

THE AACCS ANCHOR

A Publication of Asian American Christian Counseling Service, Inc.

“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.” Hebrews 6:19

August 2011

Divine Appointments: AACCS in Japan

Carol Miyake, LCSW, Clinical Outreach Director

It was 2:30 PM on March 11, 2011 in Mitaka Tokyo, Japan where AACCS therapist, Rie Mizuki and I were doing a member care training for a missionary. It was our last session of a 17 day trip of ministering to missionaries in Japan. Suddenly at 2:45 PM an earthquake hit. The building kept shaking, so we finally got under the table. The building swayed so much I felt seasick. It lasted five minutes! The Lord protected the three of us. Because the earthquake's epicenter was in Sendai, approximately 250 miles north of us, the missionary wanted to continue the training. From personal experience living in Southern California, I hate earthquakes. I told the missionary we may have to stop training at anytime due in order to evacuate the building. There were multiple aftershocks. As I continued the training, a huge aftershock hit, so we ran out of the building for safety.



Women in Ministry Annual Retreat in Karuizawa, Japan

Women in Ministry (JEMA-WIM) Annual Retreat in Karuizawa, Japan. There were approximately 70 women from North America, Europe, and Australia representing various mission boards serving throughout Japan. The needs of women missionaries in Japan are so great that Rie and I were booked with individual sessions the entire three days we were there. We not only ministered until late into the evenings but were also asked by the retreat committee to meet with additional missionaries during our meal times!

Some of the common issues we saw were depression, grief and loss. Several of the missionaries shared

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Celebrating 25 Years of Healing Hearts and Transforming Lives

Arlene Yee, LCSW, Board Member

*“He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion, to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.”
Isaiah 61:1a, 3*

On April 10, 2011, 288 friends, family and supporters of AACCS joined together at Almansor Court in Alhambra to worship, praise and give thanks to the Lord for His 25 years of faithfulness to the Asian American Christian Counseling Service.

Thank you for your partnership in healing hearts and transforming lives...

Over the past 25 years, thousands of brothers and sisters in Christ have come through our doors because they had tried everything to heal their hearts and relationships. They were confused and fearful that their lives were not turning out the way they hoped and were looking for something that would change their lives for the better. Many came because their past experiences kept getting in the way of the present, bringing anxiety into their lives and keeping them from moving forward. Our doors have remained open because your partnership made this possible.

Many therapists have also come through our doors looking for a place to counsel with the freedom to integrate their faith in Christ with their professional training. They wanted to make a

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Therapist Corner: Reflections on Christian Counseling

Ken Yabuki, M.Div, MFT - Board Member & Staff Therapist

In April, we celebrated 25 years of providing Christian counseling at AACCS, during which much has happened in the field of “Christian counseling.” The idea of Christian counseling was a result of the anti-religious attitudes of the secular counselors who were influenced by Sigmund Freud, an avowed atheist. Twenty-five years ago it was not uncommon for secular counselors to say that belief in God was delusional and a symptom of psychosis. Consequently, believers who needed counseling were often damaged when they went to see secular counselors. Today, thanks to the hard work and efforts of Christians who have gone into the helping professions, healthy “spirituality” is considered an important part of good mental health even among secular counselors. Additionally, many Christians who chose the helping professions, such as psychology, counseling, social work and psychiatry, became aware of the rich psychological wisdom and insight contained in the Bible, which they began to incorporate in their own counseling practice. Today there is much written on the subject of Christian counseling and a plethora of self-help books, based on Biblical principles and teachings.

Over the past 25 years AACCS has been blessed with a large number of Christian counselors who have come to join the staff with their competent counseling skills, coupled with their

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Celebrating 25 Years of Healing Hearts and Transforming Lives

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difference in the lives of their brothers and sisters in Christ allowing them to heal and grow in their faith, knowing the love of the Father. More than 50 therapists have been licensed and trained at AACCS in the past 25 years. Our commitment to developing human resources for the Christian community has been and remains an important aspect of our mission. Last year we began an Externship Program. This year, we were able to provide three \$2,000 scholarships to graduate students in counseling and psychology because of the Jean and Ryo Komae Scholarship. Your partnership has made this possible.

