You’re Invited to a

LAUNCH PARTY

See details inside

Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Community Services

You’re Invited to a LAUNCH PARTY

See details inside

READY FOR LAUNCH

3.2.11 AT 3:21 PM

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From the President & CEO

I am very proud of all of you and everything that this agency has accomplished in the past year and a half. As you know, we had many challenges to overcome independent of the economy and the normal ups and downs that confront nonprofit organizations. The future will bring both opportunities and challenges, but I firmly believe that we are in a much better position to address the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities.

Tomorrow we will launch our new logo, vision and mission. I hope that all of you will take this event seriously and work diligently to help move this organization forward. The heart and soul of this organization is our staff, all of you. The Executive Team and Board are strategically driven to improve the quality of our working environment, the quality of services to our clients and the promotion of this organization within the community.

On March 2, 2011, we will launch what will be a grand new vision and direction for our agency. There will be much more to follow and I am excited about the future and what we can accomplish as Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Community Services.

Letter from the Editor

We have a compact edition of “Community” this month. There has been so much going on with the launch of our new logo, new name and rebranding efforts. I truly look forward to working with you on your program marketing materials. OUR NEW LOOK is something we can all be proud of. My goal is that all materials reflect the redesign of our agency. I apologize in advance for the challenging steps we will be taking to make this happen.

This edition includes a new feature focusing on programs and support out in the community that might be beneficial to our clients. Take a look at the TIP LINE to see what’s in store. Many thanks to Laura Freed for her monthly contributions to the newsletter.

One very important request. EVERY DAY think about what photos or successes you’d like to share. I received only one photo this month and no success stories. I guess part of that is my fault for not bugging you enough.

Finally, make sure to look at page 3 for information about the LAUNCH PARTY. We don’t want to miss anyone.

Cathy Gardner
Marketing & Development Director
LAUNCH PARTY

When:
3.2.11

What:
We are launching our new name, new logo and new branding.

Where:
See all locations listed to the right.

Time
3:21 PM

Icot Boulevard
14041 Icot Boulevard • Clearwater

Eckerd
8550 Ulmerton Rd. • Largo

Darlington/Chatlin
3142 Darlington Road • Holiday

Orlando
4419 Park Breeze Court • Orlando

N. Nebraska
15402 N. Nebraska Ave. • Lutz

Hillsborough Kids Inc.
5681 East Fowler Ave. • Tampa

Mulberry
5925 Imperial Parkway • Mulberry

Oakland Park
201 NE 40th Court • Oakland Park

Broward
7777 Davie Road Ext. • Hollywood

Delray Park
220 S. Congress Ave. • Delray Beach

Miami Springs
101 Westward Drive • Miami Springs
Katarzyna, who goes by “Kat”, is a case worker for the Alternative Family Program. She has been with Gulf Coast as a full time employee for four years and has a masters in Mental Health Counseling. Alternative Family Program (AFP) is a unique program that offers supportive community placement for people that cannot live on their own.

The main criterion that a client must have to be a candidate for AFP is to have a mental health diagnosis. Most commonly, the clients have schizophrenia, schizoid effective disorder, or bi-polar disorder. Some of her clients have dual diagnosis of substance abuse or they are developmentally delayed.

Kat carries a caseload of twenty people and she sees each client with their caregiver once a month. She will also meet with the caregivers regarding their client’s goals which can include regular showers, making the bed, taking their meds and becoming more independent. The main goal for AFP is to get the client to be completely independent, but most clients do not reach this goal of complete independence.

In the four years that Kat has done this job, she estimates that 10 out of 50 clients have successfully returned to the community independently. She states that many of her clients never want to move since they have become comfortable in their situation and feel like a member of a family.

The caregivers are special people who open their homes to these clients because they really care, not for the money. Most clients are on SSDI or SSI and only get $674 per month. They are able to keep $54 for themselves and the rest goes for their care. Many of these caregivers have been opening their homes for clients for ten years.

Care homes can have up to five residents, but AFP will only allow a maximum of three clients per home so the client a true feeling of family. AFP provides the caregivers trainings every other month. Some of the topics they are trained on include; medication management, mental health disorders and other concerns. They are able to brainstorm about their residents without breaking confidentiality. This allows them to help each other with information and support.

On a typical day, Kat will go visit her clients at their homes and speak to the caregiver and each individual client separately. Most commonly there are only one to two residents living in each care home. She will evaluate the home to make sure that they are following rules and regulations, providing a safe environment, providing a clean home and sees if medications are organized and not laying around. She makes sure that the residents are happy and that they are doing well on their medications. She asks if they are experiencing any new symptoms and goes over their treatment plan and goals.

Every six months she develops a new care plan and Kat helps them acquire the needed coping skills to function in the community. Most of her clients attend a day program and she encourages them to keep active. Once Kat returns to the office she remains extremely busy creating treatment plans, monthly progress notes, psychosocial evaluations, staff meetings and prepares for caregiver trainings. She also coordinates care between doctors, case managers and other agencies to provide the best care possible.

