



# According to PLAN

## Planned Living Assistance Network of Central Texas

**Mission Statement:** Offer an array of customized services to enhance the lives of individuals and families facing mental health challenges.

**Vision:** All people living mentally healthy lives.

Editor: Karla Starkweather

[www.planctx.org](http://www.planctx.org)

June 2015

## John F. Nash, Jr. and Louis Nirenberg, Co-recipients of 2015 Abel Prize

by Cecile DeWit, Ph.D. and Anne Clark, M.S.

On March 25, 2015, the Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters announced its decision to award the Abel Prize for outstanding scientific work in the field of mathematics (\$765,000) to John F. Nash, Jr. and Louis Nirenberg. Nash, aged 86, and Nirenberg received the prize from the King of Norway in a ceremony in Oslo, Norway, on May 19.

The name John Nash is not a household name, but the film *A Beautiful Mind* based on his life is well-known and so is the name of the actor featuring him, Russell Crowe.

In the fall of 2012, PLANCTX invited John Nash and his wife Alicia to Austin to help PLAN conduct a symposium honoring caregivers and in recognition of Alicia Nash, John's wife and companion. They were in Austin from September 13 to September 17 with three full days of activities. PLANCTX organized the meeting in recognition of Alicia Nash, the companion and wife of John, who played a major role in his near complete recovery from his mental illness culminating with the award of the Nobel prize in Economics and, now, the Abel Prize. Many PLAN peers and their families had the opportunity to meet John and Alicia.

There is an excellent article on John Nash in the March 2015 issue of *Nature*. At the occasion of the Nash event, PLANCTX produced a small and elegant booklet which contains three articles: "An Autobiography" by John Nash and two articles by John Milnor (Fields Medal in 1962 and Abel Prize) on Nash.

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A few copies are still available and can be ordered by calling the PLAN office.

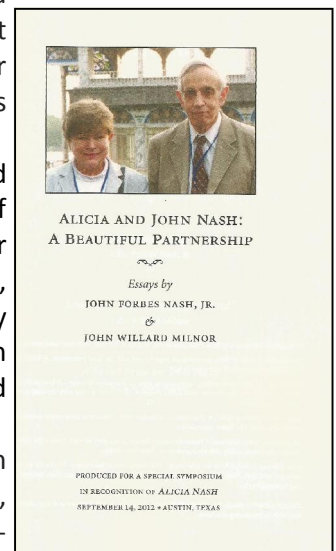
Nash was a very creative thinker and capable of solving problems long considered impossible by other

mathematicians. His ability to utilize those innate skills in a productive way, and also overcome his mental illness distractions, resulted from strong family support—especially his wife—as he dealt with these issues. In contrast, another creative thinker, a sculptor, had a very different experience.

Talented yet unsupported by family, the French sculptor, Camille Claudel, was unable to pursue her art and languished in a deplorable institution. Yet her early work earned her recognition in the famous Rodin Museum in Paris.

Claudel's family rejected her completely as a result of her mental illness. After thirty years of creating art, she ended the last thirty years of her life in France in a hospice where she died abandoned by everybody.

Supporting those with mental health challenges, whether creative individuals or otherwise, can make a difference for everyone.



## Nobel & Abel Prize Recipient John Nash and Wife Killed in Tragic Accident

Dr. John Nash and his wife, Alicia, were killed in a taxi accident on the New Jersey Turnpike on Saturday, May 23. They were returning home from Norway when the accident occurred.

PLANCTX will establish a John and Alicia Nash fund in their memory. If you wish to make a donation to the fund, please send it to PLAN office

Our hearts and condolences go out to the Nashes's sons during this most difficult time.