Additionally, over the past 25 years, missionaries and their families overseas and on home assignment have been able to receive counseling and training from AACCS therapists through AACCS' Mission Outreach Fund and its partnership with a local family foundation. These funds have subsidized much needed counseling and training for missionaries as well as ancillary support for their sending organizations in important aspects of self-care and emotional and relational health. AACCS therapists have traveled as far as China, Japan, and Thailand to provide support and encouragement thanks to your partnership.

At the AACCS anniversary dinner, there was enthusiastic bidding on silent auction items and excitement over the many raffle prizes that were given away. At the end of the evening, guests left with arms full of prizes to take home. We are grateful to the many sponsors of this event as well as to those who attended. Thanks to the generous donations of the many friends and supporters of AACCS, \$32,300 was raised for the future ministries of AACCS. Adding to the spirit of the evening was the message given by Pastor John Lo of Epicenter Church, our featured speaker. He shared his story as a "PK" (pastor's kid) who journeyed away from God and then back again. He described the significance of his relationship with his mentor / therapist in his return to his relationship with Christ. Pastor John inspired and encouraged each one of us to do the work that God has placed before us "because you never know how God will use you in the lives of those you touch."



AACCS Board and Staff

We could not do the work of AACCS without you. Again, your faithful partnership through the years has made all this possible.

To God be the praise, thanks and all of the glory!

Time, Talent and Treads

Eleanor Huang, LCSW, Executive Director Consultant

2011 is special year of thanksgiving for AACCS. As we look back on 25 years, we continue to be amazed by how the Lord has provided for our every need through the many offerings generously given to support our mission. We would like to highlight two friends of AACCS whose extraordinary efforts have been a particular blessing to us, Pastor Ron Miyake of Evergreen Baptist Church of San Gabriel Valley and Stephanie Nakayama of Gardena Valley Baptist Church.

For the past several years, Pastor Ron, an avid runner and former missionary, has faithfully run at least one marathon per year to single-handedly raise dollars for AACCS' Mission Outreach Fund. Its been a Miyake family effort with his youngest daughter sometimes running as back-up for her dad, his eldest daughter, and wife, Carol, rooting Pastor Ron onward to the finish line. As recently as June 5, Pastor Ron completed the San Diego Rock 'n' Roll Marathon in 4:44 hours.

Writing one year to thank his supporters, Pastor Ron shared, *"Running a marathon (26.2 miles) gives a person a lot of time to think about different things: remembering the prayers of people who said they would pray for my run, remembering those who sacrificially gave to this Outreach Fund, raising funds so that missionaries are able to get counseling and are able to receive financial help for the sessions. These are some of the things that missionaries will appreciate. Not only because they are helpful, but they are also ways that a missionary will feel remembered, encouraged, supported and cared for."*

Stephanie Nakayama, a jewelry artist, entrepreneur and AACCS therapist for over 12 years, has also single-handedly raised funds for AACCS through her spring and Christmas boutiques in Gardena, known as *A Time for Sharing*. Stephanie has faithfully dedicated a portion of each boutique's proceeds to AACCS, raising thousands of dollars over more than a decade to support our agency's commitment to keeping fees affordable for our clients.

Like Pastor Ron, Stephanie is a runner. This year, she will be running the Long Beach Half Marathon on October 9. She is currently seeking sponsors and hopes to raise additional dollars for AACCS. Stephanie recently shared, *"One neat thing that happens when I run is that the Lord puts people on my heart to pray for, so I pray for these people, one person per mile for the entire run"* (for more information regarding sponsoring Stephanie's half-marathon, check out www.aaccs.org).

