2014 was an amazing year for us, 2015 will be even better!

2014 was an extraordinary year for our combined program! Although we had to say goodbye to our graduating chiefs, Kelley and Dorothy, we welcomed two amazing, caring, and wonderful people—Ian and Maryam.

Safi and Aaron on the other hand have been maneuvering through second year, and are anxiously counting the days they have left to start outpatient psychiatry at Gifford and St. Vincent’s. Our St. Vincent’s staff is certainly excited to see more of them in clinic soon.

Our third year’s, Rachel and Dave Larson, keep astounding us with their superb work and dedication. Rachel has taken on a leadership role at the Association of Medicine & Psychiatry, while Dave has been pivotal in so many structural changes at St. Vincent’s. It seems that everything those two touch turns into gold!

Jennie and Christine have been so spectacular and inspiring. Jennie stepped in to help us with interviews this year (and may I add, she did a phenomenal job!). Christine on the other hand, I wish you could see how much your patients adore you! Your devotion and empathy towards them is truly an example for so many.

Our chief residents, Andrea and Chris have been busy bees helping out with residency interviews, setting up procedure and detox clinics at St. Vincent’s, and supervising a whole department at the VA!!

And lastly, Drs Folsom and Lindeman, our residency program directors . . . their support, guidance, and kindness have helped make 2014 one of the best years ever!
St. Vincent de Paul Village Family Health Center

The Affordable Care Act has been a blessing to San Diego’s homeless community. Our neighbors-in-need, many of whom were previously uninsured, are now finding themselves with the coverage they need to manage their health needs. Here to discuss the impact of the healthcare act on our patient population and St. Vincent de Paul Village Family Health Center (the continuity site for our combos), is Amanda Brown—Medical Case Manager and Jeshannah Ayala—Lead Medical Assistant, both at St. Vincent’s.

What percentage of our patients have insurance today vs. 2 yrs ago? What has been the driving force behind this change?

(Amanda) In 2012, only 23% of our patients were insured. Due to the Affordable Care Act, many more of our patients are eligible for Medi-Cal (California’s version of Medicaid) than ever before. The clinic was able to hire a Certified Enrollment Counselor through Covered California who reaches out to uninsured individuals and assists them in enrolling in Covered California or Medi-Cal. Thanks to her hard work and diligence, we now end 2014 with 74% of our patients having insurance.

Now that many of our patients have health insurance, is St. Vincent’s able to bill medical/psych visits?

(Amanda) Yes! Before the clinic relied heavily on donations, grants, and volunteers to keep our day-to-day operations functioning. Now we are contracted with 3 Medi-Cal HMO plans (Molina, Care 1st, and CHG) as well as Medicare and we are able to collect payment for those insured individuals. Our revenues have increased substantially due to being able to bill for the 74% of patients who are now insured.

Aside from insurance enrollment, what other major changes have recently taken place at St. Vincent’s?

(Amanda) Due to recent grant funding, the clinic is able to hire additional LCSW’s and a psychiatrist. There has also been a transition in the structure of St. Vincent de Paul Village where behavioral health is now under the umbrella of the clinic and open to residents and non-residents of the Village.

St. Vincent’s has been moving toward a Patient-Centered Care model. What steps have been taken to reach this goal? Why is this model so important for the patient population at St. Vincent’s?

(Jeshannah) The shift to a patient centered medical home is a huge leap in the evolution of our facility. When dealing with a demographic as dynamic as our population, a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to care is critical. One of the most important steps taken to meet this goal, is implementing ways to cultivate and strengthen our care team. This is paramount because quality patient care cannot be accomplished without a team of medical professionals, within all echelons, who will collaborate effectively to meet a patient’s needs. Thus a patient-centered approach goes hand in hand with a team-centered approach. You can’t have one without the other and this is the model of service that we at SVDP are working to create.
Combo Grad Interview: Ryan Shackelford

Having graduated in 2011 from our residency program, Ryan Shackelford has gone off to do incredible things in the city of San Francisco. Here to talk about his current projects (and about our residency) . . .

As a medical student, what led you to pursue a combined residency training program?

The most formative experience was while working as a mental health counselor in a Colorado state facility prior to medical school. The patients' mental health problems seemed to have such gravity that even simple medical issues were overlooked and their access to preventative health services was very limited. There were plenty of Psychiatrists in the facility but no one had the scope or possibly desire to treat the whole person. I was both saddened and motivated to help.

What would you tell a medical student who is interested in both family medicine and psychiatry, but is unsure if both can be integrated into their practice and addressed in a single patient visit?

