



Co-

Chairs: Linette Escobar & Eva Iraheta  
Secretary: Cristy Dieterich

## SF-CAIRS Meeting

Wednesday, March 14th 2012 – 12:15 pm– 1:45pm

Host: Upwardly Global  
Hobart Building, 582 Market St. 10th Floor Conference Room  
San Francisco

- Welcome & Introductions – *Linette Escobar, Eva Iraheta, Cristy Dieterich, Daisy Reyes, Cecily Victor, Ildar Hofizov, Blythe Raphael, Cecily Victor, Saher Bahloo, Cecilia Lipp, Dario Romero, Elena Zlobina, Suyen Figueroa, Lobsang Thinley, Christina Shea, Nate Dunstan*
- Highlights from January 11, 2012 Meeting – Re-elected SF-CAIRS leadership team. Nour Chamba, Immigration Attorney from the Arab Resource and Organizing Center (AROC). Burmese community profiles and report by Zar Ni Maung - Burma Refugee Family Network and Zaw Phan, Newcomers Health Program, health worker/interpreter

### **\*\* Special Topic: MEDA Tax Program for low-income filers**

Dairo Romero, Director of Programs, Mission Economic Development Agency –“Strengthen Your Family’s Economic Wellbeing” - [dromero@medasf.org](mailto:dromero@medasf.org) 415-282-3334 x132

- **Services:** For 40 years MEDA has provided various **FREE workshops and individual coaching session** at several sites in the Mission, including issuing official IDs for tax services, and tax preparation. Last year MEDA completed tax forms for 2700 individuals. MEDA also provides financial education services, including establishing credit, how to start a business, and the first-time home-buyer program. Share their building with other organizations such as: Tax program qualification is family household income under \$50,000 from any county.
- **Who:** low-income (less than \$50,000/family), English, Spanish, or bring an interpreter. Open to anyone regardless of immigration status.
- **How:** Call to make an appointment or walk-in, Mon-Sat. Bring photo ID, paystubs etc.
- **Safety:** There is legislation that IRS does not share info with Dept. Homeland Security.
- **Benefit:** Filing taxes is one proof to obtain naturalization services.
- Services provided in English and Spanish. For other languages, refer to “Earn it, Keep it, Save it” program provides services in the Tenderloin in many Asian languages. Find other credentialed tax prep agencies on the MEDA website or 211 by zip code and language capacity.

### **\*Guest Panel: Mental Health Services & Referrals**

- Cecilia Lipp Program Manager Survivors International [cecilialipp@survivorsintl.org](mailto:cecilialipp@survivorsintl.org),  
[415-546-2080](tel:415-546-2080) (general) [415-437-3073](tel:415-437-3073) (direct) [www.survivorsintl.org](http://www.survivorsintl.org)

- Saher Bahaloo, PhD, [saharbahaloo@survivorsintl.org](mailto:saharbahaloo@survivorsintl.org) clinical services.

[415-546-2080](tel:415-546-2080) (general) [415-437-3073](tel:415-437-3073) (direct) Last fall, Survivors International (SI) became a program of the UCSF’s Trauma Recovery Center.

**Services:** SI works with immigrant clients who have experienced trauma and torture or gender-based violence. There is not a time limit of when the incidence happened to obtaining services. SI provides individual therapy, assistance with medical and mental health exams for asylee applications, medical and psychological evaluations for asylum cases, and assistance to survivors of crimes such as acute sexual

-----\*\*

Share info and resources by sending an email to the group at:

[sf-cairs@googlegroups.com](mailto:sf-cairs@googlegroups.com)

email to : [SF.CAIRS@gmail.com](mailto:SF.CAIRS@gmail.com)



assault to obtain assessments for immigration relief. They also help clients with evaluation and testimony in court for removal proceedings. They can provide waivers for medical disability for naturalization. SI refers to partner agencies for support with case load and capacity.

Main diagnosis they see are PTSD and Major Depressive disorders and often somatic complaints such as pain and sexual dysfunction, which are difficult for clients to talk about. SI's approach is to reach them and customize a plan.

