



OMBUDSMAN SERVICES
OF SAN MATEO COUNTY INC
ADVOCATE. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.

711 NEVADA STREET
REDWOOD CITY, CA 94061



We are told that the two things we can count on in life are death and taxes. I believe we can add a third to that list: change. Ombudsman Services has added a new staff member to our team. Mitch Reitman has joined us as our new and first Development Director. We are pleased to welcome him, and believe that in time he will strengthen and increase our ability to continue building on the services we provide to the residents in the long-term care

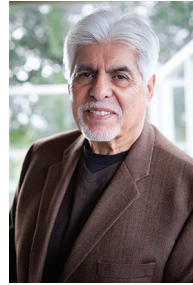
facilities, as well as our collaborative efforts with stakeholders to strengthen the continuum of care for all who reside in our county. It is an exciting new step for us that holds much promise for the future of the program. See Mitch's bio inside this newsletter.

In addition to adding a new staff member, we have also launched our internship program for Masters of Social Work students at San Francisco State University and San Jose State University. We have our first intern, and believe this is a strong win-win situation for all concerned. We hope that our involvement with this program will grow in the years to come, helping us bridge the shortfall of state-certified volunteers we need while at the same time providing a rich and worthwhile learning experience for future social workers, hopefully generating a lasting interest in the aging community. See a short article on Kirsten inside the newsletter.

We want to maintain close contact with each of you who are so important to the overall program well-being. To keep you better informed you can visit our website at www.ossmc.org and register on the front page with your e-mail address, or you can send us an e-mail so we can add it to your contact information. Thank you to all our readers for your ongoing interest and support.

Sincerely,

Tippy Irwin
Executive Director



In assuming the role as President I thank the board members for their vote of confidence and support in the months to come.

I joined the OSSMC board in 2008 following retirement from The City and County of San Francisco as Head Assistant District Attorney in charge of the Consumer and Environmental Unit and the Child Support Department Legal Team.

I have witnessed the remarkable growth and development of the OSSMC. Under the combined leadership of the board, staff and ombudsman volunteers, the residents of Long-Term Care facilities have the continued assurance of effective services to protect and advocate for a meaningful quality of life.

While there is a federal mandate for oversight of Long-Term Care resident elders and dependent adults, there are limited designated funds for the sustained operation of ombudsman services from the federal and/or state governments. OSSMC has received operating funds from local health districts, local government agencies, foundations, private donors and annual fundraisers. The recent recession had a negative effect on operating revenues limiting any expanded support services.

Our compassionate and dedicated volunteers provide core services without compensation. However, the population of elders is growing dramatically with a corresponding increase need for oversight and monitoring of long-term care elders. A recent bequest has now enabled us to employ an experienced Director of Development and a grant writer to develop and diversify sources of funding to enhance programs, services and operations.

We look forward to our continued collaboration with elder and adult dependent service providers.

Best Regards,

Robert H. Perez
President, OSSMC Board of Directors



Meet Our Newest Team Members



Please welcome Mitch Reitman, our Director of Development to OSSMC. Mitch is responsible for fundraising and development from individuals, corporations, foundations, and government sources. He also coordinates marketing efforts for the agency.

Mr. Reitman's 30-year career as a non-profit development officer and non-profit administrator began as a Jewish Communal Service professional in Jewish Community Federations and as an Executive Director at several Bay Area synagogues. Later, Mitch worked as Development Director for the Mid-Peninsula Boys and Girls Club in San Mateo, the South Bay Branch of Cystic Fibrosis, the Alameda County Health Care Foundation, and Eden I&R where he directed annual and corporate giving, major gifts, special events (including galas and golf tournaments), grant management, and capital campaigns.

Mitch holds a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from San Diego State University, and Master's Degrees in Social Work from the University of Maryland and in Jewish Studies from Baltimore Hebrew University. He lives in Foster City with his wife, Lisa. Together, they have two grown sons, Jeremy and Adam.

Mitch's goals for OSSMC are to diversify funding sources, increase giving by individuals, develop fundraising and marketing plans, and a structure for development activities. He hopes to create strong partnerships with board members, staff, volunteers, funders, and community organizations in order to increase vital revenue to meet the mission of OSSMC in challenging long-term care facilities to deliver the highest standards of individualized care for their residents and advocates for the health, safety, and dignity of residents.

Ombudsman Services is thrilled to announce the launch of our internship program for Masters of Social Work students studying at San Francisco State and San Jose State. Students are able to gain a deeper, hands on understanding of the aging and long-term care setting while completing their academic coursework. Through their time at OSSMC they are able to engage directly with residents of long term care and work to help resolve their complaints and concerns. If you are a student in a Masters of Social Work program and are interested in joining the 2015-2016 program please contact Nicole Howell at 650-780-5705.



In August of 2014 we were joined by our first intern Kirsten Irgens-Moller. Kirstin is a second year student at San Francisco State University who is transitioning back to the aging sector after working for twenty five years as a human rights advocate. She is a long-time resident of San Francisco with her husband and is the proud mother of two adult children. Kirsten is eager to begin her career in the aging industry and looks forward to advocating for those living in long-term care.

2013-2014 Snapshot

Cases Opened: 1,331

Cases Closed: 1,318

Total Facility Visits: 4,564

Total Hours Donated by Volunteers: 5,643

Community Presentation Hours Provided: 60

Circle of Care Conference



Alzheimer's Association: Circle of Care

Saturday, November 8, 2014
Crowne Plaza Hotel
1221 Chess Dr.
Foster City, CA 94404

Register at: <http://conference.kintera.org/coc2014>



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alzheimer's 
association™

Did you know that 70% of
the residents we serve
experience dementia?

