

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW CHIEF



### Laura Larson-Huffaker New HHW CEO

The HHW Board of Directors and Staff are very excited to have Laura Larson-Huffaker, M.C., L.P.C., join the Team as our new Chief Executive Officer this coming December 17th.

Ms. Larson-Huffaker replaces Mr. Norman E. Mudd who is retiring after leading HHW for the past 27 years. Laura joins HHW after serving as Executive Director of La Frontera-Empact for the past 12 years.

When asked about her leadership style she noted, "I believe my leadership style is intertwined with my personality which makes me a genuine and transparent leader. I am supportive, collaborative and solution-focused in my approach. I believe I communicate well and directly. Similar to Horizon Health and Wellness, EMPACT is a multi-faceted organization and I have seen how important a good leadership team is to the company's success.

Part of me being a successful leader is being able to facilitate a good team with diverse ideas to come together around a common goal."

When asked about her interest in becoming CEO of HHW she shared, "I had been working as the Executive Director of EMPACT-Suicide Prevention Center for the past 12 years and felt ready to take the next step in my professional career. I wanted to be the CEO of a multi-faceted non-profit organization providing health and behavioral healthcare services. Horizon Health and Wellness was the exact kind of organization I was looking for. It provides vitally needed services in underserved communities, for a variety of populations, and has an excellent continuum of services including behavioral health, primary care, crisis and inpatient programs."

Laura responded the following as to her vision for HHW, "I am excited about the future of Horizon Health and Wellness, as there is so much foundation to build upon. The communities we serve are growing and people want to have good quality healthcare. Herein lies our opportunities. With technology improving the reach of healthcare, more data being available to us to improve the quality of our care, and new and improved methods of care arising, Horizon Health and Wellness can become the go to agency for all of the important medical and behavioral health services, in the areas we currently serve as well as other areas where services are needed."

When asked to share a little about her personal life Laura said, "Family is very important to me. My husband and I have 4 children—3 in Nebraska and one in Arizona. All are adults and we have 6 grandchildren. I love animals and have always had a variety—we recently downsized our home which included rehoming our two desert tortoises and 7 birds. Currently we have 4 dogs and an African Grey Parrot. We love to take family vacations, whether that is a weekend at our cabin up north, visiting the kids in Nebraska, or traveling, usually to a beach location."

And what is her favorite saying, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Welcome Aboard Laura Larson-Huffaker, our new CEO.

## **Florence Community Health Center**

### **Getting to Know the Center**

#### **Where is the new 23-hour Adult Observation Unit?**

*It's located at 450 W. Adamsville Rd. in Florence.*

#### **What is the Observation and Stabilization Unit?**

*It is an Emergency Room for a person who is experiencing a behavioral health crisis and needs immediate intervention.*

#### **What are the hours of the facility?**

*The unit is open 24 hours/7 days a week. The 23-hour refers to the maximum amount of time a participant would be in the unit to complete an evaluation and to determine the necessary level of care. Referral to an inpatient unit for further care can be made, if needed.*

#### **Who can take an individual to the Center in an emergency?**

*Anyone can take a person who is experiencing anxiety, depression or threatening self-harm. Occasionally it is difficult to discern if the behavior is due to mental issues, drugs or both. At the Center the appropriate diagnosis will be completed and appropriate care provided. Depending on the circumstances, a law enforcement officer can be called if the person is a danger to self or others.*

#### **Does the person have to go willingly or can they be admitted involuntarily?**

*For someone who voluntarily accepts to go to the center, anyone can drop him off for evaluation. For involuntary admission, law enforcement or a family member must sign an Application for Emergency Admission upon arrival to the Unit. You will be assisted by staff.*

#### **If the patient is physically aggressive or violent, does law enforcement have to stay with the patient?**

*No. Once the person is dropped off, the staff is specifically trained to handle the situation. The person who transports the individual can be out of the center within 5 minutes.*

#### **Do I need to call to get an authorization before referring someone to the Observation Unit?**

*Individuals from the community do not need to call for authorization prior to taking a person for observation. If the individual is referred by a hospital emergency room, they need to call to make sure Horizon can medically accommodate the person prior to arriving. They usually send the medical records prior to arrival. HHW staff will coordinate the transfer.*

#### **Who do I call regarding a referral to the Observation Unit?**

*Call Admissions at (520) 635-6336 any time: 24/7*

## **Bits of Useful Information:**

### **Spirulina**



The thyroid gland presents many problems which are often neglected. Even when tested, most people are told their thyroid glands are working fine. However, the person continues feeling tired, lethargic, experiencing loss of hair, brittle fingernails which break easily, and dry skin. We need a very small amount of iodine daily in order to produce thyroid hormone, unless the thyroid is overactive or inflamed. In the 1950's the FDA began the practice of adding iodine to salt because there was a high incidence of "goiter", which is due to an enlarged or overworked thyroid. However, salt is not the best form of taking iodine.

