Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services has been providing free mental health, substance use disorder and suicide prevention services for 75 years. Didi Hirsch is dedicated to serving communities where stigma or poverty limits access. Its Suicide Prevention Center is the nation’s first and a leader in training, research and services.

**Adult Services**
- Therapy and medication
- Clinic and field-based services
- Integrated healthcare
- Crisis residential treatment
- Transition age youth
- Older adult services
- Wellness Centers

**Substance Use Disorder Services**
- Substance use treatment
- Adolescent treatment & prevention
- Mother/child residential treatment
- Homeless outreach
- Assessment, linkage & referrals

**Child & Family Services**
- Family-focused treatment
- Birth-to-Five program
- School-based therapy
- Military families support
- Trauma-focused treatment

**Suicide Prevention Services**
- 24/7 bilingual Crisis Line
- Crisis chat and text
- Bereavement support and therapy
- Survivors of Suicide Attempts groups
- Disaster Distress Helpline
- Training, education and outreach
- Suicide Response Team
- Research and innovation
In the 1930s a few compassionate women funded psychiatric care for adults devastated by the Great Depression. Buoyed by their success, they leveraged $5,000 from the Community Chest and free space from Cedars of Lebanon to create Los Angeles Psychiatric Service—the first stand-alone non-profit psychiatric clinic in Los Angeles. The Community Chest (now United Way) and Cedars-Sinai continue to support us.

Out of acorns, mighty oaks grow. What began as an agency with three employees and nine volunteers now has over 500 employees and 200 volunteers. Here are some milestones that illustrate our 75-year commitment to transforming lives, especially in communities where stigma or poverty limits access.

The ABCs: Training future mental health professionals has been a core value since the beginning. Our psychiatry residency program and our predoctoral psychology internship were first accredited in the 1950s. Today, we also train social workers, marriage and family counselors, nurse practitioners and physicians’ assistants.

Restoring Equilibrium: In 1966, we opened a clinic in Venice to improve access to health care for Latinos and African Americans. Residents waited in long lines on opening day for brief counseling that helped families recover from crises like divorce and unemployment. Now known as Crisis-Oriented Recovery Services or CORS, LA County’s Department of Mental Health still trains professionals throughout Los Angeles to use the treatment model.

Team Didi: In 1974 we became a federally designated Community Mental Health Center—responsible for providing prevention, early intervention and intensive mental health services to residents of all ages on the Westside. With a generous gift from Didi Hirsch and her family, we built a new headquarters and renamed the agency in her honor.

Mothers With Children: We opened Via Avanta, our residential program for women with substance use disorders in 1979. It still is one of only a few residential programs where mothers can bring their young children, rather than having to choose between family and treatment. With the generous support of former Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, we added a clinic on site to address the mental health needs of the women and their children.

Standing Up to Stigma: In 1991, an organization objected when we purchased a nearby property for one of our crisis residential programs. With hundreds of mental health advocates on our side and pro bono legal representation, every suit our neighbor filed was defeated. Now on very positive terms, time has proved that nothing erases stigma like getting to know individuals one has stereotyped.

Bridging Gaps: Didi Hirsch’s commitment to vulnerable communities has prompted several mergers. 1) Under our wings, a small children’s clinic in Inglewood now serves all ages with over 125 staff. 2) The Suicide Prevention Center and clinics in the Pico-Union area and South LA joined us when a family service organization failed. 3) With the support of former Supervisor Michael Antonovich, we preserved a 50-year-old mental health agency in Glendale that serves the largest Armenian-American population in the nation.

Crisis Support: Like the Great Depression, the Great Recession of 2008 was devastating financially and psychologically. In their darkest hour, many Americans reached out to our Suicide Prevention Center for support. Since then, calls to our crisis line have tripled. In 1942 less than half the nation had home phones. Today, a significant number of young people reach us through chat and text, as well as the phone.

Who knows what the next 75 years will bring? I do know that only with the help of generous individuals like you will we continue serving those most in need, training future mental health professionals and advancing the field. Thank you for being part of Didi Hirsch’s past and future.

With gratitude,
Growing up with a stepfather who was addicted to heroin, Fina Sanchez learned at a young age how police officers will empty milk and cereal containers while searching for contraband.

In the face of her stepfather’s drug use, her brother’s gang affiliation and her mother’s neglect, she lost her way and became deeply depressed. By age 14, she was drinking alcohol and joining peers who were snorting methamphetamine in biology class. Fina managed to graduate from high school, but she soon became homeless and developed a serious substance use disorder.

