

- My name is Lawrence Reyes, CADC I

I'm a social worker, a substance abuse counselor for the chronically homeless. But before my current title and job description, I knew firsthand what it meant to live in a world of neglected health, mental illness, addiction, and trauma. I understood how these could spin a life out of control. And I learned to work with others to take it back.

- If you want to feel in control of your job, of the challenges that are before us here today as LA County Health Agency workers, then getting involved in the work of partnership and integration is the answer. Like many of you, I felt skepticism about this process. I never bought in to pie in the sky promises. I came to this as someone used to getting things done by butting heads with the boss. Partnership is something new. Integration is something new.

As a member of the Health Agency Integration Advisory Board, my job is to ask tough questions of top decision-makers, and then to make sure that the right actions are taken once the best available information arrives. I got involved through SEIU 721, the Union that represented my bargaining unit when it came time to bargain our contract, and if need be, file grievances to enforce it. I arrived at the position I currently hold because I was concerned with the wellbeing of the vulnerable populations all of us serve, AND with the job security, pay, and benefits all of us deserve. What I discovered through doing partnership and integration work is that others, not only from other Unions, but from Management as well, share similar concerns.

- A *safe and just culture* for all means moving resources to establish a system that trains for Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dignity, and Employee protection. One with reporting, and accountability, so bully free environments can be achieved, and elements keeping us from providing exceptional patient and client experiences, can be removed.

We don't have tons of examples of partnership and integration working out perfectly for everyone everywhere. We're building this airplane while flying it. But so far, our LA County Health Agency is solutions-driven such as what's happening in homeless settings like Skid Row with the homeless initiative. By having labor and management working together, we now have a joint customer service trainings and 60 Care Improvement Team projects, we have examples of where things worked out better than expected, and coming together for the sake of action-driven, and satisfaction-driven work.

- I see myself in the addicted, traumatized, and homeless people I serve, because I don't see a difference between their humanity and mine. I know many of you feel the same way. And that is why we need more voices from the frontlines that will promote greater integration of services, coordination of care and communication and at our partnership and integration tables. There's a work group, council, committee, or taskforce seat for you:

Join us and get involved! Thank you.