**Referrals to SI:** contact Cecilia Lipp [415-546-2080](tel:415-546-2080) (general) [415-437-3073](tel:415-437-3073) (direct)

Referrals come from legal services for asylum evaluations and therapy and group referrals from community and health partners

Services are free for the client. SI solicits donations from legal representatives who are representing clients.

**Environment & Trainings:** The goal of service delivery is to create a safe space for clients through a welcoming environment, groups, classes, and consistent interpreter staff.

They remind us all to keep in mind the "trauma lens" and set up your office for client safety, for example, make sure the client can see the door, no harsh lights, etc.. Cecilia offers trainings to organizations about how to best accommodate clients who may have experienced torture/trauma, which provide safety and can encourage the client to return for services. Trainings also include learning when and how to get support for a client and to have a risk assessment plan in place. They have had positive feedback on these trainings.

- Christina Shea, LMFT, RAMS, Inc. (Richmond Area Multi-Services)- Deputy Chief/Director of Clinical Services 415-668-5955 [christinashea@ramsinc.org](mailto:christinashea@ramsinc.org)

**Services:** RAMS provides culturally competent community mental health services with a focus on serving API and Russian speaking communities. Annually RAMS provide services to 15,000 adults, children, youth and families in San Francisco. In particular, RAMS provides outpatient mental health services to 1200 diverse clients at the Adult Outpatient Clinic at any given time. Half of those clients are immigrants and refugees and they serve anyone regardless of immigration status. There are bi-lingual interdisciplinary team on staff representing over 16 API languages/dialects and Russian, and they use the Service Model of matching culture and language, without needing to use interpreters. Most clinical staff are trained in western psychology but keeps client's cultural background in mind and apply cultural sensitivity/informed practice to best meet their needs. RAMS also provide mental health services to children, youth and families at the Child Youth and Family Outpatient Services Clinic and at public schools. RAMS collaborates with over 20 local partner agencies and groups.

**Programs:** RAMS has over 30 programs integrated in eleven clinical programs, and services are provided across SF, some of the services including:

- Culturally competent clinical trainings for graduate students studying psychology, Marriage Family Therapy, and social work.
- Behavioral health services at Wellness Center program for youth at 15 public high schools
- Mental health and substance abuse services for welfare to work program at PAES Counseling and Pre-Vocational Services.
- Fu Yau Project – a collaboration of RAMS and Chinatown Child Development Center provides Mental health consultation services at childcare centers, family child care homes, and family support centers. Services including prevention and early intervention.
- Summer Bridge a mentoring program for youth in understanding about how psychology applies to career options. (many referrals come from San Francisco public schools).
- Asian Family Institute – provides mental health services -- fee for services for those with private insurance and CalWork recipients.

-----\*\*

*Share info and resources by sending an email to the group at:*

[\*\*sf-cairs@googlegroups.com\*\*](mailto:sf-cairs@googlegroups.com)

**email to :** [SF.CAIRS@gmail.com](mailto:SF.CAIRS@gmail.com)



- Hire-Ability Vocational Services – contract from a collaboration of DPH and State Department of Rehab – provides vocational and employment services located at Potrero Hill. Another program within Hire-Ability is Vocational IT program, funded through MHSA, including a 9-month training program for the HelpDesk at DPH-Community Behavioral Health Services location. We are starting a new training program, Desktop, which is teaching consumers to learn how to trouble shoot and repair computers at CBHS. We also operate a café and a shelter workshop to assess clients' employability and provides vocational training.

**Referrals:** for outpatient mental health services for consumers with public health insurance (MediCal, Medicare, Healthy SF, etc.) or without insurance Call 668-5955 and ask for the intake coordinator. You may be asked some questions (e.g. home location, health insurance, major issues, date of birth, etc.) and possibly setting up an intake appointment; for outpatient mental health services for consumers with private insurance and free problem gambling treatment, call 668-5998.

### **Communication Tips when talking about mental health services for your clients:**

How to broach subject with your clients who may experience mental health stigma?

