“The only ones... who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.”

– Albert Schweitzer

When a friend finished cancer treatment, the true measure of her recovery was in the meals she cooked for her family, the sculptures she created and her volunteer hours at an art co-op. The successes of Didi Hirsch’s clients look much the same, though they have different illnesses.

All of us share universal needs. We thrive when we have food and a safe place to sleep, the connectedness that comes with friendship and love, and the sense of purpose that comes from service.

When others are ill, we often aim too low for them. With mental illness, the tendency is even stronger. Where will optimism come from as long as most of us successfully living with depression and other illnesses keep them a secret? The lack of role models also feeds stigma. In a 2013 Kaiser Foundation survey, only 54% of Americans said they would be somewhat/very comfortable working with someone with a serious mental illness.

That’s why Didi Hirsch nurtures our clients’ community connections and service—paid or unpaid. And why this Annual Report celebrates individuals who are leading lives that include far more than the basics. Homeless when a bus driver brought him to our doorstep, David now teaches other clients to cook. Shattered by his brother’s suicide, Rick eventually became a co-leader of support groups for others bereaved by suicide. We are grateful to them and all the others you will meet in this report. By sharing their stories, they perform a service; they instill hope and erase stigma.

Thank you, dear readers, for your service, too. Your support last year helped us furnish the apartment of a mother making a fresh start; develop the first group for suicide attempters to be listed as a best practice on the Suicide Prevention Registry; teach therapists special treatment models that meet military families’ needs; and so much more. Most importantly, your giving multiplied with each client who helped others.

Warmly,

Kita S. Curry, PhD
President/CEO
Driven to Hope

David Mills hit bottom. He was homeless, suffering from untreated depression, and had a long-standing addiction to alcohol. For eight years, he slept on sidewalks, bus benches and the beach. Under frequent attack, he began suffering seizures, and had one so bad that it broke his back, confining him for a time to a wheelchair. Miserable, he rolled into a busy intersection one day hoping to be struck by a car.

“I had given up,” the former boat painter recalls. What happened next surprised him. A vehicle came along, but instead of killing him, it screeched on the brakes. It was a not-in-service Culver City bus driven by Adrian “Red” Roberts, who often gave David free rides and money for food. She loaded him onto her bus and drove him to Didi Hirsch Sepulveda. “Go into those doors. They can help you,” she told him.

Too depressed to talk to anyone, he curled up next to the soda machine, where a Didi Hirsch employee found him. By the end of the day, he had a treatment team and a bed in a homeless shelter. He got therapy for his depression, met with a doctor for his physical ailments and moved into a sober living home in Koreatown. He also joined Didi Hirsch Sepulveda’s Wellness Center and took classes in nutrition, yoga and computer.

Today, David is sober, walking and living independently in an apartment with his own bed, shower and desk. Part of his recovery includes giving back; he volunteers regularly at Didi Hirsch’s Wellness Center kitchen and mini-mart.

In October 2014, David was one of 22 formerly homeless adults honored at the Westside Shelter & Hunger Coalition’s 19th annual “Celebrating Success” breakfast at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel in Santa Monica. Nominated by Didi Hirsch, David picked out a new shirt and jacket from “Didi’s Closet” to wear to the Awards.

“If Red hadn’t picked me up that day, I would be dead,” David notes. “But I got better due to everyone’s help. I am very grateful.”

About 82,000 people in LA County are homeless each night, with two out of three suffering from substance use disorder or mental illness.
In Good Health

During the past five years, Diana lost her parents and eight of her 10 siblings to cancer and diabetes. Also diagnosed with diabetes, Diana worried that she would succumb to the same health challenges that had taken so many of her loved ones. Her worries multiplied when she lost her job and medical benefits. She became so depressed and anxious that she started to think about ending her life.

"Before I lost my health benefits, I had been able to live life normally," Diana says. "But when that was wiped out, everything boiled up. I just wanted to drive my car off the road."