After the father of her first son got custody of their child, she had two more sons by a man who often hit her. Fina tried to break free from her abuser, but it wasn’t until a judge sent her to Didi Hirsch’s Via Avanta residential treatment center for pregnant and parenting mothers that Fina was able to turn her life around. With the support of her therapist and fellow residents, she stopped using drugs. When her boys came to live with her at Via Avanta, the family worked through the trauma of domestic violence and the six-month separation they had endured.

Fina and her boys, David, 6, and Andrew, 5, now live in a cheery, light-filled apartment in Glendale full of books, video games and family photos. Fina, 36, is determined to provide the supportive environment she went without as a child. She takes her sons to weekly therapy sessions at Didi Hirsch Glendale and coordinates monthly visits with her older son. She also volunteers at her boys’ school, helps them with homework and works weekends at a retail store.

“One in three homeless people in Los Angeles County are women and many were victims of domestic violence.”

Most women experienced significant improvement in their relationships, less distress and fewer symptoms of mental illness when they graduated from Via Avanta.
Edward “Kenneth” Givens, a “blackout drinker” who slept on the streets of downtown Los Angeles for more than two decades, was tired of waking up in jail and not remembering how he got there. “It’s very scary to wake up and wonder, ‘Oh, my God, did I kill somebody? What did I do?’ It was always ‘Don’t worry, you were just drunk in public.’ But it made me want to stop.”

That desire always ran up against what made him start drinking in the first place: depression, mood swings, the voices he sometimes heard and a feeling that “maybe I’m not worthy.” If he drank, everything seemed OK—for the moment. He didn’t realize how bad things had gotten until December 2007, when some people from Project 50—a Los Angeles County effort to help the 50 homeless people most likely to die within a year—showed him a photo of a bleary-eyed, disoriented man with a sleeping bag. Barely recognizing himself, Kenneth agreed to take shelter at a supportive housing program that includes a team of outreach workers, mental health professionals, medical staff and substance use counselors provided by Didi Hirsch.

The first time he tried to enter a detoxification program, his withdrawal symptoms were so severe that he walked out and got drunk. But he credits the patience and support of his Didi Hirsch substance use counselors with helping him to stop drinking in 2008—and keeping him sober ever since.

Today, his life is full of activities that have nothing to do with alcohol. He frequently visits with family members, plays cards, rides a bike, grows vegetables and flowers in a rooftop garden and volunteers his time to dispense clothing, food and advice to others struggling to survive on the streets.

“A lot of people are inspired by me. I tell them you have to want it and work at it—one day at a time. If you fall, no one’s going to blame you for that. Just get back up. I fell plenty of times, but there was always someone there through this program to help me get back on my feet.”

More than 70% of Project 50 clients who received substance use treatment from Didi Hirsch became abstinent or actively involved in treatment after receiving housing.
Kathy Diradoorian was 9 when she first daydreamed about taking an overdose of pills to end her sadness. She mourned the death of her grandfather who had been like a dad to her. Her biological father had never been in her life and she wasn’t close to her stepfather. She was a teenager when she discovered that smoking marijuana helped dull her pain.

She gave birth to daughter Michelle in her 20s and raised her as a single mother. Years later, she earned a bachelor’s degree in social work. All the while, she continued to suffer from anger and depression, which was exacerbated by the trauma she experienced after a boyfriend kidnapped and assaulted her. Frequently out of work, she smoked marijuana obsessively and routinely contemplated suicide.

Urged by her grown daughter to get help, Kathy checked herself into Olive View-UCLA Medical Center in Sylmar, where doctors referred her to an agency that treats victims of abuse and violent crime. Eventually, the agency referred her to Didi Hirsch Glendale, where her healing began in earnest.

Kathy received treatment for her trauma and depression and eventually enrolled in our Wellness Center’s Healthy Integration Program, where she participated in cooking, personal finance classes and groups in anger and stress management. She stopped smoking and, in May 2016, landed a job as a baker in Burbank. She enjoys baking breads, rolls and cookies and plans to get training in peer advocacy so she can volunteer to help other women in need.

“It took a long time for me to realize that I needed help,” Kathy said. “But when I did, Didi Hirsch was there. My therapist and care coordinator took an interest in me as a human being and did everything they could to make sure I’m living a life that makes me happy. Thanks to them, I am.”

Depression has been linked to an increased risk of death from heart disease and cancer.

