

NEWSLETTER

April 2024



New Program Offerings & Heartfelt Thanks

We're thrilled to introduce exciting new program offerings alongside heartfelt thanks to our supporters.

Firstly, we're delighted to unveil our Unity Garden, a testament to inclusivity made possible by the support of individual donors and the Cathay Bank Foundation. Join us on April 19th at noon for a special ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating this space designed to unite people of all abilities through gardening.

Our sincere appreciation extends to Food Ed, Mayor Thomas Wong, and dedicated volunteers for their invaluable contributions to the launch of our garden. In addition, with the help of volunteers, we've reopened three classrooms in our South Building, expanding our services to support more adults with developmental disabilities, reinforcing our commitment to inclusivity and accessibility.

Furthermore, we're excited to announce the upcoming launch of a new on-site fitness center, thanks to the generous contributions from the Beth and Wilbur Woo Foundation and board member, Rene Araiza. This facility will not only promote the health and well-being of our consumers and staff but also symbolizes our ongoing dedication to enhancing their lives.

Amid recent challenges, the importance of accessible transportation has become evident. We extend our gratitude to J's Maintenance for their donation of three pre-owned station wagons, easing transportation barriers for our senior consumers and enabling them to access essential services and activities within the community.

Your continued support empowers us to expand our programs and services, making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

New Program Offerings & Heartfelt thanks

Introduction to New Financial Controller & Board Members

Message from Executive Director

Invitation to Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony: Unity Gardens



Meet MERCI's Newest Board Members

Brittany Wolfson, a seasoned professional with 20+ years' experience, joins our board. Her diverse roles include Behavior Analyst, Clinical Director, HR Director, and Chief People Officer. Her expertise in Applied Behavior Analysis and Organizational Development enriches our strategic vision at MERCI.

Felipe Hernandez, MERCI's newest board member, retired as Chief of Consumer Services after 44 years at Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center. Today, he leads a consultancy committed to advocating for the disabled and strengthening service quality. Felipe eagerly contributes his expertise to MERCI's journey in these transformative times.

Meet MERCI's New Financial Controller

Josephine Quach has 28 years of expertise in governmental finance, with a focus on budget management exceeding \$500 million annually, meticulous accounting practices, efficient payroll administration, process improvement, customer relations, software proficiency, project management, and cash flow tracking.

In her last role, Josephine was the Assistant Superintendent of Business Affairs for Alhambra Unified School District.



Message from Executive Director

Dear Friends of MERCI,

In December, we joyously celebrated Irene's 76th birthday. Irene holds a special place at MERCI, having been part of our community for over six decades. She became one of the original residents at our John & Mary's home and is a participant in our Person-Centered Activity Support Services (PASS) program. Over the years, Irene has not only grown up with MERCI, but our dedicated staff has also grown alongside her.

Your support can make a tangible difference in the lives of our participants, fostering independence and enhancing their



overall well-being. Please support us in April with a tax- deductible gift to MERCI!

- A significant contribution of \$500 allows MERCI to continue to maintain Unity Garden for a month, while providing agricultural education and activities to our participants and visitors
- A substantial gift of \$150 equips a participant with a tablet, enabling them to explore digital leisure activities, create schedules, and make choices with ease.
- A generous donation of \$50 provides the ingredients for one participant to attend cooking classes for an entire three-month period.
- A modest contribution of \$25 ensures that a participant has necessary supplies for engaging in arts and crafts for three months.

To make your gift, visit our website: **www.merci.org**.

Your support directly contributes to the vital work we do, allowing us to continue providing high-quality programs that empower individuals to lead lives of their own choosing.

There are also other ways to contribute.

- We are accepting in-kind donations (e.g. art supplies, storage racks, ipads)
- Volunteer your time to help us advance our mission
- Lend your expertise and experience and become a Board member
- Find and follow us on Social Media:



We appreciate your ongoing support.

With Gratitude,

Angela Pao-Johnson
Executive Director of MERCI





In Close Collaboration with

Food ED

Invites the Community to Celebrate

Unity Garden's

Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony

MERCI's Unity Garden is a vibrant community space where neighbors can come together with participants and residents, who are adults with developmental disabilities, to cultivate plants and foster connections. Join us in celebrating diversity and inclusion as we cultivate not only a garden but also a sense of belonging and togetherness among all members of our community.

MERCI

**APRIL
19
2024**

**525 N. Chandler Ave.
Monterey Park, CA
91754**

**FRI
12:00
PM**

**Refreshments
Provided**

RSVP VIA EMAIL: [MERCi@MERCi.ORG](mailto:MERCI@MERCi.ORG)