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Interim, Inc. Begins Search for New Executive Director Following Retirement Announcement of Barbara Mitchell

Barbara Mitchell announced that she is planning to retire in the summer of 2022 after a distinguished 43-year career at Interim. Barbara has served for 38 years as the Executive Director, and previously developed and directed the vocational services program.

Under Mitchell's leadership, Interim, Inc. has become Monterey County's preeminent mental health care provider, operating the largest non-profit supportive housing, treatment, and services program for people with mental illness in the county. Filling her shoes will be a daunting task.

The Board of Directors of Interim has formed a Search Committee to coordinate the search and has hired a San Mateo-



based executive search firm, Brakeley Search, which specializes in finding executives for nonprofit organizations.

Scott Staub, Managing Director of Brakeley Search, explained how Brakeley goes about finding the ideal candidate.

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Frank Warren PostSecrets May 11, 2022 5:30PM-6:30 PM

Interim will be hosting a free Virtual Zoom Webinar featuring Frank Warren, creator of the PostSecret Project.

Warren introduced the world to a collection of highly personal and artfully decorated postcards mailed anonymously from around the world. What started as a community mail art project exploded in popularity. Since PostSecret's inception in 2004, Warren has received over 1 million anonymous secrets on homemade postcards.

Among other achievements, Warren has published six PostSecret books, all of which have been featured on the New York Times bestsellers list. PostSecret's website is the most visited advertisement-free blog in the world and has won seven Webby Awards for "Best Blog on the Internet." Warren's project has raised over \$1 million for suicide prevention, earning him the Mental Health Advocacy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2011.



Warren's interactive multimedia event, "PostSecret Live" includes inspiring and funny stories behind the secrets, discusses the blog and how it led him to make suicide awareness part of his life's work, and demonstrates that through our secret struggles and adversity, we can help others.

Interim is hosting this unique event in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month. May is a time to raise awareness around those dealing with mental health and behavioral challenges and to reduce community stigma.

For more information and to register visit Interim's website at:
www.interiminc.org/events.

Meet the Board

Deborah Linden

Interim, Inc. is very pleased to welcome Deborah Linden as the newest member of Interim's Board of Directors. Deb retired from the City of San Luis Obispo's Police Department after 9 years as Chief of Police. Prior to that, Deb worked as a sheriff's deputy for the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department for 18 years.

As Chief of Police, Deb had a long relationship with Transitions Mental Health Services in San Luis Obispo. Together they secured a multi-million dollar grant to support programs and services in their county to improve lives and reduce crime.

Through her relationship with the Executive Director of Transitions, Deb was introduced to Barbara Mitchell, Executive Director of Interim, Inc. Deb is now bringing her vast experience in community relations and public safety, along with public speaking, teaching, and running both live and virtual events to support Interim's mission.

As Deb puts it, **"it's a privilege to be involved with an amazing organization like Interim, and I'm glad to be a part of it."** Interim, and the Board of Director's are grateful you've chosen to share your time and expertise with us, Deb!

Deb and her husband Bill Turner have retired in the Monterey County area. They have two grown sons, one who owns and operates The Grove Barber Shop in Pacific Grove, and one who lives in Fresno. They also have a 7-year-old grandson who they are enjoying seeing much more often.



Grand Reopening of Catalyst Apartments

The open house took place on Jan. 13, 2022 in Salinas. Tours of remodeled units A through E were conducted and refreshments were served.

Those attending included local officials and Board of Directors members, staff, and reps from other agencies Interim would also like to extend its thanks to generous funders, including The City of Salinas (CDBG funding), The Berkshire Foundation, Interfaith Outreach of Carmel, Community Foundation for Monterey County, and individual donors.

Catalyst Apartments is a 17-unit supportive housing complex located in Salinas. Interim repurchased 5 Catalyst units owned by the Housing Authority of Monterey County, which needed extensive rehabilitation. This project permanently preserves these housing units as affordable housing for very low-income adults with psychiatric disabilities. The other 12 units are owned by Catalyst Housing Inc, and managed by Interim.

For more information, please contact Interim, Inc. at (831) 649-4522 or online at www.interiminc.org.



Meet the Staff Kara Lorenz

Kara Lorenz has had quite the journey to reach her management position at Interim, Inc. as Program Director of the Choices Day Treatment Intensive program. She will take on this role in the next few months. She is currently serving as Acting Program Director at Bridge House.

That's just par for the course for Lorenz, who has worked in a number of different capacities and programs in Interim since she first volunteered for a peer position at the OMNI Center in Salinas as well as for the Our Voices program, both in 2014.

"I really wanted to get involved in Interim. My first step was to volunteer," says Lorenz, who received a bachelor's degree in psychology from CSU Monterey Bay that same year. **"I really liked it and I wanted to do more with Interim."**

That fall she was hired as a Community Support Worker with OMNI/Our Voices, which she did for a year or so. Since that position was limited to 19 hours a week, she wanted more hours and responsibilities. She applied and was hired, first as a Wellness Navigator for the Peer Partners for Health program, then as a Counselor II at Community Housing.

Then she had to take a break from Interim to finish her graduate work at CSUMB, which included a 20 hour per week internship. She knew she would always return to Interim.

After receiving her master's degree in social work from CSUMB, she took a full-time position as a Behavioral Health Clinician with The Academy. Then she worked as a "floater counselor," which allowed her more flexible hours, but also to get more intimately acquainted with all the programs and facilities at Interim.

She went on to become the Assistant Program Director at Bridge House. She held this position for 18 months before being named Program Director of Choices.