Whether running a marathon or half marathon, or offering craft-making talent as many friends have done for our silent auction gifts and raffle prizes, we know there is self-discipline, extended time and effort involved, sometimes months of preparation and work. We also know these efforts are bathed in prayer for both AACCS and the clients we serve. To Pastor Ron, Stephanie, and all of you who have run (or crafted) alongside us through our many years of fundraising, we extend a depth of gratitude for your time, talent, and treads. These have been acts of worship and sacrifice, and we are so thankful for the love of Christ through you.

"This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God." 2 Corinthians 9:12

Reflections on Christian Counseling

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understanding and personal knowledge of the Christian faith, which they integrate in their counseling practice. Thus, believers who come to AACCS are not only able to receive counseling in a safe environment, i.e. free from attacks on their Christian faith, but they are also encouraged to develop new awareness of their rich spiritual heritage, which they can add to their repertoire of effective coping skills. In my own practice at AACCS, where I sometimes work with non-Christian clients referred from insurance companies, it is not uncommon for a non-Christian client to realize that he or she might benefit from returning to their original spiritual root if it happens to be of a Christian tradition. In this sense, I believe Christian counseling is more complete than secular counseling because the Christian counselor is able to address all aspects of the human experience, i.e. the physical, psychological, social and the *spiritual*. If a client is not a Christian and is of another faith tradition, I do not in any way try to change the person's belief system, but I can be aware of the role his or her spiritual orientation plays in the person's emotional struggles. I am confident that the field of Christian counseling will continue to grow in scope, depth and significance in the years to come.

Looking forward to the next 25 years, I would like to see some of the basic tools of Christian counseling introduced to the faith community at large rather than them being confined to the counseling office. The most basic tool in counseling is *listening*. It is true that it takes years of professional education and training to become a professional counselor. However, I believe listening skills can be taught in the church by creating an awareness of its importance and therapeutic value. In the exhorted to listen (1:19), pray for one another for much emotional healing can Christians are taught to listen confess to one another, as James. A good counselor is a For most people listening believe one can learn it given adequate awareness. relationship, can become when listening is involved. most challenging times of my life by being able to talk to Christian friends who were willing and able to listen without giving advice. For years I always made sure that I had a friend or two I could talk to without being lectured or criticized.

“The Christian counselor is able to address all aspects of the human experience... the physical, psychological, social and the spiritual.”

Book of James we are confess to one another and healing (5:16). I believe be achieved in the church if to one another and learn to prescribed in the Book of good listener above all else. does not come naturally but I without extensive training if Christian fellowship, or any deep and meaningful only In my own life, I survived the

Traditionally Christian ministry relies on *speaking* but I believe there is a need in the church for the *ministry of listening*. As a former pastor, I can see a great need for it. When I listen to people, positive changes occur. When I listen, I am a better husband, a better friend, a better neighbor, a better pastor. The ministry of listening can also be a two-way street. Two friends can take turns listening to each other. One can talk while the other listens and switch roles if so desired, thus being able to “confess to one another.” We can all be “priests” (I Peter 2:9) to one another in the church so that healing may occur among members and a healthier faith community built.

Presentations/Events by AACCS

February 6, 13, 20 and 27 *Healthy Parenting Series*, Adult Sunday School Class, Cerritos Baptist Church, Cerritos, Peggy Wang, MFT

February 12 “*Inner Healing Seminar*,” Anaheim Free Methodist Church, Arlene Yee, LCSW and Carol Miyake, LCSW

March 2 “*Being an Overcomer*,” Language and Culture for Ministry, Karuizawa, Japan, Carol Miyake, LCSW

March 2-4 *Member Care*, Japanese Evangelical Missionary Association (JEMA) Women’s Missionary Annual Retreat, Karuizawa, Japan, Rie Mizuki, PhD and Carol Miyake, LCSW

March 7-8 *Japanese Evangelical Missionary Society (JEMS) Member Care and Training*, Osaka, Japan, Rie Mizuki, PhD and Carol Miyake, LCSW

March 10-11 *JEMS and Campus Crusades/EPIC Member Care and Training*, Tokyo, Japan, Rie Mizuki, PhD and Carol Miyake, LCSW

