A Valued Experience

OPICA is unique in many ways: the only day care center to offer daily caregiver support groups; the only free-standing adult day care in the City of Los Angeles (all other centers have multi-purpose centers supporting them); daily art classes and so much more. But one of the most unique programs at OPICA are the internship programs.

The largest internship program is the Marriage & Family Therapist (MFT) program. This program allows for approximately 20 interns per year to earn hours at OPICA while providing important services. Interns assist in the facilitation of programs as well as provide one-on-one companionship for members who are experiencing anxiety, depression or transitioning into programs. Students for this program come from several educational institutions, including Pepperdine University, Phillips College, Argosy and more.

UCLA has several different programs that provide students internships. Every winter OPICA takes part in the Service Learning curriculum. Students have a choice of approximately eight non-profit organizations to work for a half day a week for six weeks. At the end of the program, students create a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the organizations’ services as well as its strengths and opportunities for improvement. It is always refreshing to listen to the presentations and see OPICA from a different perspective. Over the years, the recommendations of the presentations have resulted in our addition of some programs and expansion of collaborative partnerships. Other departments within the University have provided individual internships ranging in length from ten weeks to a full academic year. OPICA has been fortunate to participate in UCLA’s WT Chan Fellowship program, hosting students from China who wish to learn about non-profit programs for older adults. One of the students returned to China and has been involved with a start-up program for older adults. Both USC and UCLA have worked with OPICA on interns for the Masters of Social Work degree (MSW).

OPICA also works with several high schools and middle schools for service hours and intergenerational programs for the students.

continued on page 6
Dear Friends of OPICA,

I hope you will join us in celebrating OPICA’s 35th anniversary at the Forget-Me-Not Luncheon on June 5, 2014. The Board is proud to honor one of our own, Richard Giesberg, who as one of the original founding members of OPICA in 1979, is a most-deserving recipient of the Founders’ Award. We are also privileged to present Joshua Grill, Ph.D. with the Community Spirit Award for his Alzheimer’s disease research at UCLA (see opposite page).

At this time of our landmark 35th anniversary, we rejoice in OPICA’s three and a half decades of service to the Los Angeles community and celebrate its commitment to develop innovative programs and provide compassionate, respectful care for older individuals who are coping with dementia. With its stimulating art and music activities and its atmosphere of love and acceptance, OPICA brings a ray of sunshine each day into the lives of those with memory loss and brightens the lives of caregivers through counseling, support groups, and much-needed periods of respite.

We pause to reflect on our years of success but more importantly, to embrace the challenges that lay ahead. As the baby boomer population turns 55 and older, living longer than previous generations, the number of people affected by the devastation of dementia related diseases will grow exponentially. Moving forward as an independent non-profit organization since government funding was withdrawn, we are especially grateful for your partnership. It is only by working together OPICA can continue to provide services and program that preserve the quality of life for those coping with memory loss and the accompanying physical decline.

With appreciation for your support I look forward to OPICA’s increasing success in the next 35 years.

Sincerely,

Mary Baker
President, OPICA Board of Directors

OPICA is a place where adults coping with memory loss, dementia and related disorders are accepted and welcomed. While families and friends who come to us for help may be in crisis and not know where to turn, OPICA is here to provide support, guidance and hope.

Our mission is to:
• Provide compassionate and stimulating day care for adults impaired by dementia;
• Support caregivers through counseling and respite;
• Offer education and resources that increase community understanding of memory disorders; and

Through these programs, help our members continue to live at home.
**OPICA** is extremely proud and excited to honor two very special people who have made significant contributions to improve the lives of individuals and their families coping with memory loss at OPICA’s 9th Annual Forget-Me-Not Luncheon to be held on Thursday, June 5, 2014 at the Four Seasons Hotel.

**Richard Giesberg**, (Founders’ Award) represents the heart and soul of all that OPICA aspires to be. Recognizing as a young man the need to improve services to older adults and provide a place where they could be treated with compassion, dignity and respect, he never imagined that he would be a beneficiary of OPICA later in life. He and his beloved wife Middie were very involved in community and worldwide issues yet found the time to be instrumental in the development of OPICA. During Middie’s difficult journey coping with memory loss, OPICA was there for them.

