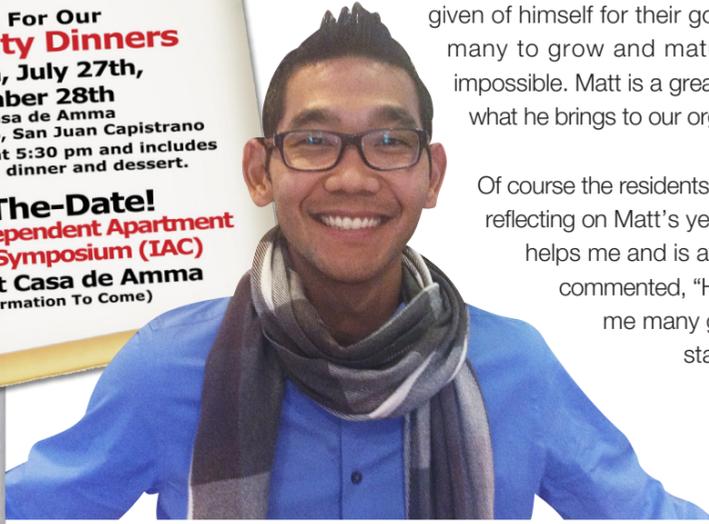
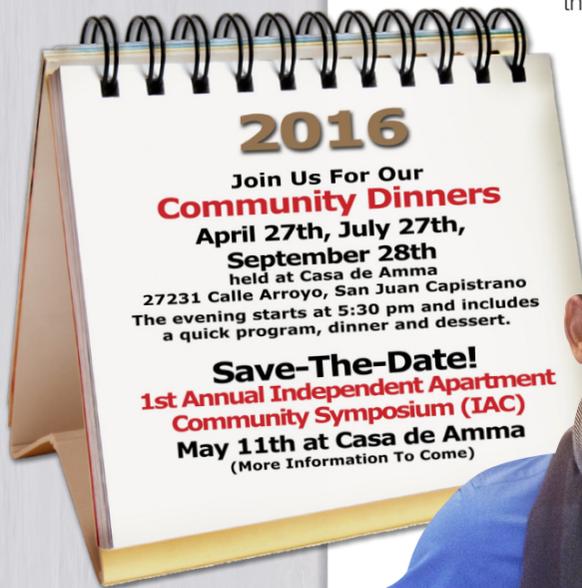


**“Don’t Wait For People To Be Kind, Show Them How.”**

*Author Unknown*



**making each day count!**

Matt O'Hara's dedication to Casa de Amma can be described like this — 20,800 hours, 2600 days, a total of 10 years. A valued employee since 2006, Matt's impact on Casa can best be described as priceless! He began his tenure as a Residential Staff Member, helping residents maintain their apartments and assisting with their various needs. Shortly after, he refocused his efforts to our Wellness Area where he facilitated doctor visits, medications, and other health-related matters. In 2009 Matt was promoted to Program Manager, a direct link for residents and their families which supports a successful Casa experience.

It was in the position of Program Manager that Matt really flourished. His incredible people skills, flexibility to deliver person-centered approaches, great conflict resolution skills and his remarkable dedication and love for the residents — proved that this is where he should be. Matt's kind support, wisdom, guidance and unique approach, is behind many stories of success and growth. Often we will see residents rush into the office when he arrives to greet him and ask when they can talk. Some just want to recount their day, while others are looking for his sage advice and help with a problem. Matt has the ability to be silly yet serious, and kind while also firm. Attributes that are hard to find but so important to the work we do at Casa. His co-worker, Wendy Rundle said, "Matt has endless compassion, patience, and understanding for the residents, no matter the situation." Terry Vorell, our HR Director stated "I love how he has the resident's pictures in his office and he always is present when he is talking to you."

Executive Director, Aaron Vorell explained, "It would be impossible to find another person who has had more of a positive effect on residents, families and staff over the last ten years than Matt. He has constantly given of himself for their good and in doing so, has enabled many to grow and mature in ways previously thought impossible. Matt is a great example of "The Casa Way" and what he brings to our organization is impossible to explain."

Of course the residents have kind words and thanks when reflecting on Matt's years at Casa. "I like how he always helps me and is available for me" said Ellen. Rachel commented, "He always helps me and has taught me many great things." On behalf of Casa's staff, our residents and their families — a heartfelt Happy Anniversary!

**6,752 feet up the mountain proved to be worth the climb**

Casa's 6th annual resident trip to Big Bear last month took the experience to new heights! The cabin was amazing and provided the perfect atmosphere for relationship building and of course, hours of fun! Residents enjoyed making their meals as well as participating in outdoor activities such as tubing, the alpine slide, hiking the nearby back country, and excursions into town to find the perfect souvenir of their trip! Downtime at the cabin included games, music of all kinds, dancing, and playing kind-hearted pranks on staff members. All in all the trip was a great success, as everyone pitched in to lend a hand with whatever needed to be done. As always, five minutes into the drive home the familiar question was asked, "So, when is our next trip?" The next trip has not been scheduled but there *WILL* be a next trip with more opportunities for camaraderie and memories that will last a lifetime!



**casa turns twelve, come help us celebrate!**

**You are invited to celebrate Casa's 12th Anniversary at our next Community Dinner on April 27th at 5:30pm, held at Casa de Amma.**

In the past twelve years Casa has accomplished a great deal. We have continued to provide long term housing and supports for our residents. We have not had anyone move out in the last four years, which underscores the success of our program. Our waiting list has grown to nearly thirty. We continue to consult with organizations who are looking to replicate the Casa model. Our greatest success however is the continued growth, happiness and independence of our residents. Instead of having a single program, we have forty separate programs. Our success is gauged by forty individuals and their families. Staying dedicated to that end can be tough but it is critically important. We aren't creating a product, we support our residents' lives and we continue to be a place for those who "don't want to live alone but want a life of their own", and that makes for a very happy birthday and reason to celebrate!

**A FEW FACTS . . .**

We have served sixty residents/clients over the last twelve years

In 2013 we established an offsite program that currently supports five people living nearby in our community

Our staff has worked at Casa an average of over five years and our management team averaging nine

Our Board of Directors have been extremely dedicated with the average member serving for over nine years



[www.casadeamma.org](http://www.casadeamma.org)