Three out of four clients who spent 6 months or more in our Healthy Integration Program found it easier to get help for their physical health problems. Nearly half had improved blood pressure, smoked less or stopped smoking.
On December 9, 2015, Ana Gutierrez’s 16-year-old daughter Ana Katherin died by suicide. Ana became numb with grief and felt as though she could never survive her daughter’s death. She went into a dream state that she thought would never end.

Through a friend, Ana found her way to our Suicide Prevention Center’s Survivor Support Services in Orange County, where individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide receive individual and family bereavement counseling and support. Ana began receiving services in Spanish. At first, she didn’t think therapy would help. “I couldn’t think about her. It hurt too much and I didn’t think I would ever get better.” But after three sessions, Ana gained confidence to continue and began to recognize a change in herself. “Before, I didn’t know how to express myself. Now, I can talk about what happened. I didn’t think I’d ever be able to do that.”

Didi Hirsch’s Suicide Prevention Center was the first in the nation to have a 24-hour crisis line and has pioneered many programs to help those who are thinking about suicide, worried family and friends and those who have attempted or suffered a loss. In 2010, we opened an office in Santa Ana, where survivors who live in Orange County can receive bereavement services at no cost in English, Spanish and through our partners in Korean, Farsi and Arabic.

Ana still struggles to be strong for her husband and other children, but she finds comfort in thinking about “everything Ana Katherin was and the beautiful things she taught us and left us.” She shares her story in the hope it will help others who have lost a loved one to suicide find some peace. “You can’t do it alone,” Ana says. “So, yes, look for help. Take it. And use it. Moving forward is the way to heal.”

Depression decreased for 80% of people who participated in Didi Hirsch’s suicide bereavement support services. All said they would recommend our services to a friend or someone in need of help.
Lucretia Williams had weathered the “terrible twos” with her other children, but felt totally unprepared for the intense tantrums her daughter, Jayani, began having after her second birthday. As often as 15 times a day, Jayani would scream, hit, scratch, spit and throw things, sometimes in response to a simple “no” or “you have to ask first.”

Feeling defeated and out of control, Lucretia consulted with a therapist who suggested she and Jayani begin parent-child interaction therapy at Didi Hirsch Inglewood. The treatment works with parents and children to improve the quality of their relationship and teaches parents skills to manage severe behavioral problems. Parents learn how to have positive communication with their child and then practice their new skills while the therapist observes from behind a one-way mirror and provides coaching instructions that only the parent can hear.

Lucretia says the therapy was “like learning another language.” Instead of issuing commands or resorting to spanking, Lucretia learned to praise and reflect appropriate behavior and to stay calm even when Jayani was throwing a fit. If Jayani acts inappropriately and won’t stop, Lucretia gives her a choice to comply or spend time in her little blue chair.

“I learned a lot in the program and I use the tools with my other kids, too,” Lucretia said. “I’m much calmer now, and so is Jayani. I’m really glad we did this. It’s made a big difference for our family.”

Half of all cases of mental illness begin by age 14; treatment is delayed an average of 8 to 10 years.

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Half of all cases of mental illness begin by age 14; treatment is delayed an average of 8 to 10 years.
“We’ve come a long way in 20 years erasing the stigma and silence around mental illness, but we still have work ahead.”

Kita S. Curry, PhD
Didi Hirsch President/CEO

“I stand here as a proud suicide survivor who wants all mental health to come out of the shadows. Look how far we’ve come since 1987... that we can fill a ballroom and openly discuss it!”

Melissa Rivers
Beatrice Stern Media Award

“I’ve been in recovery for 27 years, but my recovery story is not unique. There are millions of Americans in long-term recovery who are leading meaningful and productive lives because they were able to access treatment.”

Michael Botticelli
Leadership Award

“I would have liked to have known I was not the only one with this kind of family and my feelings were normal and didn’t make me a bad person.”

Maya Forbes
Leadership Award

Didi Hirsch’s daughter, Nancy Rubin, and her husband, Miles, served as Presenting Sponsors for the agency’s 20th Anniversary Erasing the Stigma Leadership Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on April 28, 2016. The event raised a record $540,000 for children and adults with mental health and substance use issues.

Honorees included Melissa Rivers, Fashion Police producer and co-host; Maya Forbes, writer/director of the movie, Infinitely Polar Bear; and Michael Botticelli, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy under President Barack Obama. Mixed Martial Arts fighter and actress Ronda Rousey, a former honoree, presented Forbes with a Leadership Award while Rivers accepted the Beatrice Stern Media Award from Beatrice Stern’s granddaughter, Andrea Stern.