**Joshua Grill, Ph.D.**, (Community Spirit Award) Assistant Professor of Neurology, Director of the Katherine and Benjamin Kagan Alzheimer’s Disease Treatment Development Program, and Leader of the Recruitment and Education Core within the Mary S. Easton Center for Alzheimer’s Disease Research at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, is committed to better improving the care for patients and families dealing with Alzheimer’s disease. His current research includes clinical trials of new medications for the disease and novel studies on research ethics. Dr. Grill has been an extraordinary resource and a valued partner of OPICA and dedicated to advancing community outreach, serving as the bridge between the work that he and his colleagues at UCLA do and the broader Alzheimer’s community.

**MEMBER PROFILE**

**Charles Galloway** was born in San Antonio, Texas on March 5, 1930. During the Korean War, he joined the navy at 19 years old and was part of the invasion of Incheon. After the war, he came back to Texas and met his mentor, Michael Madlock, who sparked an interest in him of culinary arts. Charles then moved to California to pursue his studies in culinary arts at L.A. Trade Tech under his new mentor, Harriet Henches.

After a career in catering, he moved to Zanesville, Ohio with his wife, Betty, to help take care of her mother. Compared to Los Angeles, Zanesville was very segregated and lacked integration. Motivated to make a difference, Charles became a leader of the local NAACP under the leadership of his boss, Medgar Evars. Charles took it upon himself to integrate the music scene by bringing musicians into town, such as Count Basie, Stan Kenton, and Duke Ellington, bringing mixed crowds to venues in Zanesville for the very first time.

Soon after, he joined the Merchant Marines where he worked for Paul Hall and Sea Fairs International Union in New York while touring the world as a seaman. During one of his tours to South Africa, he witnessed racism at its highest peak and could not idly stand. This has been a life-long theme of standing up against injustice for the sake of a better world.

Charles continues to be a very active member of a local jazz community, the Veterans Association, and the NAACP. He has been a highly valued member of OPICA for the last two years. Charles loves OPICA, not only for the value he gets out of it, but for what he is able to contribute to the members and the great feeling that he feels once he leaves, knowing he just positively affected others. After a lifetime of impressive involvement with the civil rights movement, going on naval tours of the world, organizing Jazz concerts, and attending several super bowls, Charles Galloway says, “There is so many things I still want to do, I ain’t through yet.”
FROM THE ADULT DAY CARE PROGRAM

Creating Positive Emotions

Everyone loves to celebrate a birthday – even those with serious dementia can enjoy it. Because some of our members have serious trouble with short-term memory they’re apt to quickly forget the “party.” At OPICA our focus is to create a simple celebration that produces a positive and happy vibe. Positive emotions can linger for days in someone with dementia, long after the specific cause is forgotten.

While birthdays can bring back memories that we’ve accumulated over a lifetime, at OPICA, celebrating a birthday is celebrating the “moment” where members are surrounded by familiar faces. Whether turning 9 or 99, everyone deserves a party.

For more information about OPICA’s Day Care program, contact Sara Kaye, Family Services supervisor at (310) 478-0226 or sara@opica.org

THE POWER OF MUSIC

Carl Klubok was unresponsive, keeping his head down, avoiding contact most of the time, until Andy Tubman began working with him one on one, and his demeanor changed dramatically. Andy, a certified music therapist and co-founder of Sing-Fit, is a valued partner of OPICA, training staff innovative techniques to enhance experiences for OPICA members. When Karl returned to the group on the main floor, he turned to one of his peers, very animated and made eye contact with confidence. “He came alive both physically and vocally,” Family Services Supervisor, Sara Kaye described the effect of music as transformational.

Music therapy has many benefits for people with Alzheimer’s. The power of music can soothe, unlock memories and provide new ways to communicate to those around them. “Even if they’re not necessarily able to tell you what the song is, they are able to be moved and feel the associations,” exclaimed Barbara Levy, Program Coordinator at OPICA. Barbara added the Sing-Fit program to an already robust menu of activities that include: laughter yoga, Tai Chi, ping pong, volleyball and dancing.

Even though Alzheimer’s disease and various forms of dementia compromise many parts of the brain, long-term memory of music from when one was young often remains. As Sara Kaye notes, “if you tap that, you really get that kind of awakening response. It’s pretty exciting to see.”

