

Behavioral Health hires two new staff

By Danielle Frost

Smoke Signals staff writer

Two new mental health professionals have joined the Community Health Department in the past few months and are available to help Tribal patients.

Dr. Gilberto De Jesus-Rentas is the Tribe's part-time psychiatrist and Christine McCambridge is the new psychiatric nurse practitioner.

Health Services Executive Director Kelly Rowe said both De Jesus-Rentas and McCambridge help the department better serve its clients.

"Dr. De Jesus-Rentas has brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to Behavioral Health, which has been invaluable for program planning," Rowe said. "We are very fortunate to have engaged him to provide psychiatric services to our patients. ... Having Christine join Health and Wellness to lead Behavioral Health has been instrumental in development of the array of services we are able to offer."

Gilberto De Jesus-Rentas

De Jesus-Rentas began his career working in community health and has always enjoyed interacting with clients from different cultures.

"It is something I really like professionally," he said. "When we moved from Florida to Oregon, my ambition was to work in a Tribal community. When I saw the opportunity out here, I applied. I feel that I can provide a service that is needed in the region."

De Jesus-Rentas completed his residency at Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center in the South Bronx, which includes a mix of patients from mostly African, Hispanic and Russian backgrounds. He has been a psychiatrist since 2005.

Now, he splits his time between a private practice in Salem and working in Grand Ronde.

De Jesus-Rentas earned a bachelor's degree from Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico and attended medical school at Ibero-American University in the Dominican Republic and completed an internship at the San Juan City Hospital. He has a specialty in general psychiatry and two sub-specialties in forensics and child/adolescent psychiatry.

"My original goal was to work in gerontology, but it didn't take me long to decide I wanted to do child psychiatry instead," De Jesus-Rentas said. "The forensics part I decided to do because I was doing a lot of consultations in juvenile cases and found myself talking a lot to the court and preparing reports."

A forensic psychiatrist provides services, such as determining competency to stand trial, to the court as well as providing treatment. De Jesus-Rentas' private practice is set up specifically for forensic consultation.

"That is how I keep what I learned in use," he said. "I also work with a citizen review board to look at cases for the Department of Human Services. I get lots of questions about mental health so it is a good use of what I know."

De Jesus-Rentas has three sons with wife, Yessica, and enjoys going to movies, baseball games and his children's sporting events.



De Jesus-Rentas

Christine McCambridge

The Tribe's new Behavioral Health psychiatric nurse practitioner began in June. She decided to apply for the position after living and working in Portland during the past year.

"I grew up by the beach and so living in Portland wasn't for me," she said. "I began talking to Kelly (Rowe) to see if there was something I could do here. At my old job, I mostly saw patients for medication management. Here, I could do that and administrative functions."

McCambridge has worked as a psychiatric nurse practitioner for eight years and held a variety of different positions in that time. In Grand Ronde, she sees patients ages 5 and older.

"I think just having that experience has helped me get to this point," she said.

McCambridge earned a bachelor's degree in health care administration from Oregon State University. She began working at a hospital in Newport shortly afterward and was upset by how she saw nurses treating some patients.

"I thought that I could do their job, but in a nicer way," she said.

So, McCambridge enrolled at Linfield College in McMinnville and earned a bachelor's degree in nursing.

After taking time to raise her boys, now ages 26, 24 and 22, she attended the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and Chapel Hill, earning a master's degree as a psychiatric nurse practitioner.

In her spare time, McCambridge enjoys walking on the beach, hiking to waterfalls and playing tennis.

Since she began working for the Tribe, McCambridge has enjoyed immersing herself in its culture and history with the help of longtime support counselor Joe Martineau.

"I am so fortunate to have Joe around," she said. "He has been great to learn from."

To make an appointment to see McCambridge or De Jesus-Rentas, call 503-879-2026. ■



Christine McCambridge

Afterhours health line

Tribal members can contact the Afterhours Health Line for questions about health care concerns you may have when the clinic is not open.

You can reach the Afterhours Health Line by calling 503-879-2002 and follow the prompts.

The Afterhours Health Line will coordinate care and communicate with Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center providers. ■

'This is a time of growth and change in our communities'

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rates in Indian Country are very, very bad for a number of reasons. Having a back-up bus option for these kids made all of the difference. That was huge to people out there, who live in a very remote area without taxis or bus service. ... Those two partnerships felt very powerful to me."

George noted that a negative impact of having a Community Fund is the perception that the Tribe has "loads of money."

"At times, people think if you are able to share with others, you must be filthy rich," she said. "Our Community Fund was built into the foundation of our casino, but there have been times where the Tribe has been met with doubt because we have the money to give away to others in need. ... If you visit Grand Ronde, you won't find any mansions, but what you will find is adequate housing, which looks a

lot different than what you would see 35 years ago."

She said that things that have changed over time are streamlining processes to make fund applications more accessible and simplifying applications so that less time is spent filling them out.

"This way, more organizations can follow their mission and spend less time securing grants. ... Also, we don't 'hide the ball.' We tell applicants very clearly what they need to do to apply," she said.

George said one question that some organizations found challenging was how much diversity they had among members on a nonprofit board.

"Some had a hard time with that, but other nonprofits actually thanked us for giving them an opportunity to have a conversation that they felt they couldn't have before this time," George said. "It's also nice to challenge our own thinking about the impact of our investments. This is a time of growth and change in our communities." ■



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