Suffering a severe panic attack, she exited the freeway and called 911. Paramedics took her to an Emergency Room, where she was persuaded to get help for her anxiety and depression.

Without income or medical insurance, she worried she wouldn’t be able to afford treatment. But then she found Didi Hirsch. She started to see a therapist and soon her anxiety, depression and thoughts of suicide began to fade. Her therapist asked if she wanted to join BeWell, a program of Didi Hirsch’s Healthy Inglewood Project, that teaches clients how to lead a healthier lifestyle. Diana signed up and began to address her long-neglected physical health. She learned about healthy foods and portions and how to read food labels. She took Zumba classes and started walking regularly.

"When I was depressed, I wouldn't want to exercise or do anything and gave excuses that I didn't need it," Diana says. "Today, I have more patience. I feel healthy and good. I am getting really good help here. Didi Hirsch is such a gift."

In the United States, people with diabetes are twice as likely to have depression.
A Better Mother

Jennifer was 15 when she started using illegal drugs to mask anxiety and depression stemming from abuse and a poor self-image. But it wasn’t until she was deemed an unfit mother and restricted to spending just two hours a week with her infant son that she realized she needed help.

“It was like my baby was growing up without me,” Jennifer says, after her son went into foster care. “I had basically given up my right to be a mom.”

Jennifer spent nine months at Didi Hirsch Via Avanta participating in individual and group therapy, taking classes and doing her share for the facility’s community of women before she earned the right to have overnight visits with her baby boy. When she finally graduated from the program, her son was living with her full-time and joining her for mother-child bonding activities aimed at improving their relationship and her mothering skills.

Today, Jennifer lives with her son Colt, now 3 years old, manages a restaurant and hopes to return to school eventually to become an x-ray technician. She says she is deeply grateful for all she learned at Via Avanta—including how to be a better mother.

“I now see his everyday hurts and am able to be there for him, to comfort him and be a part of his real, everyday life,” Jennifer says. “I didn’t know what I was missing.”

Children in foster care have higher rates of post-traumatic stress disorder than Vietnam veterans.
Sandra Yi earned the 2012 Beatrice Stern Intern Scholarship by using a personal experience to show how the stigma of mental illness makes it difficult for people to get help. Sandra was working at a restaurant when her manager escorted out a homeless man who was muttering to himself. "The manager refused to serve him because he was unclean and making other customers uncomfortable," she wrote. "Nobody asked if he was okay or if there was anything we could do for him. It is unfortunate when...we forget how to help our neighbors."

Sandra interned at Didi Hirsch Excelsior House, a short-term Crisis Residential Treatment Center which serves many homeless adults with severe mental illness. The fast-paced and multi-task training taught her how to screen clients, run groups, and provide counseling to people outside a traditional therapist's office. She also learned a few things about herself. Having grown up in a traditional Korean family where feelings weren't often discussed, Sandra says the job pushed her outside her comfort zone and helped her grow professionally and personally.

After earning her master's degree, she took a job as a bilingual bereavement therapist in the Orange County office of Didi Hirsch's Suicide Prevention Center where she talks to clients in English and Korean who are thinking about, have attempted or have lost a loved one to suicide. While stigma around suicide makes some therapists afraid to bring it up, Sandra is fearless with her empathy. She speaks about suicide prevention at schools, law enforcement agencies and church groups and has served as a mental health ambassador for her community, frequently talking to Korean-language media to spread the word that help is available.

"The idea of saving face is a big barrier to getting help—and if they're not asking for help, they are suffering silently and alone," Sandra says. "But talking about warning signs and resources helps us break through those barriers."
The drawings Rick Mogil uses to teach people how to recognize suicide’s warning signs are striking. In one, skyscrapers bend inward while two buildings with arms clutching knives hold a body high above a city street. In another, a tree laden with ripe red apples has a skeleton hanging from a noose.