- Establish trust. Frame the topic in a way that accessing help now will help them in the future. Focus on the skills they need to work on to reach their goal.
- Ask them “can I keep checking back with you on this item?”
- Explain that these health services can help with this particular time/process in your life, while you are helping them with other parts (such as finding a job etc.).
- Use the term “support services” rather than “mental health”
- Offer to help connect them to services (if you can)

### **Discussion Items:**

\* 2012 topics and guests – survey results of top meeting topics sent via email. These will guide the leadership committee on panel guests and topics for upcoming meetings.

\* Resume Committees topic – Info/Outreach, Resource, Publicity – Eva is reviewing notes from past committee work in order to continue the progress made to date. Meeting could be held before or after regular SFCAIRS meetings or possibly online/phone conference.

\* Website update– SF-CAIRS.org domain name is secured. Volunteer Elena is working on the SF-CAIRS website. Elena is a job seeker with Upwardly Global.

### **\*\* Agency updates, current initiatives, events, announcements etc.**

- UpGlo – upcoming San Jose Jobseekers Workshop with a focus on healthcare. Let Cecily know if you have contacts to help in the SJ area.
- UpGlo is looking for mentors 5-8 hours a month. Come to a networking event to find out more!
- UpGlo Jobseekers are available for volunteering with agencies. Contact Cecily with description of project/position you have. They have a large pool of jobseekers! Both side win – your program gets some professional help and the volunteer gets experience and a recommendation.
- RAMS – Available mentorship program for students interested in psychology: 8-weeks M, W, F summer program for transitional age youth.
- Newcomers Health Program: Anti-Human Trafficking trainings available at your site. Recommended for anyone working with vulnerable populations. Contact Cristy 415-581-2479

-----\*\*

*Share info and resources by sending an email to the group at:*

[\*\*sf-cairs@googlegroups.com\*\*](mailto:sf-cairs@googlegroups.com)

**email to : SF.CAIRS@gmail.com**



- SUNSET – Continuing work on policies for smoke-free housing. Contact Linette for more info: [lescobar@bacr.org](mailto:lescobar@bacr.org) 415-682-1963
- Survivors International – English language classes on Fridays 1-2:30pm for current SI clients. Other classes include Post-Asylum Benefits

Meeting Evaluation

\*\*\*\*\*

Next meeting: **Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> 2012 – 12:15pm– 1:45pm**

SFCAIRS Meeting Evaluation:

San Francisco Coalition for Asylee, Immigrant and Refugee Services

Meeting Date: 3/14/12

N= 8

Format	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The time of the meeting was convenient.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4 (50%)	4 (50%)
The length of the meeting was appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 (63%)	3 (37%)
Time was used efficiently.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 (63%)	3 (37%)

\* What topics or panel would you like to see presented for future meetings? (If you know of a speaker on a specific topic, please provide the speaker’s name and contact information if possible.)

- [Free attorney services for asylees or refugees.](#)

\* Are there other community partners or agencies who could add to the work of SF CAIRS?  
If yes, who? (No responses)

\* What did you enjoy most about today’s meeting?

- [Lot’s of great info](#)
- [Getting information for immigrants about services available to them.](#)
- [About Mental Health clinics](#)

\* Please share any additional comments:

- [Some “how to” trainings may be useful, such as setting up office, talking to clients about seeking therapy.](#)

\*\*\*\*\*

Share info and resources by sending an email to the group at:

[sf-cairs@googlegroups.com](mailto:sf-cairs@googlegroups.com)  
email to : [SF.CAIRS@gmail.com](mailto:SF.CAIRS@gmail.com)



- Well done all around! I appreciate your meeting note for future reference and sincerely value the connection between SF CAIRS and EBRF.
  - Presenters should prepare presentations for 15 min with materials.
  - I am wondering how to connect different coalitions/orgs to support immigrants.
  - Can EBRF be added to your member list? (yes!)
- 

-----\*\*

*Share info and resources by sending an email to the group at:*

**[sf-cairs@googlegroups.com](mailto:sf-cairs@googlegroups.com)**

***email to : SF.CAIRS@gmail.com***