

NEWS
AND
VIEWS
FROM THE
E.D.



By Jane
Tomchik

Congratulations!
This employee
newsletter is just
one of the initiatives
identified by the
Performance Based
Rewards
Committee. This
management/staff
committee is also
rolling out
employee
recognition awards
-"BRAVOS" - in the
next issue.

It's been a
challenging few
months for
everyone,
particularly with all
the changes we are
having to endure to
become an
accountable
organization. I
think it is a good
time to reflect on
why we do what we
do.

"Project BRAVO is
putting an end to
poverty by
mobilizing
resources,
promoting self-
sufficiency and
achieving a better
tomorrow for our
Community."

This is our Vision
Statement with a
couple of edits to
make it stronger
and more positive.
These edits and the
revised "Prime
Directive" below
came out of a
recent management
(Next page)



Project BRAVO
is now on

facebook

The BRAVO Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER, 2010

PB Mobile Offices Now Rolling

Thanks to a generous donation from LULAC Project Amistad, the services provided by Project BRAVO will now be available to clients in outlying areas of El Paso County. Dubbed the CAP-On-Wheels Program, the two 14 passenger shuttle buses were donated to Project BRAVO earlier this year and rolled out to the public during a special ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 27. The buses have been converted into mobile offices equipped with computer work stations. Project BRAVO intake specialists and case workers will use the vehicles to help extend the full range of Project BRAVO services to residents who may have difficulty finding transportation to any of the agency's seven locations. "I am looking forward to taking the rolling office on the road to help people," said Project BRAVO caseworker **Claudia Arreola**. The vehicles will be parked at various locations throughout El Paso County. Among the locations tentatively set are:

- Montana Vista Community Center.
- Self-help Center at Agua Dulce.



-Rio Vista Community Center.

-Colonia Revolucion.

-Sparks Addition.

The CAP-On-Wheels

Program will also

include the participation of other social agencies in the area who have partnered with Project BRAVO to bring much needed services to needy families.



Roving Case Worker **Claudia Arreola**

Weatherization a Top Priority For PB

Project BRAVO staff continues to work hard to weatherize as many as 1,700 homes by the end of August of 2011. During the month of July, Project BRAVO had exceeded its goal by weatherizing 150 homes in El Paso County. That's five more than projected. As of July 31, a total of 323 homes had been weatherized in El Paso County by Project BRAVO under the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

Every day, Project BRAVO's East side weatherization office under the direction of WAP Manager **Mike Martinez** and WAP Program Coordinator **Maggie Rodriguez** is busy working with contractors and clients to ensure all of the requirements of the federal funding are met.

The goal of weatherization is to help needy residents reduce their energy costs by as much as 30%.

Weatherization

may include

installation of

attic insulation,

weather-stripping,

window solar screens, smoke alarms, CO2

detectors and replacement of inefficient heating

and cooling systems.



Weatherization Tech **Manny Landeros** on KVIA-TV ABC-7

(Tomchik - continued from page 1)

retreat. You will be introduced to the significantly revised "Guiding Principles" at the upcoming Staff Retreat.

"Project BRAVO is an agency of excellence. We are a team of caring, committed, energetic professionals focused on providing client-friendly, quality driven service to the low income residents of El Paso County.

Project BRAVO is focused on removing the barriers of poverty. This includes addressing our clients' needs within appropriate stages:

- Short-term (crisis intervention)
- Medium-term (building a foundation)
- Long-term (building prosperity)

Our ultimate goal is that our clients will be empowered for self-sufficiency and propelled toward future successes."

As some of you may know, most of my professional experience has been with designing and managing programs for the chemically dependent, the seriously mentally ill and their friends and families.

Hope for a better tomorrow for each of these populations involves belief in and the practice of "Recovery". I cannot help but see that moving out of a lifestyle of poverty into self-sufficiency as "recovery" from poverty. And our role, as Project BRAVO employees is to support our clients to move along the road to recovery. A road that consists of the stages identified in our new Prime Directive.

Books on how to be successful always stress that you need to establish goals and then continually ask yourself if your decisions and actions are bringing you closer to the goals or further away. As we continue in our evolution as a Community Action Program, we will constantly be asking if what we are doing organizationally and with our individual clients and their families is consistent with our Prime Directive and our Guiding Principles. Or, is what you/ I/we are doing each day supporting recovery from poverty for those we serve?

Thank you for your commitment.