## Creativity and Mental Health

**You and Me** A poem by Debbie Sesula as read by Bill Gilstrap at the WRAP graduation

If you're overly excited  
You're happy  
If I'm overly excited  
I'm manic.  
If you imagine the phone ringing  
You're stressed out  
If I imagine the phone ringing  
I'm psychotic.  
If you're crying and sleeping all day  
You're sad and need time out  
If I'm crying and sleeping all day  
I'm depressed and need to get up.  
If you're afraid to leave your house at night  
You're cautious  
If I'm afraid to leave my house at night  
I'm paranoid.  
If you speak your mind and express your opinions  
You're assertive  
If I speak my mind and express my opinions  
I'm aggressive  
If you don't like something and mention it  
You're being honest  
If I don't like something and mention it

I'm being difficult.  
If you get angry  
You're consider upset  
If I get angry  
I'm considered dangerous.  
If you over-react to something  
You're sensitive  
If I over-react to something  
I'm out of control.  
If you don't want to be around others  
You're taking care of yourself and relaxing  
If I don't want to be around others  
I'm isolating myself and avoiding.  
If you talk to strangers  
You're being friendly  
If I talk to strangers  
I'm being inappropriate.

**For all of the above you're not told to take a pill or are hospitalized, but I am!**

## NAMI Presents Award to PLANCTX

On May 26, Karen Ranus, Executive Director of



NAMI Austin, presented its annual **John & Kitty Holman Award** to PLANCTX. This award recognizes a person or an organization serving families or individuals with mental illness in

extraordinary measure by providing or promoting a safe environment in which to live.

## Sid Wattinger Jr. Memorial Fund

Sid Wattinger, Jr., Peer Assistant for PLANCTX for several years, passed away on February 9, 2015. A memorial fund has been set up in his memory. Thank you very much to all of the donors who have contributed to this fund which will benefit PLANCTX peers who have special needs as they set up their own apartments.

## 18 people graduate WRAP® training

*by Debbie Webb, Ph.D., Executive Director*

Fantastic news! Our first PLANCTX Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP®) Training, sponsored by the Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC), and co-facilitated by Contractors Amy Pierce (PLANCTX Board Member) and Bill Gilstrap was a remarkable success! WRAP® Training was designed by author Mary Ellen Copeland, PhD and is an evidence-based practice, used in mental health as well as other medical conditions.

Eighteen DACC and other peers in attendance got a lot out of it. It is life-changing. A big thank you to all staff who helped, especially most peer assistants and certified peer specialists and some care managers who transported clients early and late on the last two weekends, as well as to board members Karla Starkweather, Anne Clark, Leo De La Garza, and Liz Shelby (and of course Amy Pierce) for attending the WRAP® Graduation Ceremony. It was truly awesome and very inspirational!

Liz Shelby and Robin Peyson (Communities for Recovery), in collaboration with Leo De La Garza were instrumental in writing the grant application which is a collaborative effort with Communities for Recovery and the City of Austin. The WRAP® followup group starts Monday, June 1.

## A Huge Thank You to Our Amplify Austin Donors

We appreciate all of our very generous Amplify Austin DONORS to PLANCTX!. **THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

Anonymous Donors (10), Melanie Baak, Piotr Bartkow, Bonnie Bennett, Jan Bezant, Elizabeth Buckley, Mike Bullard, Karen & Gary Brode, Hallie & Tim Casey, Dr. Namkee Choi, Anne Clark, Amy Coffman, Rick Covington, Nigel & Ann Dawson, Anita Garner, Leo De La Garza, Jane Graham, Megan Delaney, Dr. Cecile DeWitt, Philip Dupree, Laurie Eiserloh, Ann Marie Ellis, Renita Fonseca, Cari Fowler, Sheila Gibson, Janice Goodspeed, Jane Graham, Nancy Grasshoff, Janice Hansel, Jon Holmsten, Cathy King, Shelley & Kyle Kish, Rosemary Klein-Robbins, Nelva Kramp, Howard Lindemann, Luke

Lindemann, Robert Litschi, Donald Lovering, Stephen Low, Cathy Lujan, Bhavani Madiseti, Lou Manitzas, Dr. Seena Mathew, Emily McCullar, Miriam Morgan & Patrick Ramb, Frances Musgrove, Allison Grace Myers, Lisa Neal, Robert Nichols, Kelly Nowotny, Dr. Ann Marie Olson, DDS, Cynthia Penwell, Mickie Phipps, Vicki Rado, Karen Ranus, Richard Reddick, Donna Roughton, June Scogin, Dr. Liz Shelby, Cindy Lou Sibley, Paul Silver, Susan Skyler, Marian Small, Karla Starkweather, Dr. Marcia Toprac, Dr. Dorothy Van Soest, Mary Venn, Betty Wattinger, John Wattinger, Dr. Debbie Webb, Marissa Wise. **We raised \$10,000 again this year with this fundraiser.**

## Miscellaneous Musings

**New support services** are rolling out for PLANCTX parents this summer, starting in June. PLANCTX Parent Kay Kennedy, MS, will be offering a one hour class of meditations, Tai Ji and Chi Kung for mothers (for a suggested \$10 donation to Kay but folks can attend for free) on Tuesday, June 10 at 2 pm. Call the PLAN office to attend

Adam Lenker, LPC, will be offering a PLANCTX professionally facilitated support group for fathers (\$20 per hour). First session will be on Sun., June 14 at 6 pm.