Rick’s younger brother, Ed, drew those pictures when he was a teenager, but nobody asked if he was suicidal. After years of suffering severe depression and alcoholism, he ended his life in 2003, leaving behind dozens of devastated family members, including a wife, two daughters, and two grandchildren. Elected by his siblings to tell their parents, “the worst thing” he ever had to do, Rick was stunned when his father, an ex-Marine, fell into his arms sobbing. “I had never before seen him cry,” Rick says.

Wracked by anguish and feelings of guilt for “not protecting my baby brother,” Rick didn’t know where to turn until someone told him about Didi Hirsch’s Survivor After Suicide bereavement groups. It took three months for him to call, but when he finally joined a group, he found fellowship and comfort in “the club no one wants to join.” After the group ended Rick began attending drop-in groups, became a co-facilitator for survivor groups and started volunteering at the Suicide Prevention Center. Eventually, he came to work full-time at the Suicide Prevention Center where he now serves as Program Director of Suicide Bereavement Services and is earning a Masters degree in Marriage and Family Therapy.

Once too shy to speak in public, Rick estimates he has provided suicide prevention education to more than 20,000 people, including police officers, sheriff’s deputies, FBI agents, medical personnel, students and others, over the past eight years. He uses Ed’s drawings to show how asking questions of someone in emotional distress can save a life.

“When I came to Didi Hirsch, I found a home,” says Rick, who earned his Bachelor’s of Arts degree on the 12-year anniversary of Ed’s death, a day he calls a celebration of Ed’s life. “Every time someone says you helped me understand what my spouse or child was going through, I feel I have found my purpose — using my passion and Ed’s story to help others.”

Rick uses drawings by his brother, Ed Mogil, to teach about suicide’s warning signs.
Robin Williams’ suicide in August 2014 brought national attention to the problem of suicide just as the Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center geared up for its annual Alive & Running 5K Walk/Run to raise money and awareness for suicide prevention.

Although our crisis counselors and staffers worked overtime to handle the spike in crisis line calls, chats and media requests, they still turned out in record numbers early Sunday, Sept. 28, 2014, and won the “largest team” award.

Tom Kenny, the voice of SpongeBob Squarepants, Rabbit in Disney’s “Winnie the Pooh,” and Ice King in Cartoon Network’s “Adventure Time,” emceed the Kiddie-K (1K) after the 5K. Tom delighted the audience by jiggling a pinch of skin on his throat to produce his SpongeBob voice and urged young runners to tell a grown-up when they feel sad and not to keep their feelings to themselves.

Several survivors contributed “Why I Run” stories and photos on our event website and spoke about the experience of making a suicide attempt or losing a loved one to suicide.

Many runners wore memorial bibs with the names and photos of their loved ones. As they crossed the finish line, volunteers handed survivors white carnations, a symbol of hope.

Didi Hirsch Board member Andrew Rubin, who chairs the 5K, and Julianne Grossman, a voice actress and award-winning playwright, served as co-emcees, rallying runners across the finish line with their humorous commentary.

The poignant but life-affirming event, which included memorial quilts and banners, message boards and music by guitarist Randy Coleman, a survivor who sang “Here Comes the Sun,” raised more than $275,000 for the Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center.

“We’ve come a long way in opening a dialogue about suicide, but we still have a long way to go,” said Didi Hirsch’s President/CEO Kita S. Curry, PhD. “If we all learn the warning signs and how to respond, we can save lives.”
Musician/actor Kid Cudi (Scott Mescudi), UFC Women’s Mixed Martial Arts champion Ronda Rousey and mental health blogger Natasha Tracey were honored at Didi Hirsch’s 2014 Erasing the Stigma Leadership Awards for using the power of social media to accelerate change and erase the stigma of mental illness.

“With social media, the walls are coming down,” says Didi Hirsch President/CEO Kita S. Curry, PhD. “We are discovering how common and treatable illnesses like depression, anxiety and phobias are.”