Japan is a country with no thyroid problems mostly because Japanese people eat seaweed daily. If you like sushi every day it will be helpful, but there are other sea plants like kelp, dulse and convenient liquid iodine drops in the health store that can be helpful. These products should only be taken as directed.

The best product to use is Spirulina which is a microalgae with a high nutritional value and health benefits. It is considered "a super food," and a "miracle from the sea." It contains significant amounts of calcium, niacin, potassium, magnesium, B vitamins and iron. It also has essential amino acids (compounds that are the building blocks of proteins). Protein makes up about 60 to 70 percent of Spirulina's dry weight.

Spirulina is also known for treating a range of conditions related to metabolism and heart health issues, weight loss, diabetes and high cholesterol according to the National Institute of Health (NIH). It is also used as an aid for various mental and emotional disorders, including anxiety, stress, depression and attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). NIH has also stated that Spirulina may help the body clear arsenic in people whose drinking water has unusually high levels of arsenic.







## HUBERT JUAN

### Celebrates 35 years at HHW

Hubert Juan was recently recognized for serving 35 years with Horizon Health and Wellness. He is a Transportation Supervisor and oversees drivers and dispatchers in Casa Grande and Florence. He is also responsible for training most of the new employees that will be driving HHW vehicles.

Hubert Juan is an Arizona native, born in Sacaton, Arizona. He's the 3rd child of 7 and his father was a farmworker, so there was lots of moving around when he was young. Hubert's family ended up in the Coolidge area around 1975, which he still calls home. He attended Coolidge High School where he participated in football and track. He joined the Army at 17 and was an Army Infantryman. Hubert's travels included Paris, Amsterdam, Austria, and Germany.

After serving 3 years in the Army, Hubert came back to Coolidge, hung out with family and friends before he started working with the Papago Police Department (now known as Tohono O'odham PD) for 2 years as a dispatcher / jailer. After leaving the PD, he went to work with UofA Archeology Department working with a group searching for Native American artifacts before the CAP Canal could be built. He then worked for the Maricopa County Medical Center.

Hubert had plans of going back into the military and needed to take his physical, but before doing that, he went to see his mother to let her know of his plans. She handed him a clipping of the "Help Wanted" ad for a Driver. Hubert filled out an application, was hired on 03/16/83 and has worked in the same department, Transportation, ever since.

He was the very first Driver who worked with the local police departments transporting inebriants to the McCartney Road facility, where counseling and services were provided. Hubert has seen lots of changes, good and bad through the years with the Agency, and has witnessed many success stories.

Hubert has many, many nieces and nephews. He enjoys drawing, sports, concerts (hard rock), and those ~ let's get on the road and see where it takes us trips.

Horizon Health and Wellness wishes to honor and express our deep gratitude to Hubert for his many years of commitment and service to the organization and those we serve.

## Youth Matter Celebrate Youth!!!

This past November 2nd, over 200 youth and adult participants attended the Youth Matter ~ Celebrate Youth event hosted at the Re-



**Youth Empowerment Partners' Emcees**

demption Church in Casa

Grande. The event was facilitated by the Youth Empowerment Partners who follow a positive youth development approach and focus on promoting youth voice and

action, addressing health promotion and risk reduction, through social-emotional learning opportunities and creating leaders for tomorrow ~ today!



**Pinal County Attorney  
Kent Volkmer**

Presentations included a powerful and engaging speech by Pinal County Attorney, Mr. Kent Volkmer who challenged the participants to practice kindness. Mr. John Fuery and his team from the Pinal County Juvenile Court Services provided an experiential and insightful workshop for all participants on "Real Colors" a creative and enjoyable way to assess ones key personality traits. The day wrapped up with a great lunch, resource sharing by numerous youth serving agencies and great performances by Zarco Guerrero and the United Dance Company.

A special thanks to AZ Complete Health, Casa Grande Elementary School District, Apache Junction Unified



**ARTIST ZARCO GUERRERO**

School District, Pinal County Juvenile Court Services, Pinal County Attorney's Office, Redemption Church, Casa Grande Alliance, Coolidge Youth Coalition, Coolidge SADD Chapter, and the AJ Wellness Partnership.



**CG Councilperson McBride and  
CGESD Superintendent Gonzales**



## Youth Empowerment Partners ~ A Colorful Crew

L-R: Jackie, Gustavo, Jonathan, Jubania, Lolita, Mandy, Sharon, Alicia, & Michael

## Upcoming Events

### December Highlights:

- Dec. 1st : Artisan Market - 9 am to 12 noon @ EHP
- Dec. 3-4th: Health Current Summit @ Renaissance Hotel
- Dec. 7th : AJ Open-Mic Night, 6pm to 9pm @ EHP
- Dec. 15th : AJ Open-Mic Night, 6pm to 9pm @ EHP
- Dec. 25th : HHW Offices Closed ~ Christmas Holiday

### Contributors to Viewpoint

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**Horizon**  
*Health And Wellness*



The *Viewpoint Newsletter* provides information pertinent to HHW and its many statewide programs. Please let us know what you think by sending us your feedback or suggestions to:

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Thank You ~ Gracias!



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