



**FIELD**

# Notes

Issue # 2

## Prop 63: Fulfilling the Promise of Mental Health Care in California

On November 2, California voters overwhelmingly expressed their support for Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act. Winning passage with 53.4 percent of the vote is an historic accomplishment for mental health care in California, and supporters hope it will spark a trend that will continue across the nation to fulfill the promises made more than twenty years ago to fund community mental health services.

By taxing incomes of more than \$1 million at 1 percent, Proposition 63 will raise up to \$800 million or more each year in state funds. With increased federal funds, the amount of new money for care for people with mental illness is expected to exceed \$1 billion per year.

Proposition 63 will fund community mental health programs with voluntary outreach, access to medicines, and a variety of support services for children and adults who suffer from disabling mental illnesses. The investment will produce hundreds of millions of dollars in savings by reducing hospitalizations and incarcerations. In pilot projects similar to those that would be funded by Proposition 63, participants had a 56 percent reduction in hospital stays, a 72 percent reduction in jail stays and a 65 percent increase in full-time jobs.



Assemblyman Mark Leno speaks at a Proposition 63 reception



Stephen Mayberg and Kita Curry at the annual meeting of the Iris Alliance Fund's 2004 National Leadership Council.

## Annual Meeting Reveals Ground-breaking Survey on Extent of Teen Suicide

This year's annual meeting of the Iris Alliance Fund's National Leadership Council brought together the impressive and diverse group of leaders, experts and advocates who make up the council, along with a few special guests. The highlight of the meeting was the release of the Iris Fund's new national and California state survey on adults' perceptions of teen suicide. This survey, which revealed that 42 percent of Americans know someone who attempted or committed suicide as a

teenager, is the first-ever study to attempt to measure the reach of teen suicide. The meeting covered many topics, including the newly defined role of the National Leadership Council, and goals and strategies for eliminating stigma, preventing teen suicide and ensuring that all people have access to quality mental health care.

*For more information on the meeting and/or the survey please contact:  
Janice@irisfund.org*

# New Grantees Promote Youth Mental Wellness

## SOUTH BAY LEADERSHIP COUNCIL FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY 2004 GRANTEES

- ACT for Mental Health, Inc.
- American Lung Association of Santa Clara-San Benito Counties
- Crisis Support Services of Alameda County
- Family Emergency Shelter Coalition
- Fremont Family Resource Center
- Girls Inc. of Alameda County
- Regional Parks Foundation
- Bill Wilson Center
- Hayward Police Department, Youth and Family Service Bureau

*In 2002, the Iris Alliance Fund* began a partnership project called the South Bay Leadership Council for a Healthy Community to address issues of depression and tobacco use among multicultural communities in Alameda and Santa Clara Counties. This project is broad in scope, one that not only educates community leaders about both depression and tobacco use, but one that also addresses common root issues of youth self-esteem and overall wellness, and how a community can work to promote prevention and provide more support to its youth. The South Bay Leadership Council for a Healthy Community is now 47 members strong, representing local businesses, school boards, city councils, and community health and social services.

The Iris Alliance Fund and South Bay Leadership Council decided to continue the small grants program, having confidence that there are changes being made in terms of youth support. Thus, in July 2004, the Iris Alliance Fund released another RFA inviting members of the South Bay Leadership Council to apply for funds to conduct a culturally sensitive program focused on preventing youth suicide and depression, as well as smoking and other high-risk behaviors by promoting youth mental wellness. Members of the National Leadership Council's Steering Committee served on the review board and selected 9 agencies to receive grants.



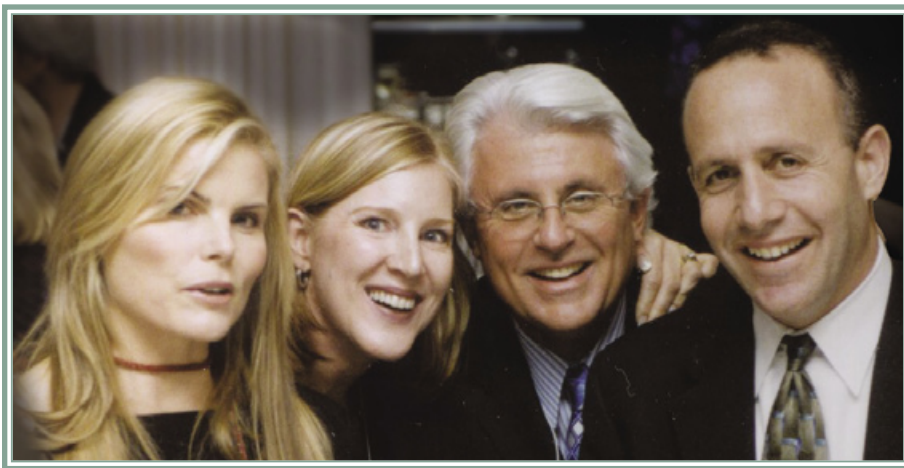
Mary Hayashi with some of the South Bay Leadership Council for a Healthy Community Grantees for 2004.

**Advocacy Tip:** Whenever a mental health issue pops up in the news, in print or in broadcast, comment on the story by submitting an op-ed to a local paper. This is an especially good way to praise media outlets for quality coverage or to correct any misconceptions or inaccuracies in the piece.

# Iris Alliance Fund Gala Raises Awareness, Money

At its third annual gala fund-raiser, the Iris Alliance Fund was able to bring together leaders and advocates in the mental health community, as well as raise money to support efforts in decreasing teen suicide and eliminating the stigma of mental illness. The keynote speaker, actress and author Mariel Hemingway, moved the audience with her wisdom and insights regarding her family's and her own struggles with mental

illness and suicide. California Assembly Member Darrell Steinberg, a tireless supporter of mental health issues during his tenure in the Legislature, also spoke, and Bay Area philanthropist Marcia Goldman was honored for her commitment to children's mental wellness. Kevin McCormack, an award-winning medical producer at KRON-TV news, kept the evening moving smoothly as the Master of Ceremonies.



Mariel Hemingway, Mary Suilmann of Telecare Corporation, Richard Crispino of Bonita House, Inc. and Assemblyman Darrell Steinberg at the Iris Alliance Fund's 2004 Gala.

## National Leadership Council Members on the Move

The Colorado Trust in Denver has promoted Iris Alliance Fund steering committee member Carol Breslau to the position of vice president of initiatives. Breslau, formerly a senior program officer at the trust, developed its Colorado Violence Prevention, Assets for Colorado Youth, and Preventing Suicide in Colorado initiatives, and previously developed programs in aging and adult services for various state and local agencies.

Steering committee member Dian Harrison, Executive Director of Planned

Parenthood Golden Gate, was selected by The California Wellness Foundation as one of six nonprofit health sector executives for its Sabbatical Program, a leadership support initiative.

The Mental Health Association in California, an affiliate of the National Mental Health Association, announced the selection of Iris Alliance Fund Founder and President Mary Hayashi to serve on its Board of Directors.

### IN EVERY ISSUE

*Field Notes features important facts and information to help you keep abreast of the latest advocacy issues around youth suicide prevention. We will feature profiles of what other Leadership Council members are doing and offer concrete ways for members of the Iris Alliance Fund National Leadership Council to contribute to the work of reducing youth suicide.*



Iris Alliance Fund  
One Embarcadero Center  
Suite 500  
San Francisco, CA 94111  
Phone: 415.773.2878  
Fax: 415.773.2872  
mail@irisfund.org  
www.irisfund.org