Kat wanted to express how much she appreciates her team at AFP and feels that she receives the support she needs to do her job well!
I give them a family—not an institution. The walls are thickly adorned with pictures, photographs, and memorabilia. Crayon drawings of palm trees and self-portraits. Photos of smiling faces among smiling faces. Souvenirs from road trips and vacations. This home feels like it has been built on a foundation of many years of love and affection and support. It is a true family home. It is the home of three schizophrenic men who have found a family in the Alternative Family Program. Betty is their caregiver. For 15 years she has provided Tom, Larry, and Todd with support, affection, and the open arms of her home. She regards them only as family members, something one would never find in a state institution, and loves them as her own sons.

And they love her as a mother.

Betty offers them comfort, security and independence. Their bedrooms are uniquely different to reflect their individuality. Todd, being quite the writer, has a typewriter on his desk. His shelves are lined with knick-knacks and collectibles. Tom and Larry share a room. The large windows in their room create the perfect lighting to display many of Larry’s drawings that hang on the walls. The pride these men take in their living quarters is palpable; it’s reflected in their beaming smiles and in the sweep of an arm that translates welcome to MY room. Betty has given them a TV room in the den which leads to a beautiful garden in the yard. Outside, paths wind around the trees and bushes and there is a swing-set beside a flowering rose bush. The yard is shaded and cool and serene.

It horrifies Betty that so many people are not given the opportunity Tom, Larry, and Todd are afforded. It’s intuitive, it makes sense—home is where the heart is. Families are the people who care. The relationships and normalcy that exists in Betty’s home are impossible to find in an institution. She insists on the program’s success and how it encourages stability and nonviolence.

Betty has given these men a garden; to grow, to flourish. And like a garden, Betty tends to them every day with love, encouragement, and support.

The Alternative Family Program is based upon the therapeutic foster home concept. Trained volunteers open their homes to adults with mental illness and treat them as new family members. Loving relationships are built as volunteers look out for their residents’ well-being and care.
How can I get my client a car???

Wheels of Success is a unique non-profit organization whose mission is to provide reliable personal transportation to help working families through a program of car repairs, vehicle replacement and assistance with car related licensing services so that they can keep their job, find better employment, increase their work hours or use the vehicle to also get to school.

Wheels of Success only takes referrals from agencies or employers through their website www.wheelsofsuccess.org, and will not accept applications directly from an individual. Applicants must be working full time or have a verifiable full time job offer and cannot afford to purchase their own car due to financial burdens. For instance, GCJFCS recently referred a counseling client to the organization because they were in a car accident and no longer had a vehicle. The client needed a car to get to work and they were in danger of losing their job if they did not get reliable transportation. This particular client had a family that was also suffering since they had no car to get them to the store and activities.

Susan Jacobs, the founder and CEO, explained that statistically the majority of families she helps are single mothers (about 84%) but the agency also helps couples and single men as well. The main obstacle that she encounters is that she does not have enough cars to give the clients in need. She is always in need of vehicles to be donated and explained that all cars that are donated, running or not, are accepted and picked up through AAA Auto Club South at no charge to the donor or the agency.

Once the applicant is eligible to receive a car, they must agree to certain stipulations. The clients agree to pay a small payment of about $50 per month for one year and at the end of the year they will receive the title to the vehicle. They are also required to volunteer with the agency for three hours per month during that year.

Ms. Jacobs stated the vehicle changes the quality of life for many families as they are now able to sustain their independence and find a new freedom not offered by public transportation. In their exit surveys after their year of payments and volunteering, clients tell the organization that their lives are happier and less stressful, thus making them better employees. Because they are spending less time travelling to and from work (often 3-4 hours per day on the bus) they can spend more time with their families. They now have transportation to participate in their children’s school activities, visit relatives, and some were even thankful they could finally visit one of our beautiful beaches now that they had a car to get there. All things those of us with reliable transportation often take for granted!