YouTube personalities and “The Amazing Race” contestants Joey Graceffa and Meghan Camarena emceed the Awards, which took place on April 24 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles. Rousey, who has spoken publicly about her own struggles with eating disorders, won a Leadership Award; Kid Cudi, who frequently tweets messages of hope regarding depression and suicide to young fans, received the Mental Health Ambassador Award; and Natasha Tracy, who authors the acclaimed blog “Bipolar Burble,” won the Beatrice Stern Media Award.

Didi Hirsch Board member Shawn Amos, a blues musician and Freshwire CEO, and his sister, Sarah Amos, co-chaired the event, which featured Kid Cudi performing his hit song, “Pursuit of Happiness.” The dinner raised more than $370,000 for Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services.

Social Media Celebrated at the 2014 #erasingthestigma Leadership Awards

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Didi Hirsch stepped in for a failing mental health agency in 2011 to ensure that clients of the Glendale facility wouldn’t lose access to mental health care services. We came to fill a need, but didn’t expect the need to be so big.

In less than a year, our client load was 50% higher than it was under Verdugo Mental Health and double that in the next couple of years. We were bursting at the seams when we turned to Mike Antonovich, now mayor of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, for help. He understood the need and helped us secure $1.2 million in county funds, which we augmented with $500,000 from other foundation grants, to renovate the facility. Completed at the end of 2014, the renovations included more consultation rooms, soundproofing to ensure patient privacy during therapy sessions, an expanded children’s waiting area, handicap access and a redesigned Wellness Center with computers, gathering areas, a kitchen and a shower for clients who may be homeless. The Wellness Center allows clients in advanced stages of recovery to socialize, learn to plan and prepare meals, apply for jobs and housing and gain skills to reintegrate into the community.

In honor of Mayor Antonovich, we named the building after him and hosted an open house celebration on Jan. 21, 2015 that drew more than 100 guests, including community leaders and mental health professionals. A jazz band from Crescenta Valley High School performed during the festivities, which also gave guests a chance to take self-guided tours.

Mayor Antonovich, who is serving his last term on the county’s elected board, said he appreciated that we named the building for him and thanked Didi Hirsch for the vitally important services it provides.

"From its beginning more than 70 years ago, Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services has been a leader in the field of mental health treatments," Mayor Antonovich said. "Developed with the input and participation of the surrounding community, the newly renovated Glendale center is a state-of-the-art facility – and a vital component in our countywide effort to improve access to quality mental health services for residents of all ages."

Among the guests was Kim Hall, 53, who started therapy at Didi Hirsch Glendale after a year of living on the streets with schizophrenia and losing her job as a substitute preschool teacher. Today, Kim lives in her own apartment, has reconnected with her family and serves as a peer advocate at the Wellness Center.

"I’ve gotten a whole lot better since coming here," Kim said. "I wanted to be a peer advocate because I like helping others."

Didi Hirsch Glendale provides outpatient care to about 2,800 low-income children, families and adults each year. Glendale-based therapists run teen groups and programs in nearly 20 local schools. They also coordinate support groups, presentations, cultural events and other services through ARMUNITY, a partnership that serves the Armenian community.

Glendale Renovations Take the Cake

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The stigma of mental illness exists everywhere, but is especially burdensome in ethnic communities that already face so many socio-economic challenges. Didi Hirsch works to overcome those barriers by raising awareness about mental health issues in Southern California’s diverse communities and providing quality treatment to children and adults who would otherwise have nowhere else to turn.

As part of that commitment, Didi Hirsch has counselors at our clinics in Los Angeles, Glendale, Inglewood and Culver City who share a language with our clients—whether Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Armenian or Farsi. Our Suicide Prevention Center’s Crisis Line was one of the first in the nation to have Spanish-speaking counselors available around the clock and has seen call volume triple since 2011. And we recently launched a campaign to promote our Crisis Line number in Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and English on the radio, websites and bus shelters throughout Southern California.