Helping People, Changing Lives

Did you know that Project BRAVO is 45 years old this year? Our agency was born in 1965 when President Lyndon B. Johnson declared his "War on Poverty"



Paint-a-thon Draws Local Support

Armed with brushes, ladders and paint buckets, a huge army of volunteers will converge on more than 50 homes around El Paso County on September 18th during the 24th Annual Paint-a-thon. The annual event is the county's largest volunteer community effort bringing together people from all walks of life to help elderly and disabled residents. Project BRAVO is proud to spearhead the event. In the last 24 years, employees and volunteers have helped a total nearly 2,000 residents who are physically or economically unable to paint their own homes. Special thanks are in order to the numerous civic groups, churches, school organization and private and public employees who have come forward to lend a helping hand. Thanks also to the many kind and generous sponsors including Home Depot, Helen of Troy, Securities Services Federal Credit Union, Dominquez Sheet Metal Co., Kwal Paint and Target Stores for their help and support this year.



IT Techs Keep Us Moving Into The Future

There is no question that information technology is a key factor in the success of any organization. Project BRAVO's IT Department is dedicated to making sure our technology is up to date and working flawlessly at all times. IT Manager **Juan Manuel Vasquez** and his assistant **Carlos Pena** work almost around the clock maintaining and updating the agency's information technology systems at all seven Project BRAVO locations around El Paso

County. The pair is charged with ensuring continual operation of dozens of computers, internet connections, telephone systems and Web site operation. Both men are highly trained and exceptionally skilled having received their technical training on both sides of the U.S. and Mexico border. "It took many years of study to reach this level," said Juan Manuel. Members of the Project BRAVO staff are confident that the efficient and courteous service rendered by Vasquez and Pena will help keep Project BRAVO moving successfully forward well into the future.

County. The pair is charged with ensuring continual

Project BRAVO's IT Team



From the Client Side



Mrs. Mercedes Revercomb is not a person who freely asks for help or attention. That's why she found it difficult to approach her daughter Kathy to find help in fixing a water leak in her bathroom wall. The 79-

year old mother of ten grown children was living on a fixed income with her disabled husband.

The resources to fix problems in their aging home were scarce. A relative had vaguely heard of the services provided by Project BRAVO and recommended Kathy make a phone call to get information. At Project BRAVO, intake clerks quickly gathered Mrs. Revercomb's information and sent Weatherization Tech Gilbert Cubillos to her home at 7314 Mojave to conduct an assessment of

her needs. A few days later, an analysis determined Mrs. Revercomb was actually qualified to receive a number of services under Project BRAVO's Weatherization Assistance Program. "They replaced my attic insulation, my old furnace and they placed solar screens on my windows," said Mrs. Revercomb. "I am so happy I was given so much help by the people of Project BRAVO."

Mrs. Revercomb is just one of hundreds of clients who have been helped by the Weatherization Assistance Program.

The Young Faces Behind PB's Work-Study Program

They juggle school work, are always ready to greet you with a smile, and are every bit an integral part of the agency—meet the young faces of Project Bravo's Work Study Program.

The UTEP Work-Study program is designed to provide employment opportunities for students, but aside from helping them pay their educational expenses, it provides "hands-on" training, says Angie Villan, Patient Assistance Program (PAP) Coordinator who is also the agency's UTEP Work Study Program Coordinator. Villan says she enjoys working with these young students and placing them in departments where they will get the most out of their learning experience.

Sophomore Manny Mateo, who is the Housing Department's work-study, says one of the most worthwhile skills he's learned so far is being a catalyst in helping low-income people of El Paso. "I have made a difference in helping the community move forward in remodeling its housing facilities for low-income tenants," he said.

Gustavo Balderas, 21, began the program 10 months ago, and says he is glad he did especially since his work is very relevant to his degree. Balderas thinks he might even seriously consider the world of non-profits over that of a corporate environment when he graduates.

"First of all, I'm studying finance, so I

like working with numbers," said Balderas of his work in the Finance Department. "But I think I would also like to see how I can use these skills to work in (agencies) that help people."

Miguel Betancourt, 19, a Sophomore Chemistry major says his opportunity with the agency has taught him far more than any class in the curriculum can provide.

"It is very different than the way you cope with problems in school, which are far more trivial than the ones here where there are actual people depending on you doing your job right"



Work-study students Betancourt, Mateo and Balderas

Building Resources And Vocational Opportunities



Que ondas?

Welcome New Employees!

- Ignacio Seguro - Housing Services
- Felipe Huerta - Employment
- Diana Herrera - Human Resources
- Carlos Pena - IT
- Sharde Hargrave - Case Worker I

Did you know that BRAVO is an acronym? It is always spelled in upper case.

- Alberto Jimenez-Custodial
- Dania V. Gallegos - Case Worker I
- Jessie Vasquez-Housing Intake Clerk

Joke of the Month

Q: How many paws does a bear have?
A: One. One paw, one paw.

Tienes chisme?

Do you have anything interesting or fun to tell us? Are you getting married or engaged? Do you have a new grandchild? Did you celebrate a birthday or an anniversary recently? Share the good news with us. We'll post it in this space every month. Send it by email or phone to Roy Ortega or Maribel Santoyo in the Community Relations Department at the Main Office.