



Mental Health Services  
Oversight and Accountability Commission  
Communications Unit  
Monthly Report  
May 2008

**Staffing:**

In late April, we welcomed Yee Xiong, our newest staff member, to the Communications Unit. A recent graduate of UC Davis in Communications, Yee comes to us with broad experience in community outreach. She has worked with the university student population, particularly in the Southeast Asian community, exploring issues of identity and culture.

Yee will work primarily on helping us get the new MHSOAC website online. She has experience in video documentary-style story-telling, and in operating complex video and audio editing systems. At age 5, Yee immigrated to the United States with her family from a refugee camp in Thailand. As Hmong refugees, Yee and her family escaped from persecution by the Laotian government and resided in the refugee camp until they were relocated to the United States. She grew up in Sacramento.

**Newsletter publication:**

During much of April, the Communications Unit worked on pulling together the revived MHSOAC Update newsletter. We all shared in the writing, editing, and design duties. We hope the Commissioners found it interesting, and we are soliciting ideas for future editions. We would love to receive Commissioner feedback. A number of Commissioners have already volunteered to contribute articles for the newsletter.

There's been some discussion about the potential usefulness of broadening the scope of the newsletter so it appeals to the general public – or, of producing a parallel newsletter to the Commissioner-oriented one. Please tell us what you think.

**MHSOAC Website Update:**

In April, we worked on finalizing more details that will bring us closer to getting the new website design up and running. In the coming month, we will begin compiling material to post on the website, and will continue to hold teleconferences with our consulting designers and producers, as well as keep lines of communication open with the Department of Mental Health IT unit.

**Community Outreach:**

Also in April, we conducted community outreach in the Southeast Asian community. Meeting at a community center, two Communications Unit members accompanied Mental Health Staff Specialist Earl Green for a meet-and-greet during which Earl encouraged Hmong community leaders to participate in the stakeholder process and shed light on their traditional healing methods. Also present were a number of representatives of non-governmental agencies who were already familiar with the Mental Health Services Act and wanted to know more about when Prevention and Early Intervention dollars might become available.

**Broadening Our Knowledge Base:**

We took advantage of two days of in-house training in reviewing county plans for Prevention and Early Intervention dollars by Deborah Lee, PhD., and representatives of the Department of Mental Health. PEI funding is a truly important function of the Commission, and we want to be able to help tell the story in the media of the goals and promise of this portion of the Mental Health Services Act rollout.

Best Regards,

Cynthia Craft, Communications and Media Relations  
Matthew Lieberman, Associate Mental Health Specialist, Communications  
Yee Xiong, Staff Services Analyst  
Gia Vang, Student Intern  
Christina Call, Student Intern