

Santa Clara County Supervisor Liz Kniss partners with Catholic Community at Stanford PIA for homeless facility

At a community meeting on May 25 sponsored by leaders from Peninsula Interfaith Action (PIA) at the Catholic Community at Stanford, 60 people joined a discussion of how the Opportunity Center of the Midpeninsula, which is being built to provide coordinated services and housing to homeless men, women and children, can meet mental

health needs of the local homeless population of northern Santa Clara County.

One focus was on how student and community volunteers could enhance the array of on-site mental health services that the center plans to offer with the help of a volunteer coordinator.

A panel of partners formed at this meeting included Santa

Clara County Supervisor Liz Kniss; Stanford Associate Professor of Sociology and Human Biology Donald Barr, President of the Community Working Group which is building the Opportunity Center; and John Holland, COO of InnVision, which will provide many services at the center.

Supervisor Kniss supported the need for a volunteer coordinator and agreed to work with PIA to seek public or private funding to create such a position.

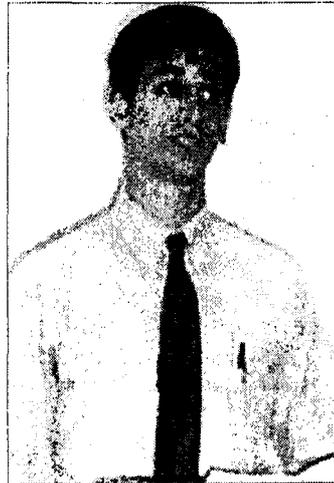
Each member of the panel committed to work together with PIA to form a task force to address mental health services at the Opportunity Center, and

agreed to meet again in August.

"Linking young people interested in learning about the medical, mental health and other allied health fields with professionals and individuals in need of services is a win-win situation for everyone.

"Student volunteers can provide invaluable support services, and will retain for a lifetime the lesson learned from working with individuals who are homeless and struggling with mental illness," noted Dr. Julie Weitlauf, a postdoctoral fellow in clinical psychology at Stanford University and community leader at the Catholic Community at Stanford.

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Stanford undergraduate Todd Fojo, a PIA leader at the Catholic Community at Stanford, speaks at the May 25 meeting.



Ann George, PIA leader at the Catholic Community at Stanford and Stanford University Assistant Dean of Research and Graduate Policy, presents a research report on mental illness among the homeless.