

ETTIE LEE YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES



Contact:
Vicki Mastro
626/960-4861
vicki_m@ettielee.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ettie Lee Youth & Family Services Finds a Partner in Westwood College

February 2014 – BALDWIN PARK – Ettie Lee Youth & Family Services has partners with Westwood College to hire graduates from Westwood College’s School of Justice to work with Ettie Lee’s clients who have been referred through the criminal juvenile justice system.

“They bring a unique set of skills and training,” said Karen Turner, Ettie Lee’s Interim Director of Residential Services, and, “they have been trained to work and intervene positively with clients who behave in ways that are anti-social. They also have the skills and knowledge in forensic documentation of the maladaptive behaviors that are common in our settings. This is critical when working with the juvenile justice system.”

Working with Westwood was the idea of another Ettie Lee employee, Steve Lechuga. Lechuga, a gang specialist and law enforcement affiliate, who has worked with Ettie Lee for more than 15 years, believes that these graduates will be able to hit the ground running and be able to encourage clients to cooperate within the system instead of working against it. “They are highly motivated, have a passion for the justice system and have the necessary training to be successful with our youth,” remarked Lechuga.

Westwood College prepares their Criminal Justice students to compare and contrast the various components of the criminal justice system; explore the impact of contemporary societal issues on the criminal justice system; compare legal, social, and political parameters within the juvenile justice field; and to analyze information and develop solutions to challenges within the criminal justice system.

“It’s a win-win situation for us,” said Don Perfecto, Westwood’s Senior Career Advisor. Because says Perfecto, “We are able to place students in a well established agency upon their graduation to start in their chosen field, and one in which they have been well trained for.”

The first two Westwood grads are going through Ettie Lee’s hiring process at this time.

For more than 63 years Ettie Lee Youth & Family Services has served the complex needs of at-risk youth with emotional and behavioral problems and their families in Southern California. When Miss Ettie Lee opened the first group home in 1950 she introduced the model of providing a family atmosphere.

Although Ettie Lee has grown significantly since 1950, providing a family atmosphere has been so successful that we still follow that model in all of our six group homes and 40 foster homes.

Ettie Lee's group homes expertise is in serving older children, ages 13-18+. All of group homes are located in residential areas and provide family-style residential treatment that focuses on the importance of being active in the community to develop the skills for success in life.

Ettie Lee's therapeutic Foster Care Adoption Agency serves children ages 0 – 18+. Located in Covina the boys and girls are placed in the loving homes of foster parents who are trained and licensed. Recently Ettie Lee was certified to provide another level of foster care adoption services -- Intensive Treatment Foster Care (ITFC) services.

Ettie Lee's other much needed, individualized in-house and community-based services include mental health, substance use disorder, child abuse prevention and education services We are Doing Whatever It Takes to help vulnerable children, youth and families build a life worth living.

Last year Ettie Lee served 518 unduplicated youth and families: 64% were Hispanic, 18% African-American, 12% Caucasian, .2% Asian/Pacific Islander; .2% American Indian; 5% mixed and over 97% were from low-income and/or disadvantaged families.

About Ettie Lee Youth & Family Services

Ettie Lee Youth & Family Services is a nonprofit, non sectarian organization started in 1950. Ettie Lee Does Whatever It Takes to help vulnerable children, youth and families to build a life worth living. The vision of Ettie Lee Youth & Family Services is for all children, youth and families to achieve safety, permanency, and well being in their lives. Ettie Lee Youth & Family Services is accredited by the California Alliance for Children & Families and the Council on Accreditation. To learn more about Ettie Lee, visit the website at www.ettielee.org.

About Westwood College

Westwood College is an institution of higher learning with 14 campuses located California, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois and Virginia. Westwood offers a hands-on, career-focused curriculum in fields such as healthcare, technology, criminal justice, and business. Westwood is nationally accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). A 2012 survey conducted by Noel-Levitz showed Westwood students are significantly more satisfied than the comparison group of approximately 125 public and private colleges, particularly in the areas of course content, quality of instruction and the school meeting their career goals. For more information, visit www.westwood.edu.