town Crier Holiday Fund
Joan MacDonald
Mountain View Voice Holiday Fund
Ruth Ottaway Sherer
Palo Alto Medical Foundation/Sutter Health
Ross Stores Foundation
Los Altos Rotary Endowment Fund
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Whitney Education Foundation
Wright Institute

$5,000-$9,999
Anonymous
Dudley-Vehmeyer-Brown Memorial Foundation
Foothills Congregational Church UCC
Fremont Bank Foundation
Phyllis & Henry Gauthier
Highfield Foundation
Kiwanis Club of Mountain View
Gay & Bill Krause

$1,000-$2,499
Bill & Danielle James
Vagn & Hilda Jensen
Kinkaide Family Foundation
Donna & William Krepick
Barbara Krzyczkowska & Massimo Prati
Mina Malek/MPM Corporation
Jessica Mancini
Katherine Mellberg
Judy Moss
Paige & Paul Muret
Tina Nguyen
Vicki & Terry Oldberg
Leona & Jason Pearce
Ann Peters Battle
Tim & Terri Petersen
Guadalupe Romo
Terri & Michael Rose
Marcia Scott
Douglas & Julia Scott
Sereno Group
Anthony Shortland
Supervisor Joseph Simitian
George & Stephanie Tyson
Dennis Young

Please forgive any misspellings or omissions on these pages—and help us ensure that they don’t happen again by letting us know of your corrections. Call 650-965-2020, ex 120 or email lyn.balistreri@chacmv.org.
In Memory of:
Vincent Frank Balistreri
Christopher Gerke
Susan Kane
Paul Kraus
Karl Walter Prager
Gretchen Wamen
Laura Wilson

In Honor of:
Piper Aaronson
Lyn Balistreri
Lizie Bernard
Laura Blakely
CHAC’s Staff & Board of Directors
Irais Chimino
Martha Desaulniers
Anita Jagtiani
Jonna and Leigh
Monique Kane
Jessica Lopatka Mancini
Joan MacDonald
Leslie Oberhelman
Percival Pasqua
Ron Plato
Massimo Prati
Carol & Keating Rhoads
Vaishali Sirkay
Lauren Stroshane
Mary White
Lakshmi Yendapalli

Reflections on...

$500-$999
Anonymous (4)
Robert & Lois Adams
Jan Ambrosini
& Tim Stroshane
David Bernstein
James & Alice Cochran
Stefanie Dalzio
John & Gail Dilley
William & Virginia Dolan
Elizabeth Dutton
& Daniel Shadrer
The Sarannah Fund
Melanie Espino
Veronica & Zack Foster
Jeff Yoakum
&Cindy Gonzalez-Yoakum
Giulio Gratta
Roma Hammel
Judy Hannemann
Roy & Janet Hayter
Lisa Hills
Vice Mayor Ellen Kamei
Taly Katz
John & Virginia Kavanaugh
Alison Kbrick
Debbie & Doug Kundrat
Peter & Sue LaToumette
David & Karen Paradise
Jeral Poskey
John & Jane Reed
James & Andrea Sandstrom
Vaisha & Vinal Sirkay
David & Lenelle Smith
Thomas & Karen Smith
Jeessie a Speiser
Clint & Judy Steele
Dennis & Jan Switick
Steven & Valerie Taglio
Bridget Watson
Anna Weldon
Tim Williams
Catherine Vonnegut & Gary Winiger

Phanthropy

$250-$499
Anonymous (3)
William & Marjan Abbott
Susan August
Amy & Kem Beare
John Beman
John & Julie Brown
Victoria BurtonBurke & David Burke
Dolores Chasuk
Noreen Christopher
Martin Gorinka & Georgina Wren Clark
Judith Crates
Chris & Mary Dateo
Gregory & Johanna Doyas
Kevin & Robin Duggan
Family Matters in Home Care
Susan Farn & Rosene Ferber
Eugene Farn
Owen, Kim, Catherine,
& Emma Halliday
David Hatt
Alan & Anita Hermann

Matching Gifts:
Apple Inc.
Cisco Systems Foundation
Google, Inc.
Hewlett Packard Company
LinkedIn
The David & Lucile Packard Foundation
Silicon Valley Bank

In-Kind Gifts:
Anonymous
American Girl
Lisa Carlson
Costo
De Martini’s Orchard
Dr. & Mrs. Robert Fishman
Michael Huddleston
Joseph George Wines
Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts
Peet’s Coffee
San Francisco 49ers
The Charles M. Schultz Museum
Southwest Airlines
Sprout’s Market
Tootoonchi Chiropractic
Trader Joe’s
Revenues: $4.068M
Includes In-Kind Revenue.

Expenses: $4.133M

A detailed financial statement is available for viewing at chacmv.org.