Have you heard that there
are 5 million Americans
living with dementia and
they are cared for by 15.5
million family members?

Ready to learn what you
can do to help support
those who are living with
dementia and learn more
about the disease?

Then join us for a day of
learning and information
sharing from leaders in
dementia research and
care.

Ways to Give to Ombudsman Services

Your Gift to Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County (OSSMC) helps us to accelerate our mission in raising the standards of care and quality of life for those who live in long-term care.

Donate On-Line via secure credit card transaction - visit www.ossmc.org

Donate By Check - 711 Nevada Street Redwood City, CA 94061

Make a Tribute Donation in honor of or memory of a friend or loved one or note a special occasion.

A Tribute Donation to OSSMC is a fine way to memorialize a loved one, honor a caregiver who made a difference in your family's life, or to note a special occasion, such as a wedding or the birth of a child.

The person whom you designate will receive a Tribute card, and you will receive an acknowledgement letter that also serves as a tax receipt.

Planned Giving

You don't have to be rich to leave a legacy. Individuals from all walks of life can leave a portion of their estate to charities of their choice through their will or estate plan.

Leaving a legacy of support for OSSMC will protect the rights of residents in long-term care facilities and raise the level of care for frail and elderly residents throughout San Mateo County.

If you have included OSSMC in your will or estate plan, please contact us and become a member of our Legacy Society today. You can email your name as you would like it to appear in printed materials to Director of Development, Mitch Reitman at mitchreitman@ossmc.org. If you would like more information, please email or call Mitch at 650-780-7249.

Your gift affords many advantages:

- You can plan today how you want to be remembered, while not disrupting your current financial plans.
- You can plan a gift that will take effect only after your other obligations have ceased.
- You can donate appreciated securities instead of cash.

For more information on other planned giving vehicles and ways you can leave a legacy gift, contact your tax and legal advisors, and then contact Director of Development Mitch Reitman at 650-780-7249.

Workplace Giving

Support OSSMC through the United Way's Workplace Giving campaign.

Matching Gifts

Many employers match their employees' gifts to charitable organizations. Just contact your supervisor or human resources department, then fill out the matching gift form and mail it to us. Your employer will receive your gift, complete your form, and send both your gift and corporate matching gift to OSSMC. Some restrictions may apply.

Theft in a Long-Term Care Facility

Ombudsman Services received a report that a residents' money was missing. Then came another such report, and yet another involving mostly small amounts of cash. Our ombudsmen called in local law enforcement, but given the strong pull on their time to investigate more serious crimes in the community, they were somewhat hesitant to intervene. That continued until a woman reported she had lost jewelry valued at over \$10,000 and it was at that time noted that prescription drugs had also been stolen. By now we had the attention of law enforcement. In all, a total of 35 thefts were reported. A request was made to the facility to install cameras in the hallways. The facility's corporate decision makers were reluctant, but finally complied.

In the meantime, an RN in the facility had been noted stumbling down the corridors, evidently under the influence of drugs. When confronted by the administration, she refused a drug test and left, only to show up later as an RN at another facility in our county.

And when yet another theft was reported, the video from the cameras revealed nothing of interest, for the cameras had not been installed correctly. A letter to the corporate headquarters on the east coast demanding that the corporation fix the cameras, yielded a response. They requested a meeting. The attorney for the corporation made the case that the average age of the residents at the facility was 85, and that these residents were forgetful, would often lose items and presume them to be stolen, only to find them later. The degrading and condescending attitude towards the aging residents was shocking. However, the investigating detective was at that meeting and was able to state that he had found lock boxes broken into when the thefts were reported, and that he did not believe for a moment that the losses were merely the imaginings of a group of incapacitated, demented elders. The meeting was productive, with the facility agreeing to review two of their policies: how they should deal with staff that are perceived to be under the influence while on the job, and the security of prescription drugs in their custody. Both these policies have been reviewed and some changes have been made. As a result of the interventions driven by Ombudsman Services, the cameras have been reinstalled correctly, the spate of thefts has been halted and anxiety levels among the residents have decreased significantly.

A Life Well-Lived

One of our most beloved community members and volunteers, Joan Kidd, passed away recently. She was a longtime resident of Half Moon Bay, living with her cherished cats Tiger and Lady.

Joan was born in a suburb of Manchester, England, and immigrated with her husband to California. She worked as a dedicated nurse for over 30 years with San Mateo County. Joan was a woman of deep faith. She served her community in so many ways, e.g., as a church leader (Good Shepard and Holy Family, Episcopal Churches), Third Order Society of Saint Francis, Ombudsman Program of San Mateo County, and read and assisted in first grade classes at Hatch School.

During her twenty three year tenure with Ombudsman Services, Joan investigated thousands of cases and touched the lives of countless residents and families. Her "territory" extended along the San Mateo coastline, and she was revered for her ability to understand complex issues while still focusing her attention on the wishes of each resident. Combining her no-nonsense demeanor with her kind heart, Joan always found a way to bring calm and peace to situations that were once chaotic and frustrating. In addition to her work as a Field Ombudsman, Joan also served on the Program Development and Human Resources Committee for OSSMC where she was able to pair her knowledge of the program with her keen sense of organizational development.

Joan was a friend to all and an advocate for thousands of those in need in our community. There are no words to express how much she will be missed by all her friends and family, but we feel especially lucky to have known her.





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Read this issue to...

Meet our new staff member
Learn about our internship program
Mark your calendar for an upcoming event
Special memories of a long time volunteer

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Lance Reynolds



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