March 19 “*Understanding Asian American Youth Part I and Part II*,” Youth Leaders and Parents, First Chinese Baptist Church Los Angeles, Vicky Kwan, LCSW

March 25 “*Member Care While on the Field Training*,” Epicentre Staff/Church Leaders, Alhambra, Carol Miyake, LCSW

April 9 *Marriage Workshops Part I and Part II*, Marriage Conference, First Chinese Baptist Church Los Angeles, Pastor Ron Miyake and Carol Miyake, LCSW

April 10 *AACCS 25th Anniversary Celebration*, Almansor Court, Alhambra

April 30 *Bread of Life Health Fair*, Outreach Table, Torrance, Eva Fukumoto, LCSW and Shane Matsui, LCSW

May 1 “*A Time for Sharing Boutique*,” Outreach Table, Gardena, Rick Taira, LCSW

May 12 “*AACCS Services*,” Outreach Table, Department of Mental Health Social Services Fair, Arcadia County Park, Carol Miyake, LCSW

May 20 “*Ministering with a Family Systems Perspective Part II*,” First Evangelical Christian Association Staff, AACCS, Alhambra, Mei-Leng Lin, MFT

June 3 “*Caring for International Students from a Family Systems Perspective*,” Association of Christian Ministries to Internationals (ACMI), two workshops, Columbia University, South Carolina, Mei-Leng Lin, MFT

September 9-10 *Northern California Member Care Training*, World Christian Fellowship, San Jose, Pastor Ron Miyake and Carol Miyake, LCSW

Divine Appointments: AACCS in Japan

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how some 40-50% of their colleagues have left the field due to their inability to raise enough support to continue to serve in Japan. Thus, those in the field have to minister with almost half their team members gone, placing great strain on interpersonal relationships.

Nancy Nethercott, JEMA-WIM Chairperson, recently wrote that after the devastation of the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear fallout, the missionaries are finding “*their new normal*” in Japan. “*It is our prayer that [Rie and Carol] will return in March of 2012 to counsel with our women after what looks to be a year of loss and pain mingled with the Hope we have in Christ. We anticipate the positive impact of continuity in meeting with the same counselor two years in a row.*” Your past donations to AACCS’ Mission Outreach Fund have made a difference, especially this year in Japan. As Nancy additionally wrote, “*We are still hearing reports from women who met with Carol or Rie and of the timely work of God in their lives...*”

Will you consider donating to our Mission Outreach Fund again or for the first time? Not only do we have requests from Japan to serve missionaries there, but also from China and Thailand. We need your help as we look to the Lord to provide the funding necessary to meet these needs. Thank you for your faithful support of missionaries, their families and their work for God’s Kingdom through AACCS’ Mission Outreach Fund.

Reach the Harvest in Crisis

Interested in *Disaster Preparedness Training*? In light of the Japan disasters, U.S. tornadoes and floods, it can be helpful to be properly prepared especially living in earthquake regions of California. Crisis Response International (CRI) will be offering a Big Bear Lake Training August 15-20. Get tools to prepare your home, business or church as a place of refuge and reach the harvest in crisis.

After attending this training one will also be certified to respond with CRI on a national or international deployment. Visit criout.com/training to learn more about how they will be equipping.

Staff Announcement

AACCS is pleased to introduce our newest clinical staff member, Jennifer Oh, an Associate Clinical Social Worker. She will be seeing clients at our Alhambra location. She joins our staff with experience working especially with adolescents and their families. She is Korean speaking and looks forward to using her abilities as well as her faith in her work with our clients.

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19TH ANNUAL ART & SHARON YOKOI MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

October 14, 2011

Los Verdes Golf Course

7000 West Los Verdes Drive

Rancho Palos Verdes, CA

1:00 PM Shotgun Start

\$125 registration before September 5

\$150 after September 5

For more information on sponsorship opportunities or registration:

www.aaccs.org or 626.457.2900 ext. 355

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