



For Immediate Release

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**MEND, THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY'S
LARGEST ANTI-POVERTY AGENCY, HOSTS ITS FIRST ANNUAL
MENDING POVERTY CONFERENCE—"REFRAMING POVERTY"**

**Conference Includes Keynote Speakers, Moderators and Workshops by
Los Angeles' Leading Poverty Experts, Funders and Members of the
Media**

Pacoima, CA (June 2, 2008) – On Wednesday, June 18, 2008, MEND -- the San Fernando Valley's largest anti-poverty agency -- will host its first MENDING Poverty Conference, themed "Reframing Poverty." The day's event will cover many issues affecting poverty, including myths, the media's role in shaping public perception, the clients who seek assistance, a blueprint for change, and much more.

The opening keynote address, "*Re-Thinking Poverty—Telling the Story Effectively*," will be given by **Andy Goodman**, author of "Why Bad Ads Happen to Good Causes;" **Frank Gilliam, PhD**, Vice Chancellor and Director, Center for Communications, UCLA; and **Thomas E. Backer, PhD**, Executive Director, Valley Nonprofit Resources, will serve as the keynote moderator. Los Angeles City Councilmember, **Richard Alarcon** and moderator **Alicia Lara**, Vice President, Community Investment United Way, will address "*The Myths of Poverty*."

"We're bringing together under one roof the non profit agency executives along with community stakeholders that impact what we think about poverty, how we address poverty, and help us fund and find resources to help those living in poverty. This is a huge milestone for an agency like MEND, which has served the northeast San Fernando Valley's low-income families and individuals for more than 35 years," said Marianne Haver Hill, Executive Director, MEND. The fact is that poverty is an on-going issue. It's not seasonal, but happens year-round and it affects people from all walks of

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life. We are looking forward to the discussions and outcomes of our first annual MENDING Poverty Conference.”

The MENDING Poverty Conference will have six workshops, led by community leaders:

Morning Workshops

How the Media Think about Poverty

Speakers include: **Miriam Hernandez**, Reporter, KABC-TV; **Gabriel Lerner**, State and National News Editor, La Opinion; **Dennis McCarthy**, Columnist, Los Angeles Daily News; and Moderator: **Christine Hershey**, President, Hershey/Cause Communications.

How Funders Think about Poverty

Speakers include: **Kafi Blumenfield**, President and CEO, Liberty Hill Foundation; **Cristina Regalado**, Vice President of Programs, The California Wellness Foundation; **Beatriz Solis, MPH, PhD**, Senior Program Officer, The California Endowment; and Moderator: **Thomas E. Backer, PhD**, Executive Director, Valley Nonprofit Resources.

When Poverty Makes You Sick

Speakers include: **Marc Allen Hoffman, MD**, Assistant Area Medical Director at Kaiser Permanente in Panorama City, Sun Valley Asthma Project; **Eli Palomares**, Attorney, Neighborhood Legal Services; **Kathy Proctor**, Clinic Administrator, NEVHC Homeless Clinic Representative, Sun Valley Middle School Clinic; and Moderator: **Diana Bonta, RN, Dr.PH**, Vice President, Public Affairs, Kaiser Permanente.

Afternoon Workshops

Involving Millennials in Poverty Issues

Speakers include: **Jack MacKenzie**, Executive Vice President, Frank N. Magid Associates; and Moderator: **Larry Adamson**, President and CEO, Midnight Mission.

Diversity Across the Board

Speakers include: **Alan Kumamoto**, Principal, Kumamoto Associates; **Alex J. Norman, DSW**, Diversity and Management Consultant; and Moderator: **Frank Quevedo**, Vice President of Equal Opportunity, Southern California Edison.

Pay it Forward: How Poverty Clients Give Back to the Community

Speakers include: **Kathi Frazier**, Neighborhood Legal Services – L.A. Client Eligible Board Member, Human Resources Manager; **John Horn**, Program Director, Sydney M. Irmas Transitional Living Center, L.A. Family Housing; **Baltazar Martinez**, Member of MEND’s Board of Directors and former MEND Client, Home Loan Consultant; and Moderator: **Jennifer Kang**, Director of Development, Neighborhood Legal Services-L.A.



Finally, **Torie Osborn**, Senior Strategist to Foundations and The Mayor's Office will address "*Ending Poverty—A New Blueprint for Change,*" which will be followed by closing comments by **Thomas E. Backer, PhD** and **Marianne Haver Hill**, MEND Executive Director.

For more information about the conference or to receive a full brochure with a complete schedule, please visit MEND's website www.mendpoverty.org. You may also contact Marianne Haver Hill, Executive Director, MEND, at 818-897-2443, Ext. 7321 or Marianne@mendpoverty.org.

The MENDING Poverty Conference Sponsors include: MEND – Meet Each Need with Dignity, Valley Nonprofit Resources, Honorable Richard Alarcón, Jewish Community Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, Southern California Edison, United Way and Honorable Zev Yaroslavsky. The Conference is also funded in part by a grant from The California Wellness Foundation.

About MEND

In the early 1970's, MEND (Meet Each Need with Dignity) opened its doors in an effort to transform the lives of the neediest residents of the San Fernando Valley - poor children and their struggling families. Starting as a small group of volunteers working from a garage, MEND has grown primarily by word-of-mouth into one of the leanest operating non-profit organizations in existence. More than 95% of the support and donations received by MEND, now the largest poverty agency in the Valley, provides emergency food, clothing, medical, vision and dental care, job skills training and job placement assistance, English as a Second Language classes, youth activities, and a Christmas program. In 2007, MEND served over 40,000 individuals each month utilizing a workforce of more than 2600 volunteers.

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