We couldn’t build these bridges across cultural and linguistic divides without the support of our donors and are especially grateful for the generosity of our Legacy Society members who have dedicated portions of their estates to sustain the work of Didi Hirsch for generations to come.

I am proud to serve as Board Chair of this agency, which does so much to ensure people with mental illness have the opportunity to reach their full potential. I invite each of you to support Didi Hirsch with your donations, estate plans, volunteer efforts and in-kind contributions so we can continue to erase the stigma of mental illness and transform lives.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Carlos E. Garcia, Board Chair
Christopher J. Harrer has a lifelong connection to Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services. His mother, Patricia Harrer, a close friend of our founder, Didi Hirsch, served on the Board for 20 years before she died in 2004. Senior Director and Adjunct Professor at the University of Southern California’s Marshall School of Business, Chris joined the Board in 2014 to “honor my mother’s legacy, but also to continue to help erase the stigma of mental illness, to make a difference in mental health and to grow suicide prevention services.”

Michael D. Wolper was drawn to serve on Didi Hirsch’s Board for personal and professional reasons. “I have dealt with mental health issues in my family and recognize how they can ravage a family and community if not addressed in an accepting way,” he says. He is also co-founder of the Center for Mindful Education and Operation Mindful Warrior—non-profits that teach mindfulness to civilians and veterans struggling with depression, stress and other life challenges. “Didi Hirsch does meaningful work by teaching people how to navigate rather than suppress or hide mental illness,” he says.

Meet Our Newest Board Members

CHAIR
Carlos E. Garcia

EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIR
Philip B. Strauss, CPA

SECRETARY
Charlotte W. Fletcher, PhD

TREASURER
Janine B. Lichstein

VICE CHAIR
Shawn Amos

VICE CHAIR
Thomas J. Han, DDS, FACD

VICE CHAIR
Martin J. Frank

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR
Michael C. Wierwille

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD
Christopher J. Harrer
Vera M. Jashni, EdD
Gail Kamer Lieberfarb
Laura Ornest
Lisa Petrazzolo
Andrew E. Rubin
Todd M. Rubin
Michael D. Wolper
Cheri Renfroe Yousem

IN MEMORIAM
Lee Leibman, PsyD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
### Financial Summary

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<th>FY 13-14</th>
<th>FY 12-13</th>
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<td><strong>$17,031,395</strong></td>
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**Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services** is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. For information on contributions or planned gifts, please contact the Development Department at (310) 751-1200 or development@didihirsch.org.
2014 by the numbers

**Mental Health & Addiction Counseling**
- 8,444 individuals
- 144,843 client visits
- 97% of clients live at or below the poverty line

**Outreach and Education**
- 21,019 learned about drugs and alcohol, suicide and depression
- Number of outreach activities: 421

**Suicide Crisis Line**
- 62,972 calls, chats, texts
- 882 Suicidal callers rescued
- 37% Percentage of callers with past suicide attempts
- 3x Spanish calls have tripled since 2011

87 CENTS of every dollar we receive goes directly to services

Callers under the age of 25:
- 42%

TOTAL Served 92,435
Didi Hirsch Legacy Society

The Board of Directors gratefully acknowledges an extraordinary group of philanthropists whose bequests and other estate gifts ensure access to mental health, substance use and suicide prevention services for generations to come.