Emmy Award-nominated Actress Eva LaRue was emcee. Grammy Award-nominated pop vocalist KT Tunstall performed and voice actress Julianne Grossman-Deme hosted the stage appeal, which raised $58,000 at the event.
The 18th annual Alive & Running 5K Walk/Run for Suicide Prevention raised a record $375,000 for Didi Hirsch’s Suicide Prevention Center, the nation’s first and a leader in training, research and services. The Fletcher Family Foundation was Presenting Sponsor; Board Members Pamela Kluft and Andrew E. Rubin were Event Co-Chairs.

Three-time Olympian runner Suzy Favor Hamilton led the pre-race warm up and spoke about her brother’s suicide and her own battle with bipolar disorder and a suicide attempt. Voice actress and advocate Julianne Grossman-Deme emceed the race, which drew over 2,000 people and included a Health & Wellness Expo, client testimonials and musical performances by singers/songwriters Tom Goss and Larissa Lam. Alive & Running has raised over $2.5 million for the Center over the years. Proceeds fund support groups for people who have attempted suicide or are grieving a loss, send staffers to the scene of a suicide and provide counselors for Crisis Chat, which is popular with teens who wouldn’t otherwise call for support.

Awards:
- **Hope Award**
  - Sherry and Al Yanagisawa
- **Inspiration Award**
  - Susan and Jonathan Hyman
- **Spirit Award**
  - Team SPC
Christopher J. Harrer, Chair of the Board of Directors

Dear Friends,

Many of us have a passion for erasing the stigma of mental illness because of personal or family experience. In my case, a close family member suffers from mental illness. Everyone in my family was well aware of how difficult it can be for those with mental illness to function in daily life — and of how the illness of one member can affect the entire family.

When I was a boy, my mother, Patricia, was named to the Board of Directors of Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services. My mom was a great friend of Didi Hirsch, the social worker and benefactor for whom the agency was named, and she served on the board for 20 years before she died in 2004. When I got the opportunity to serve on the Board, I viewed it as a chance to give back and to honor my mother in some small way. I also sought to honor the memory of a dear friend whom I lost to suicide three years ago.

While serving as chairman this past year, I have focused on helping to identify a location for Didi Hirsch’s new, standalone Suicide Prevention Center to meet the rising demand for our services. Our organization already leads in research, training and services, but, as we are poised to celebrate our 75th anniversary, we also intend to create a national resource for hope and healing that will allow us to accommodate a projected doubling of calls to our Crisis Line, Crisis Chat and Text services by 2025.

A few months ago, I attended a holiday party for Didi Hirsch’s 500 staff members. It was wonderful to see the affection and mutual respect they have for one another. Everyone there shared the same vision of wanting to make a difference in the lives of the more than 100,000 adults and children that we help each year.

Our hard-working Board members share that vision. Some, like our newest, Sara Rutenberg, have made it a family affair. Her brother, Andrew Berman, as a member of the Capital Campaign Committee, is helping with the effort to build the new Suicide Prevention Center. Thanks to both of them for stepping up — and to all of you who support this agency and our events. We have much to accomplish, and we couldn’t do it without you.

Warmly,

Christopher J. Harrer
Chair, Board of Directors

Sara Rutenberg is a business affairs executive and attorney who joined Didi Hirsch’s Board of Directors in December 2016. She has an extensive background in brand management and business development, and has worked in key leadership positions for such companies as National Lampoon, Fremantle Media and Universal Television. A family history of mental illness and her sister’s suicide inspired her to become a mental health advocate. “I have seen the mistreatment and lack of affordable housing and health care faced by people with mental illness and how the system fails them. I really believe that Didi Hirsch is one of the few places that is actually addressing the mental health crisis and I am committed to working with the agency to help erase the stigma of mental illness.”

Chris Harrer
Chair, Board of Directors

Sara Rutenberg
NEW BOARD MEMBER

Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services
Board of Directors

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Christopher J. Harrer

EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIR
Rudolph I. Estrada

SECRETARY
Pamela Kluft

TREASURER
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Lisa Petrazzolo
Andrew E. Rubin
Sara Rutenberg
Philip B. Strauss, CPA
Cheri Renfroe Yousem
## Financial Summary

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<tr>
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<th>FY 15-16</th>
<th>FY 14-15</th>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>$24,054,220</td>
<td>$20,914,282</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) 751-5455 or development@didihirsch.org.
2016 by the numbers