A warm welcome to Stacey Barrett, OPICA’s new Director of Fund Development. Before coming to OPICA, Stacey was the Director of Development at BJE – Builders of Jewish Education and Development Associate at Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion. We look forward to working with Stacey to expand OPICA’s capacity to enhance and grow its services and programs.

The power of music can soothe, unlock memories and provide new ways to communicate.

Carl Klubok takes the stage

Hal Weinberg Celebrates his birthday at OPICA
FROM THE COUNSELING CENTER

The OPICA Brain Train Brings Out the Artist Within

While evidence shows that art stimulates the senses and gives us something to talk about, most of us reserve it as an activity for those with perceived talent.

Art therapy is one of four components that comprise OPICA’s innovative program, the Brain Train. A maximum of eight participants per group ensure an intimate and informal social environment. The OPICA Brain Train offers peer support with activities designed to stimulate cognitive functioning and preserve social skills, to decrease isolation and anxiety. A four hour program that takes place weekly, the OPICA Brain Train was developed six years ago with seed money from the Brookdale Foundation to help people with mild cognitive impairment. Today OPICA operates OPICA Brain Trains at five locations and looks forward to opening a sixth in summer 2014.

In addition to art therapy, OPICA Brain Train activities include Yoga for the Brain™, support groups (held concurrently with a caregivers group), a relaxed social setting for lunch where relationships build, and interactive exercises that provide cognitive stimulation to promote critical thinking, problem solving and self-esteem. Jay Hoffstein, a former basketball coach at Venice High School, signed up for the Brain Train in 2012. Today he appreciates and enjoys the time spent with friends whom, he says, “are going through the same things I am. [Painting] helps me communicate when talking is difficult.”

Studies show that art therapy can enhance communication, brain function and social interaction for dementia clients. In fact, visual art can trigger dormant memories and emotions, inspiring conversations among clients who often struggle to express themselves. Emily Carvill, Program Supervisor at OPICA, explains that “art activity stimulates the whole brain. Art media is used in a personally meaningful way as individuals plan, remember, create images and use motor skills, but more importantly, it enhances their quality of life.”

DID YOU KNOW?

OPICA works with several educational institutions to offer internships and learning opportunities from middle school to the graduate level. Some of the schools include:

- Wildwood
- New West Charter
- Notre Dame Academy
- CSUN
- UCLA
- USC
- Mount St. Mary’s College
- Westchester Playa Village
- OASIS
- Yvonne Burke Senior Center
- Alzheimer’s Association
- UCLA
You Are Not Alone

Coming together to celebrate, nurture, encourage, and console one another is an integral part of being human; and is even more important during difficult times. If we’re lucky, we get support from family and friends, but sometimes they can’t quite understand what it’s like to be in our situation.

Pete England joined a support group at OPICA in 2007 when he was the caregiver for his partner Nancy. Today, Pete is an active member of OPICA’s Board of Directors and continues to come to his weekly support group. As Pete puts it, “For me, it’s an opportunity to give back, to take a horrible situation and make something positive of it.”

OPICA provides family caregivers the community they need where they can share personal stories, express emotions, and be heard in an atmosphere of acceptance, understanding, and encouragement. Participants share information and resources. By helping others, people in a support group strengthen and empower themselves.

The emotional support derived from support group participation can help reduce stress, where participants learn how to develop better coping skills. By attending support groups, partners, friends, and family members may also learn how to be more understanding and supportive of their loved ones coping with dementia.

For more information about OPICA support groups, contact Anne Galbraith, Director of Counseling at (310) 478-0226 or anne@opica.org

A Valued Experience continued from page 1

OPICA participates in these programs so that future generations can have an opportunity to learn of the need for supportive programs for older adults, as well as provide an opportunity to experience first hand the rewarding experience of providing service to others.

Mary Michlovich, Executive Director

We apologize for inadvertently omitting recognition for the very generous donation from Benefactor ($5,000-$9,999), John Levi, Jr. to our 2012/2013 Annual Campaign in the previous newsletter.