Susan Jacobs and a recent recipient of a car!
March Birthdays

1-Mar   Terri Boyne
        Irma Naria Leyva-Kikta
        Tyla Mortimer-Graham
2-Mar   Karen Chouinard
        Rebecca Pena
        Lakezia Perry
        Mackenzie Conner
3-Mar   Charles Jacobs
4-Mar   Gabriele Hall Cash
5-Mar   James Callaway
        Andrea Thomas-Riley
6-Mar   Matthew Duck
        Janet Shideman
        Tiffany Sams
7-Mar   Felicia Key-Watts
        Carla Davis
9-Mar   Nubia Featherstone
10-Mar  Vicki Tench
        Tania Hamilton
        Aida Perez
        Christy Howard
11-Mar  Gladys Dye
        Carmen Blanco
        Heather Naccarato
        Melissa Pierre
        Brittan Overby
12-Mar  Andrea Knauber
13-Mar  Pervis Parker
        Keisha Patrick
14-Mar  Carmen Monzon
        Cindy Mendez
        Melisa Tatum-Boone
        Avigail Vives
15-Mar  Vincent Corso
        David Selvar
16-Mar  Lillian Callihan
17-Mar  Susan Buckley
        Jenise Manning
        Kimberly Rabin
18-Mar  Renee Buesman
        J. Lynn Cermier
20-Mar  Judith Thompson
        Jennifer Key
22-Mar  Sofia Perez
        Kevin Cauthen
        Katarzyna Lukasiewicz
        Christy Niccolosi
        Angelique Lytle
23-Mar  Diane Ferland
        Deborah McDermott
        Patricia Brown
24-Mar  Margot Dargahi
27-Mar  Kim Worthy
29-Mar  Jonathan Jones
        Shameka Wallen
31-Mar  Susan Charlip
        Rhonda Rentz
        Michael Forster
        Angela Sutton
        Marlon Wright
        Christopher Muhleisen

We randomly chose March 4th as our birthday spotlight for March. Gabriele Hall Cash is the only staff member in our agency with that birthday, so we were pleased that she wished to participate. Gabriele, who goes by “Gabe”, works with our Safe at Home Diversion Program. She is their Family Engagement Specialist Counselor and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. She loves working with her clients and is passionate about helping them.

Gabe grew up in Orange County in the state of California. When she was in high school, she came to Florida to visit family friends and loved it here. She decided to pursue her undergrad degree in psychology and to attend the University of South Florida in Tampa. She went back to California for her graduate studies at Alliant International University with a degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. She then returned to Florida to complete her internship and decided to stay here.

Gabe met her husband, Nathan, through mutual friends. They were best friends at first, then dated for six months and fell in love. She has been happily married for three years and is looking forward to starting a family. Right now she has two dogs - whom she considers her babies. Her two “puppies” are miniature dachshunds that she affectionately calls Cali & Chase.

In her spare time, Ms. Cash catches up on her DVR shows, likes to cook (especially barbeque) and enjoys going to the beach. Family is very important and her number one priority. Gabe enjoys going to her mother-in-law’s home every Monday night for a family dinner. These dinners consist of 16 to 20 participants and Gabe is grateful to have that night free from cooking dinner and she also gets to spend quality time with family.

Gabe has a private practice in which she sees clients on the weekends, so she feels she is kept quite busy.

Happy Birthday
Gabriele Hall Cash!!
### New Hires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Bergstrand</td>
<td>Case Manager</td>
<td>CBC Pinellas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Huyen Bui</td>
<td>Youth &amp; Family Specialist</td>
<td>Refugee Youth &amp; Family Program Pinellas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamela Cabral</td>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>Community Care for Disabled Adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jose Carcamo</td>
<td>Mental Health Tech</td>
<td>EGRTS Broward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heather Comstock</td>
<td>Client Records Coordinator</td>
<td>Client Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kina Copeland</td>
<td>Case Manager</td>
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<td>Patti Lynn Deemer</td>
<td>Mental Health Tech</td>
<td>Darlington/Chatlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michelle Deese</td>
<td>Case Manager</td>
<td>CPS Mulberry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Briana Driver</td>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>Community Care for Disabled Adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashley Eldred</td>
<td>Case Manager</td>
<td>CPS Mulberry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martha Jacques</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doree Johnson</td>
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<td>Alison Lawrence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saisha LeShoure</td>
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<td>Orlando Family Diversion</td>
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<td>Deborah Peters</td>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>Orlando Family Diversion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andres Viel</td>
<td>Case Manager</td>
<td>CBC Pinellas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stewart Yon</td>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>Orlando Family Diversion</td>
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### Anniversaries in March

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<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Angela Littlefield</td>
<td>Shelter Manager</td>
<td>Homeless Shelter</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sarah White</td>
<td>Client Service Specialist</td>
<td>Client Billing/Services</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Susan Turnbeau</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>CPS Mulberry</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Dorothy Massop</td>
<td>LPN EGRTS</td>
<td>Broward</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tracie Entler</td>
<td>Team Leader</td>
<td>NECP - Pasco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mantina Pezos-Provias</td>
<td>Team Leader</td>
<td>NECP - Pinellas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Maria Caro</td>
<td>Team Leader</td>
<td>AFP Polk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### One Final Shot

Gulf Coast Jewish Family Services staff raises LOTS of money at the annual phonathon for the Jewish Federation of Pinellas and Pasco Counties. We exceeded the goal of $5000 by over $350 by night’s end. GCJFCS receives over $80,000 in annual allocations from the Federation. *(Pictured l-r: Carla Washinko, Sue Charlip, Francine Wolf, Jared Freed, Deb Larkin and Dorothy Chambers.)*