

The Mercury News

MercuryNews.com

Suzanne Lamar's compelling film reintroduces the Pacifica Resource Center

By Jean Bartlett
Pacifica Tribune correspondent

Posted: 09/13/2011 05:00:35 PM PDT

Updated: 09/13/2011 05:00:36 PM PDT

On Tuesday, Sept, 6, at 8 p.m., PCT Channel 26 aired the 105th episode of "Footprints of Pacifica" titled — "Pacifica Resource Center: Neighbors Helping Neighbors."

"Footprints of Pacifica" is a volunteer-driven show which offers first-rate film capsules of the people, the businesses and the events that give our city its history. The half-hour program is the recipient of multiple awards. The "Pacifica Resource Center" episode takes the viewer along the extraordinary workings of a giving center in Pacifica which lives daily the modern-day axiom — "we are all in this together." If you missed it, it will air again. More importantly, it can be bought through the Pacifica Historical Society store. This 105th episode is a fascinating, heart-felt narrative with a long-reaching purpose.

The show was the brainstorm of multimedia expert, Pacifican Suzanne Lamar. Lamar has been on the volunteer film crew of "Footprints" for the past two years. She is also the owner and president of More than Multimedia, a multifaceted company which brings businesses to their most competitive edge by bringing their story to the market through Lamar's extensive knowledge of (and ability to create) — branding, logos, graphic design portfolios, website content and design, and client video.

"I have lived and worked in Pacifica for nine years and have walked by the Resource Center on Palmetto but never noticed it," Lamar said. "But once I understood who

they are and what they do, there was no way that I couldn't help them tell their story."

The Pacifica Resource Center "is a project of the Tides Center. Their mission is to help stabilize Pacifica families and individuals by providing a safety net of food, housing assistance, and other critical services along with advocacy, coaching, information, and referral. Their vision is to assure the basic needs of every Pacifican are met so that every member of our community has food, shelter, and the opportunity to thrive."

Established in 1974, the Pacifica Resource Center (PRC) has been under the direction of Executive Director Anita Rees since she signed on in January of 2010. Rees has said that she knows exactly what it is to need help. As a single parent raising her son, Rees was on welfare and received food stamps. With financial aid assistance, she attended college and earned her B.A. in sociology from the University of California, Berkeley.

Committed to helping low-income and underrepresented families in Pacifica access the resources they need to become stable and economically secure, Rees is a dynamo. Also working with Rees, are the three other equally dedicated members of the PRC Staff — Administrative Assistant Dulce Adonis, Direct Services Manager Marina Castellanos and Case Worker Ann Cooney.

This "Footprints" episode driven by Suzanne Lamar really lets the Pacifica Resource Center tell its story of purpose and community.

"In Pacifica, we have gone from 18 people that were homeless two years ago, to 95 people," Rees said in the episode's opening interview conducted by

FREE APPLEBEE'S COUPONS
The largest coupon collection on the web!

Coupon For 33% Off

Get Coupons >>

Print Powered By FormatDynamics

The Mercury News

MercuryNews.com

Lamar. "These people sleep on the beach or in their vehicles. There are also a lot of people barely making it each month."

"In 2010, PRC served 3,200 individuals," Rees continued. "Now we serve about 4,500 individuals. We bring to Pacificans over \$600,000 in outside resources which include: food, rental assistance and deposits, infant supplies, utility payments and transportation."

Included among the PRC food service programs is the weekly produce "drop-in" program — every Thursday at 9:30 a.m. at PRC, during Pacifica's Coastside Farmer's Market season (May to mid December), farm fresh fruits and vegetables are donated by the farmers. There is a monthly Produce Mobile, delivered by the Second Harvest Food Bank on the second Monday of every month. Second Harvest Food Bank also provides 100-120 pounds of free groceries once per month for Pacifica families with children under the age of 18. And every Tuesday at 1:30 p.m, individuals can drop into PRC for free bread donated by Safeway Half Moon Bay with additional free items provided by Fresh & Easy Pacifica. Pacifica Gardens and the Sanchez Library Garden are also a part of the food giving tree. See PRC's website for the full list of donors.

Lamar's camera follows the great army of volunteers who help grow the food, harvest the food, transport the food, distribute the food and line up the food on tables and shelves — 150,000 pounds of food, annually — and what really comes across is how thrilled people are to help their neighbors.

"Most people are not aware of how many people we have in need in Pacifica," Lamar said during a separate interview. "But to me, if you take care of your neighbors you build the resources to help the rest of the world. If your neighbors are hungry, you can't solve the problems overseas. I think food should be a right."

Lamar said her relationship with PRC started when she found she was in need of a place to donate food.

"What I learned immediately is PRC takes care of people with really good, nutritious food, not the kind of junk food that creates poor health," Lamar said. "This really touches me and the fact that the women of PRC provide so many resources,

including free tax returns, with a concern and yet a normalcy which allows those on the receiving end to feel completely welcomed. There is no stigma."

Not only did Lamar work on the PRC film for "Footprints," she also recreated PRC's website so that people will understand how important this organization is and see the value in the giving of their time or their money.

"Because of Suzanne, because of this 'Footprints' episode which she produced, edited and directed — and because of how she has completely updated our website, we are able to tell our story better than ever and in a way that is compelling," Rees said.

Lamar, who has a BA in Sociology and an MBA, and who works with businesses, nonprofits and universities to enrich their communication and marketing strategies, said she sees her commitment to PRC as long term.

"Giving back to the community is about finding the intersection of things that you love to do and the value that matters to you."

Purchase the "Footprints" episode "Pacifica Resource Center: Neighbors Helping Neighbors" through the Pacifica Historical Society store at <http://pacificahistory.org/footprints-of-pacifica>. Learn more about Suzanne Lamar and her communication solutions business at <http://morethanmultimedia.com>. The Pacifica Resource Center is located at 1809 Palmetto Ave. Visit them on the web at <http://www.pacresourcecenter.org>

**Celebrate
20 Years of
Dummies**
Get \$20 back
when you spend \$50
on any Dummies
purchase in September

DUMMIES **LEARN HOW ▶**

Print Powered By  FormatDynamics