Your support is vital to the work of OPICA. In appreciation, all donors to the 2013/2014 annual campaign will be acknowledged in the Summer/Fall newsletter.
OPICA SERVICES
If you’re struggling to care for a loved one with Alzheimer’s or other challenges with dementia, we can help. Learn why more families trust us to improve quality of life for those coping with dementia with compassion and loving care.

ADULT DAY CARE CENTER
- Current events discussions
- Reminiscence groups to stimulate memories and improve cognitive skills
- Daily walks in the adjacent park
- Speech therapy
- Relaxation and/or sensory exercise
- Entertainment (music, magic and more)
- Art therapy including painting and drawing for self-expression
- Music therapy
- Language/cultural groups (e.g. Yiddish and Nisei)
- Evidence-based arthritis prevention program
- Continental breakfast, nutritious hot lunch and afternoon snack daily
- Low impact aerobics, chair exercises, Tai Chi, yoga and dancing

EDUCATION & OUTREACH
- Chapters in Caregiving
- Powerful Tools for Caregivers
- Savvy Caregiver
- Memory Training
- Healthier Living
- Walk With Ease
- A Matter of Balance

COUNSELING
- Spousal Support Groups
- Adult Children Support Group
- Adult Children & Spousal Support Group
- Individual, Couples and Family Counseling
- Trainee/Intern Program

EARLY MEMORY LOSS
The innovative OPICA Brain Train supports individuals with early memory loss and their family care partners mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Offered at five locations.

For more information regarding OPICA programs, call (310) 478-0226
TRIBUTES AND MEMORIALS

OPICA Tribute Cards honor, commemorate, and recognize life’s most important events with a unique message of care and compassion.

We express appreciation to the individuals listed below who contributed to OPICA in the form of a tribute between July and December 31, 2013.

IN HONOR OF

Ishara Bailis
by Izak and Sharon Ben-Meir
OPICA Staff
by Anne Berkovitz
Ann Hammond
by Ishara Bailis and Tim Bowler
Mary Chelnek
by Diane Branman
Frances’ 70th Birthday
by Lana Brody
Albert Wolf
by Patricia Bucky
Shila Hazan
by Phyllis Cole
Appreciation of Arnel
by Maria Cortez
Joyce Leanse
by Rhea Coskey
Fred Cowan
by Rob Cowan
Tom O’Conner and Mary Bomba
by Miriam Daniel
Eugene Davis
by Sherrill Davis
Barbara Bilson’s 80th Birthday
by Aaron and Sari Eshman
Bunni Dybns
by Shirley Carey Evatt,
Richard and Middie Giesberg
by Daniel Giesberg and Carol Lifland,
Ann Hammond
by Richard Giesberg
Frank Wood
by Ellen Goldman
Mary Lyday and her loving son Dennis
by Raymond Goldstone
OPICA Staff
by Stan and Linda Goodman
The Hart’s Anniversary
by Arlene Gottlieb
Joyce Leanse
by Jacquelyn Gottlieb
Ann Hammond
by Douglas Hammond
Wishing a Rapid Recovery to
Mrs. Twyla Weiss
by Irwin and Carolyn Harris
Mary Baker
by Elizabeth Hecht
Bobbie North’s Birthday
by Barbara Eisenbach Heitz
Alice Hirai
by Agnes Hirai
Alice Hirai
by Jane Hirai
Stanley and Betty Sheinbaum
by Margery Tabankin and Earl Katz
Bunni Dybns
by Aura Kuperberg
Betty and Stanley Sheinbaum
by Luis and Lee Lainer
Joyce Leanse
by Alvin and Gloria Lanfeld
Joyce Leanse
by Tom and Barbara Leanse
Joyce Leanse
by Jean Leserman
Joyce Leanse
by Shirley Levine
Happy Hanukkah to
Nancy Levinson
by Daniel and Dana Levinson
Barbara Levy for our anniversary
by Alan Levy
Mary Baker
by Ruth Linnick
Marilyn Levin
by Marion Marsh-Goldenfeld
Bunni Dybns
by Lorene Mendelsohn
Leroy Miller
by Janet Miller
Dr. David Trader
by Sylvia Miller
Harold Weinstock
by Nicole Netanel
Joyce Leanse
by Laura Ornest
Shirley Kleiman
by Frank and Roslyn Pinkus
Shirley Kleiman
by Herb and Adele Reznikoff
Frances’ 70th Birthday
by Teresa Riddle
Lillian Roth
by Harry Roth
Appreciation to OPICA
by Larry and Bette Rudick
Edward Keating
by Daniel and Patricia Ryan
Marilyn Levin
by Ralph and Shirley Shapiro
Dr. Jose Nessim
by Renni Skepner
Jennifer Ellen Grahm
by Ronald Smith
Rita and Ted Williams
by Ruth Snyder
Betty and Stanley Sheinbaum
by Rod Gorney and Carol Sobel
Marilyn Levin
by Marcia Solomon
Fred Cowan
by Carla Tulchin
Sue Simon’s Birthday
by Eva Wartnik
Bill Davidson
by Irene Weinrot
Joyce Leanse
by Jane Werner
Teresa Riddle
by Brenda and Dave Winter
Albert Wolf
by Diane Wolf
Joyce Leanse
by Robert and Joyce Wolf
Harriet Scheir’s 70th Birthday
by Judith Wolman
Saul Ziporovich
by Marcelo Ziporovich
Bunni Dybns
by Jay and Rachelle Zukerman
When the occasion calls for a special remembrance, your purchase of a beautiful OPICA Tribute Card (designed by participants in OPICA art classes), and the tax-deductible gift you make with it, contribute vital support to OPICA’s life-enhancing services.