**New PLANCTX Staff:** We are growing. The ED is very proud to announce our most recently hired staff, in alphabetical order: Mallory Andrews, LMSW (CM), Rebecca Cannon, MAC (CM), Susan Peake (CPT, CPSII), and Anne Vanderlaan, Ph.D., LPC (CM & Therapist).

**New fundraising opportunity:** An account has been set up with the non-profit **Next To New** for consignment to PLAN. Consignments must be marked with the account number (12693) and organization name (PLAN). They can be delivered Tuesday through Saturday, 10:30-1:00 at the back door of the shop at 5435 Burnet Road. When items are sold, PLAN will receive 50% of the sale price. This is an ongoing fundraiser for everyone to support.

The Whole Health Action Management (WHAM) group meetings start on Monday, June 8, at 7 p.m. WHAM participants will study modules such as nutrition, stress management and support networks. These weekly sessions will be aimed at clients and peers. Please call Susan to RSVP (512) 577-1603.

# URBAN MATTRESS

Urban Mattress at Sunset Valley is also a sponsor of PLANCTX. For each sale when PLAN is mentioned a portion of the profit is donated to PLAN. Please visit them when planning to purchase a mattress.



WRAP® graduate and singer / songwriter Alex De La Garza performs at the graduation. (Story on Page 2.)

## A Great Way to Help PLANCTX



**9302**

Organization Number

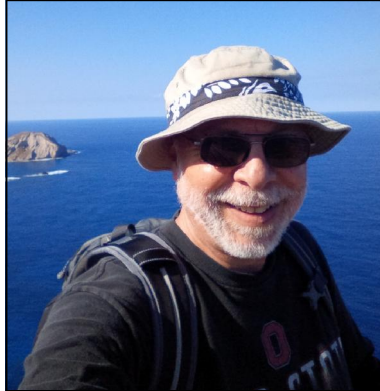
Don't forget to link our Good Neighbor Number to your Remarkable Card and help us raise funds the easy way!

*Randall's Good Neighbor Program*

## Board Spotlight-Leo De La Garza, LMSW-AP, Vice President

Leo De La Garza, LMSW-AP, has been in the Mental Health Field for the past 40 years and is currently the Director of BH Special Programs with Bluebonnet Trails Community Services. He has been married for the past 30 years and lives in Austin, Texas. He has two children, one of whom was diagnosed with a mental illness in his late teenage years.

It is the experience and trauma associated with helping his son recover that made him realize the Texas Mental Health System was broken and needed transformation. "I learned more from my son about mental illness and the Texas MH System than I had learned the previous 30 years working in the field of Mental Health," Leo said.



Leo is currently associated with the Veteran's Outreach Program, Peer Recovery Services, Jail Diversion Program and the State Hospital Liaison Services with Bluebonnet Trails Community Services and is nearing retirement, although his wife, Denise, stopped believing this will ever happen.

He has been a board member with PLAN of Central Texas for the past 5 years and is currently the Vice President. In his spare time Leo enjoys the hill country and has a cabin/retreat in Utopia, Texas (where else would you have a retreat?).

**PLAN Board of Directors** Liz Shelby, PhD, President • Leo DeLaGarza, LMSW,-AP, Vice President • Vacant, Secretary • Anita Garner, Interim Treasurer • Cynthia Penwell, LMSW • Katie Busboom, LPC, LMFT, • Anne Shelby Clark, MS • Seena Matthew, PhD • Marietta Noel, BA • Amy Pierce, CPS • June Scogin, MA • Karla Starkweather

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According to Plan is available in PDF format on the PLANCTX.org website. Additional paper copies are available on request.