"I can't sit still for too long," she laughs, when asked how she was able to take on so many positions at Interim in the eight years since she first volunteered. **"The support we have and get from each other, I don't think we would get that at any other organization. There's a sense of community here, I feel heard, they're willing to work with you, so there's a feeling of constant support."**

She also believes her initial experience volunteering with Interim set the foundation for her work now.

"I don't think I would have stayed at Interim without that peer position," says the Fairfield native. **"I was never a client,**



but started in a peer position because I have a lot of lived experience when it comes to mental health and substance use issues. The peer position comes with knowledge not learned in school and comes with a lot of empathy. I could see how much of an impact, not only for me, but Interim as a whole, could have on somebody and how much that one person could grow."

Lorenz lives on the Monterey Peninsula with her partner and 2 1/2-year-old daughter, who was born just two weeks after she graduated with her master's degree. She enjoys spending time with them, as well as crafting, in which she does "a little bit of everything," including etching names of Interim staff members at Bridge House on glass coffee cups and building a "moss wall" for her home!

Sun Rose Apartment Construction – Building to End Homelessness!

Construction of Interim's new apartment complex in Salinas is progressing! Soon this will be a three-story complex of permanent and transitional housing for 17 homeless adults with mental illness who are very low income. WRD Architects is the design firm, and Kent Construction is the contractor.

Construction started in August of 2021 and is expected to be completed in the summer of 2022. Interim is still raising funds to cover the portion of the costs that must be covered by grants and



donations. Do you have a service club or faith community that would like to sponsor part of the furnishing? Help us to end homelessness in our community! If you would like to donate to this project, contact Development Officer Deb Shearer at (831) 649-4522 ext. 205 or dshearer@interiminc.org.



Community, the Essence of Interim

By Barbara Mitchell, Executive Director

I recently attended a celebration of life for an Interim client who died. I had known J for over 30 years. "J" had been a resident of Interim's housing, a client who used Interim's services, and an employee of the agency.

The memorial service was attended by over 60 clients, staff, former staff, and community members. It was organized by her friends and peers at Interim. The service was thoughtfully planned and included poetry, spiritual readings, and drumming. As J had many spirits, it reflected the many aspects of J's beliefs.

Interim community members got up and talked about how J had helped and supported them. One person talked about how she had taught them the importance of a daily schedule and how important it was to engage in meaningful activities. They spoke about how J had struggled with her own issues but had supported them to become stronger in dealing with their own challenges. J had worked for Interim and encouraged others to volunteer or do paid employment. J had also volunteered to run peer support groups both within and outside of Interim.

Everyone talked about her strength, her fashion style, her sense of humor, and her commitment. When J was dying, she



stayed in her Interim housing. While on hospice care she managed to live in the housing, with the support of her friends and neighbors until only days before her death.

What struck me most was how speaker after speaker talked about Interim as a community. Clients were grateful for the housing, and many talked about how

the treatment and services had supported them, but mostly they talked about Interim as a supportive community, helping them to be safe, to recover and grow. As with many of Interim's clients, J had no family in the area. However, the consumers running the service included the few remaining family members by live streaming the service to them.

Interim was her family. We talk about helping people become "independent" but really, which of us wants to be completely independent? We all need to feel part of a community, to feel needed and included and to have a purpose in life. Some of our clients will use our services for a short time and then move on. Some will change from being a client to being Interim staff and some will choose to be both clients and staff, using services and housing, but also working for Interim in landscaping, maintenance, peer support, and

homeless outreach. For many we are a community that they can be part of for life. Interim is a place to live, and for some a place they die. For J, it was a full life, with many challenges, but with many friends and with purpose. J's friends decided to plant a small garden in her memory near where she lived. They have already secured a donation of plants. We will remember J.

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Interim, Inc. Begins Search for New Executive Director...

"When somebody approaches us, it's a dialogue...The more we know about them, the better," he says, referring to his team's interviews not only with those working at Interim, but those working with Interim. Brakeley takes a "holistic" approach to their search, bringing to the fore an understanding of the whole organization, its mission, culture and values. "We want to make sure we are a value-added for our clients, so when the search is over,

the organization is strengthened by it."

Barbara intends to retire once a suitable successor is hired. She will provide consulting to the agency to ensure a smooth transition.

Barbara notes, "I'm committed to Interim's mission and I want to make sure that the community and the clients continue to have the same excellent services and housing currently provided. I'm retiring, but not leaving the area, and I intend to stay involved in local and state public policy issues on homelessness, affordable housing, and mental health services."

Diana Rosenthal, Board President and one of the three co-chairs of the Search Committee notes, "The Board of Directors is committed to finding a new Executive Director who will ensure that the mission and quality of services are maintained. We hope to find someone who can help the agency grow to expand needed services in our community."

For more information go to: https://www.brakeleybriscoe.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Interim_Inc._ED_Position_Specification_Final.pdf

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SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER



Our MCGives! Campaign Was a Rousing Success!

Thank you to all of you who donated to Interim during the Monterey County Weekly's MCGives! fundraising campaign in 2021. Thanks to your support, we reached a record-breaking level of giving to Interim Inc. Our total was \$52,015, which was an astounding 78% increase over last year!

Thanks to your donations, the funds will be used to help build Interim's new Sun Rose Apartments facility in Salinas. This three-story complex will provide transitional and permanent housing for 17 adults with mental illness plus a resident manager, offices and meeting rooms.

OUR MISSION

Interim's mission is to provide services and affordable housing, supporting members of our community with mental illness in building productive and satisfying lives.

OUR VISION

Interim, Inc. envisions a world in which people with mental illness are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in the community.

Since 1975, **Interim Inc.** has been providing housing, healing, hope for adults with mental illness.

Learn more at interiminc.org