To make your special Tribute Card purchase and donation, please contact Stacey Barrett (310) 478-0226, ext.13 or Stacey@opica.org. You can also request your tribute by visiting our website (www.opica.org) or using the enclosed donation envelope.
THE FACES OF OPICA
UPCOMING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

CHAPTERS IN CAREGIVING
A monthly speaker series, open to the general public, offering a selection of topics to help family caregivers and other community members better understand and cope with those experiencing memory disorders.

All Chapters in Caregiving classes are offered free of charge and take place Mondays evening at: OPICA, 11759 Missouri Avenue, 90025 from 6:00 – 7:30 P.M.

March 10, 2014  The Power of Music
April 7, 2014  Know the 10 Signs: Early Detection Matters
May 12, 2014  Hypertension, Diabetes and Alzheimer’s Disease
June 9, 2014  Mindfulness, Self-Compassion and Self-Care
July 14, 2014  Conversation about Dementia

For more information and/or to R.S.V.P., contact Yesenia Gonzalez (310) 478-0226 or yesenia@opica.org

POWERFUL TOOLS FOR CAREGIVERS
A six-week educational series designed to help unpaid family caregivers take care of themselves while caring for a relative or friend. Develop a wealth of self-care tools to reduce personal stress, communicate your needs effectively in challenging situations, cope with difficult emotions, and, as a caregiver, make difficult decisions.

Begins Friday, March 7, 2014 (runs for six consecutive Fridays) 1:00 – 3:00 P.M.
Begins Wednesday, April 2, 2014 (runs for six consecutive Wednesdays) 3:30 – 5:30 P.M.

SAVY CAREGIVER
A six week series to learn: stages of Alzheimer’s and dementia related illnesses; how to help your loved one and how to understand difficult behavior; how to take care of yourself as a caregiver and how to share experiences.

Begins Tuesday, April 8, 2014 (runs for six consecutive Tuesdays) 3:00 – 5:00 P.M.

For more information, contact Emily Carvill, (310) 478-0226 or emily@opica.org

HOW CAN YOU HELP?
OPICA welcomes anyone who would like to volunteer.

At the day care center, you can interact with members, walk with them in the park, join them for art class, dance to the music, share your talents and much more. One-on-one social interaction with members is very engaging.

Donate items for the Forget-Me-Not luncheon’s Silent Auction. Your donation of a gift certificate or other item for the auction will provide vital support for the valuable services OPICA provides for older adults coping with memory loss and their families.
They gave us life, love
and friendship.
Give them the best.

COMING SOON:

9th Annual
Forget-Me-Not
Luncheon
June 5, 2014

OPICA
ADULT DAY CARE
AND COUNSELING CENTER
11759 Missouri Avenue • Los Angeles, CA 90025
310-478-0226 • www.opica.org

Adult Day Care Program Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday – Friday
Counseling Center Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m., Monday – Friday