Legacy Society Founders
Honoring those who have made planned gift commitments of $1,000,000 or more

Michael Becker
Cynthia Chaillie Marchant
Andrew E. Rubin

Legacy Society Members
Curley L. Bonds, MD
Anette R. Brown
Kita S. Curry, PhD and Peter W. Curry
Linda and Martin J. Frank
Kate Zimmerman Geismar
Julianne Grossman
Todd Hays
Sharon Kopman and Jason Kay Trust
Janine and Henry Lichstein
Francine Chandler Righter
Richard Ross
Jilliene F. Schenkel
Terrence V. Scott
Susan Goran Sobel
Lisa and Michael C. Wierwille

In Memoriam:
Robert E. Emerson
Gerald Geismar
Edna H. Larkin
Stanley D. Lelew
Max Silver and Louise E. Light
Judith Anne Phillips
Guy Righter
Marjorie J. Schoenberg
Eileen J. Vogt

The Tony Ross Memorial Fund
Created through the generosity of his father, Richard Ross

CELEBRATING OUR DONORS
10 YEARS OF GENEROUS GIVING*

$250,000 and above
The Ahmanson Foundation
Office of Los Angeles County Supervisor
Michael D. Antonovich
Fletcher Family Foundation
Geral Light Goldstein Trust
Kabateck Brown Kellner, LLP GlaxoSmithKline
The Nickoll Family
The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
Nancy and Miles Rubin
United Way of Greater Los Angeles
Office of Los Angeles County Supervisor
Zev Yaroslavksy

$100,000 - $249,999
Beacon Capital Partners, LLC
Linda and Martin J. Frank
Gail Kamer Lieberfarb and Warren Lieberfarb
Link2Health Solutions, Inc.
DEAR ABBY/Jay and Rose Phillips
Family Foundation of Minnesota
Andrew E. Rubin
Todd M. Rubin
Beatrice Stern Media and Scholarship Fund
Link2Health Solutions, Inc.
Laura Ornest/Ornest Family Foundation
DEAR ABBY/Jay and Rose Phillips
Family Foundation of Minnesota
Andrew E. Rubin
Todd M. Rubin
Beatrice Stern Media and Scholarship Fund
The Stone Family Fund
United Hostesses’ Charities
Weingart Foundation
Ruth/Allen Ziegler Foundation

$50,000 - $99,999
California Community Foundation
The California Endowment
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
Chapman Insurance Group
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
Kita S. Curry, PhD and Peter Curry
East West Bank
Eli Lilly & Company
Lucille Ellis Simon Foundation
Jami and Nikolaus Heidegger
George Hoag Family Foundation
Janine and Henry Lichstein
Metromedia Company
The Morrison & Foerster Foundation
Merle and Peter Mullin
Lisa Petrazzolo and Emile Gladstone
Susan Goran Sobel
S. Mark Taper Foundation

*Total giving from 2005-2014
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- Office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich
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- Fletcher Family Foundation
- George Hoag Family Foundation
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Thanks to all of our dedicated volunteers who provided 20,886 hours of service.
We couldn’t do it without you!
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Special Thanks
Judd Apatow
Michael Becker
Delila Brown
Crystal Li and Andrew J. Cohen
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Michael Becker uses his signature bullhorn to capture the attention of those attending a “friendraiser” for Didi Hirsch at his art studio in Hollywood.

Didi Hirsch Board member Laura Ornest, with Terri Cheney, who read from her memoir, Manic at a reception for Didi Hirsch benefactors and friends.
When Lee Leibman, PsyD died this year, Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services lost a passionate advocate and longtime friend, who joined the Board of Directors when the agency merged with Family Services of Los Angeles in 1997.

Lee was dedicated to helping young people with mental illness. He organized a fundraiser at The Magic Castle in 2012 and once had a sporting goods store donate sneakers to needy students who were being treated for substance abuse at a school near Lafayette Park.

Lee was deeply committed to philanthropy and served on the boards of The Jewish Federation Council’s Committee for Programs in Israel and Temple Beth Emet. He also was founder and CEO of Trichordia Entertainment and a member of The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

We are grateful for Lee’s many contributions to Didi Hirsch and miss him greatly!
Mission Statement
Since 1942, Didi Hirsch has transformed lives by providing quality mental health and substance abuse services in communities where stigma or poverty limits access.

We value care that is:
- Accessible
- Comprehensive
- Collaborative
- Innovative
- Accountable
- Committed

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