I think this is one of the greatest follies that I wrestled with during my time as a resident - we use both sets of skills in every interaction and it makes even a brief visit that much more effective; we are like Jedi (too far?). Of course we often wish we had more time with our patients but we need to realize the pressure to "fix" his or her complex problems in 15 or even 60 minutes is untenable. Obviously, we need a healthcare structure to work within and community health centers operating with meager reimbursement rates are under great pressure to maintain access and productivity while balancing this with provider burnout and patient satisfaction - not an easy task. Some organizations are more enlightened about the value of allowing physicians to listen and build a relationship than others (even some payers too!) I would recommend having faith and patience - the integration of behavioral health clinicians into a patient-centered medical home is demonstrating positive outcomes and this is helping to drive changes at the top of healthcare administration that will hopefully make the practice of family medicine more enjoyable in the future.

Was there something you learned about yourself during residency? If so, can you share?

I like to say "Yes" to people...mostly a good trait but being comfortable saying "No" is maybe more important.

What about your combined residency training at UC San Diego are you most grateful for?

It really cemented my passion to improve the health of persons with serious mental illness. I was and continue to be inspired by my UCSD Combo family. There are a lot of smart doctors in the world but rarely do I meet ones that have the emotional and social IQ to match. I genuinely liked all my combined colleagues and knew that they had that greater understanding and ambition to be part of a real public health solution.

You've worked with the Department of Public Health in San Francisco. Can you tell us what led you to work there? What has your experience been working with that department?

It was quite simple and natural. I was participating in the UCSF Public Psychiatry Fellowship which had me working in the SF public health outpatient clinics. During that year I made a lot of contacts with the DPH administration and as a result was able to craft a job following fellowship which allowed for both Primary care and Psychiatry (read - county HR departments are so lame, start early!). I spent a few years seeing lots of patients and it truly was as important as everyone says. I probably should have continued doing that longer but my heart is more in public health administration and policy so when our department was reorganizing due to ACA I was lucky enough to move into an integration director position, which has been amazing!

Another organization you've been involved with is the Behavioral Home Health Integration Project. Can you tell us more about this project and the type of work you do there?

This is part of my ongoing work with the SF DPH - my official title (always ask for a title someone told me!) is Medical Director of Behavioral Health Home Integration. My job currently is 50% clinical and 50% administrative. The clinical time is as an ACT Psychiatrist, primary care psychiatry consultant and providing primary care for my ACT patients. I move around between the Chinatown and Mission districts so I eat tons of good food (the real reason I love my job). The administrative piece involves crafting a system to bring co-located primary care services to our SMI clients and in a way that stands up to all the regulatory audits we receive. I also am lucky enough to be the lead on our SAMHSA PBHCI (Primary and Behavioral Health Care Integration) grant - a pilot initiative to help establish behavioral health homes across the country. Having clinical experience and an understanding of both primary care and psychiatry cultures has been an asset whose importance really can't be overstated.

Is there any advice you would give our UC San Diego Combined Family Medicine & Psychiatry residents? Anything you wish you knew during residency?

Keep your head up...or down (in the books). Ask lots of questions. Life is really great after residency and with a little hard work you can design any career you want...just look at what all our alumni have done!
Resident Spotlight: Jennie

**Name:** Jennifer Brewer

**Hometown:** San Diego, CA and Eureka, Montana

**Medical School:** University of Michigan

**Significant other/pets/roommate:** Sam Park, civil rights lawyer.

**Medical Interests:** Community activism and social justice. Meditation, diet and exercise as the best mind/body medicine. Many other interests, I love it all . . .

**Favorites**

**Quote:** "A human being is part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. We experience ourselves, our thoughts and feelings as something separate from the rest. A kind of optical delusion of consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from the prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. The true value of a human being is determined by the measure and the sense in which they have obtained liberation from the self. We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if humanity is to survive.” (Albert Einstein, 1954)

**Food:** Fresh local veggies, otherwise ethnic. I love spice.

**Book:** Oh too many to list! Top Three: Infinite Jest by David Foster Wallace, The River Why, by David James Duncan, A Fortune Teller Told Me by Terzani

**Movie:** I’m not a movie person, but I’ll sit for hours to watch the Banff Film Festival!

**Music:** Indie, folk, electronic, and remixes of all of the above.

**I can’t live without my:** My breath. But favorite possessions include my road bike, running shoes, and chef’s knife.

**When I’m not at the hospital:** I am ideally doing something active outside. Running, swimming or biking, hiking or rock climbing.

**Little Known Fact:** Jennifer has a thing for submerging in freezing cold temperatures, from swimming in glacial lakes to lying in snow in a bathing suit. It must relate to her lifelong interest in mind over matter :)

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The Eye - Maryam Soltani

Old Lady - Maryam Soltani
Combo Love! Here’s what we’ve been up to for the past couple of months!

Dave’s New Organic Garden, worm composting included!

Jennie and her adorable niece Charlotte

Captain Aaron sailing the 7 seas!

Christine in Rome, on her way to Istanbul

Dave surfing with his cute new puppy Makena :)

Jennie loves the water! (maybe she was a duck in another life?!?!)