

400 Oceangate, Suite 800
Long Beach, CA 90802
562.435.9033
www.longbeachcf.org



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Colleen Bragalone
(562) 435-9033
Colleen@longbeachcf.org

**A Fresh New Look for the Mental Health America
of Los Angeles Wellness Center**

*Long Beach Community Foundation to Give Center a Makeover, Creating a Welcoming
Atmosphere for Vulnerable Individuals Working Toward Better Mental Health*

Long Beach, CA – The Long Beach Community Foundation (LBCF) has chosen the Mental Health America of Los Angeles (MHALA) Wellness Center located at 830 Atlantic Ave, Long Beach for their 2018 National Philanthropy Day project. On October 20, 2018 more than 25 LBCF volunteers will embark on the Wellness Center to put in a day's work to beautify the nonprofit, and as a result, the community. This is the fifth annual project LBCF has funded and implemented in Long Beach in honor of National Philanthropy Day.

One of the principle goals of the MHALA Wellness Center is to prevent individuals from returning to homelessness. The Center responds to the needs of individuals with mental illness who are stabilized and housed by providing opportunities to learn skills for self-reliance, develop natural supports, and access local resources. The supportive services provided at this location are part of a broader effort to support individuals moving through the mental health system, assisting their transition to lower levels of care.

“Clients have told us they were afraid to enter our building for the first time simply because of how it looks,” said Brenda Hamamoto, Director MHALA Wellness Center. “Right now, the outside of our building does not match the warm and welcoming services that we provide on the inside. We are so excited that our building will finally reflect the promise that lies inside for these individuals.”

The Philanthropy Day project will result in a vibrant coat of paint on the building's exterior, new plantings to soften the hard lines and concrete façade, and updated modern signage to clearly identify the building for walk-in clients and community members.

“This year, the LBCF Board is focused on the issues surrounding housing and homelessness in the Long Beach Community,” said LBCF Board Chair Gary DeLong. “Creating a welcoming atmosphere for the Wellness Center will entice individuals struggling with mental health to seek the supportive services offered there. This is just one way we are partnering to address the broad and multifaceted issues of housing and homelessness.”

National Philanthropy Day is a national initiative that honors charitable work across the country and is celebrated in a variety of ways. To honor this philanthropic event, LBCF annually chooses a local nonprofit organization to support with some type of renovation. LBCF's National Philanthropy Day allows the Community Foundation to “roll up its sleeves” and make a meaningful impact up close and personal with a Long Beach nonprofit. Other nonprofits who have been the past beneficiary of these efforts include Young Horizons, Boys and Girls Clubs of Long Beach, Precious Lamb Preschool, and the Long Beach Rescue Mission's Lydia House for women.

“These one-day National Philanthropy Day transformations never lose their magic,” said LBCF President & CEO Marcelle Epley. “It is thrilling to watch the physical transformation before your eyes and think about the impact it is going to have on the people benefitting from the nonprofit's services.”

LBCF is still looking for volunteers and donations to support their efforts on October 20, 2018. Please visit <https://longbeachcf.org/donate/national-philanthropy-day/> to help make a difference in the community.

LBCF has partnered with Citron Design who is providing project design and management of the project. Other instrumental partners include philanthropic donors

and LBCF Board members, as well as Rebuilding Together Long Beach who provides access to resources and manpower at the event.

About the Long Beach Community Foundation

The Long Beach Community Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, public organization with more than \$53 million in assets and 162 charitable funds. It was established in 1996 to make strategic grants to nonprofits and assist individual donors with their philanthropic goals today and through planned giving. Fees charged to manage funds at the Foundation are invested directly back into the community in the form of discretionary grants. LBCF's mission is to initiate positive change for Long Beach through charitable giving, stewardship, and strategic grant making with a vision of being the preeminent steward of endowments serving the needs of Long Beach in perpetuity.

LBCF operations are led by President & CEO Marcelle Epley and oversight is provided by Board Chair Gary DeLong, Vice Chair Robert Stemler, and Board members Blake Christian, Michele Dobson, Bob Foster, Tony Gales, Mark Guillen, Randal Hernandez, Donita Joseph, Annette Kashiwabara, Steve Keesal, Frank Newell, Judy Ross and Judy Vander Lans.

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