- **8,900** clients
- **86,988** calls, chats, texts
- **15,196** people trained
- **111,084** total served

Client demographics:

- Latino: 41%
- White: 28%
- African American: 25%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 2%
- Other: 4%

- **68%** Adults
- **32%** Children

- **93%** of adult clients would recommend Didi Hirsch to a friend or family member

- **4 of 5** clients reported:
  - improved functioning
  - increased coping skills
  - decreased anxiety and depression

- **ONE of only TWO** centers in the U.S. that takes English & Spanish Lifeline calls 24/7

- **45%** of callers are under 25 years old

- **178** volunteers
- **495** employees

- **More than 86 cents** of every dollar is spent on services

- **255** total trainings
- **81** first responders
- **174** other
  - FBI
  - Police
  - Medical personnel
  - Firefighters
  - Schools
  - Colleges
  - Faith-based groups
  - Community groups
Didi Hirsch Legacy Society

The Board of Directors gratefully acknowledges an extraordinary group of individuals 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-Deme
Todd Hays
Sharon Kopman and Jason Kay Trust
Mary Lelewer
Janine and Henry Lichtstein
Francine Chandler Righter
Richard Ross, PhD
Joel Safranek
Jilliene F. Schenkel
Susan Goran Sobel
Lisa and Michael C. Wierwille

In Memoriam:
Robert E. Emersen
Gerald Geismar
Edna H. Larkin
Stanley D. Lelewer
Max Silver and Louise E. Light
Alexandria M. McAfee
Judith Anne Phillips
Guy Righter
Marjorie J. Schoenberg
Terrence V. Scott
Eileen J. Vogt

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

2016 DONATIONS

$100,000 and above
Fletcher Family Foundation
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
StanCorp Financial Group

$25,000 - $99,999
Anonymous
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
Kita S. Curry, PhD and Peter W. Curry
East West Bank
Linda and Martin J. Frank
Mimi and Carlos E. Garcia
Gail Kamer Lieberfarb and Warren Lieberfarb
Laura Ornest/Ornest Family Foundation
Robert Ellis Simon Foundation
Nancy and Miles Rubin
Anne and Philip Strauss, CPA
United Way of Greater Los Angeles

$10,000 - $24,999
Beacon Capital Partners, LLC
The Berman Family Trust
Jami and Nikolasa Heiddegger
Heidrick & Struggles
Suzanne and Ric Kayne
Pamela and Earl Kluit
The Nickoll Family
Jeanne Phillips and Walter Harris/Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Minnesota
Sharon and Nelson Rising
Richard Ross, PhD
Andrew E. Rubin
The Saban Charitable Support Fund
David E. Shaw
Matthew Silverman Memorial Foundation
Lisa and Michael C. Wierwille
Ruth/Allen Ziegler Foundation
$5,000 - $9,999

Myrna and Stephen D. Greenberg
Gussey Schneider, LLP
Thomas J. Han, DDS, FADC
Harman Family Foundation
Tiffany and Christopher Harrer
William Isaacoff, MD
Karen E. Kennedy
Dana Kessel, PhD and Paul Kessel
Cynthia Kolodny
Kim Kowksy and Sheldon Cohn
Judith and Lester Lieberman
Ed Petrazzolo
Primary Care Physician Assistant
Program at the Keck School of Medicine of USC
Murphy and Ed Romano
Andrew Rosen
Nat Schulhof
Sony Pictures Entertainment
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LightHopeLife, a nonprofit co-founded by Michael and Kim Rexford, donated $9,103 to Didi Hirsch’s Suicide Prevention Center. Michael, an attorney, and Kim, a psychologist, met while training for the Suicide Prevention Crisis Line.

For their “Sweet 16” birthday on December 27th, twin sisters Delila and Olivia Brown, asked friends and family to make a donation to Didi Hirsch’s Suicide Prevention Center instead of buying them gifts. The inspiring young activists raised $2,000 for teen suicide prevention efforts.

Comedian Jeannette Rizzi donated proceeds from the October 10 performance of her one-woman comedy show, “Blindsided,” to Didi Hirsch’s Suicide Prevention Center. The Hollywood Improv show raised $1,820 and was dedicated to three friends who died by suicide.

New Age singer/songwriter Kimberly Haynes celebrated the release of her new album, *Awaken Me*, by holding a concert on October 1st to benefit Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services. The concert at Full Circle Venice raised $500 for the agency.

To all the Didi Hirsch supporters who used their talents, creativity and love to raise money for the children and adults we serve—thank you!
Special Thanks

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