

In Repeat Performance, D'Veal Receives Another 3-Year Joint Commission Award for High Standards

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(Clockwise, from upper left) John McCall, LCSW, ACSW CEO; Ronald Mills, MBA, COO; Ariana Zepeda, LCSW QA/QI Clinical Manager; Rafaela Velado, MSW Administrative Program Director, and Yesenia Ruiz, LCSW Clinical Program Director. [Courtesy photo]

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Pasadena-based mental health agency D'Veal Family and Youth Services earned for the third time The Joint Commission (TJC) Gold Seal of Approval for the category Behavioral Health Care and Human Services program.

The organization was founded in 1993 by John McCall as an effort to initiate preventative early intervention programs for at-risk youth.

It serves children and youth ages 0-25 years old. Since its establishment, it has developed various services including after-school programs, family therapy, and other community services. Its therapists are trained to make sure young people will have the best service possible.

Currently, D'Veal is certified in 18 schools and 2 community sites and 1 Wraparound program. Its contracts come directly through the Department of Mental Health.

“We are so proud of the work that D'Veal continues to do in the community, delivering safe, high quality care. The rigorous, unannounced onsite review is a validation of our continuous quality improvement efforts. Our accreditation/certification by The Joint Commission is recognized nationally as The Gold Seal of Approval in health care,” said McCall.

TJC is an independent, nonprofit that accredits and certifies over 22,000 healthcare organizations and programs in the United States.

It awards a three-year accreditation to organizations upon successful completion of an on-site survey, which is conducted by a specially trained Joint Commission surveyor or team of surveyors who assess the organization's compliance to their standards.

Ronald Mills, Chief Operating Officer at D'Veal said the organization first secured TJC accreditation in 2017.

To assess if D'Veal is following standards, TJC has also looked at clinical records and contacted families to see how D'Veal staff are doing their work. They also looked at staff's level of expertise, among many other things.

Getting accredited once again, Mills said, is challenging, as the organization faced many challenges in recent years.

“One of the things that was a challenge for us, so we got accredited prior to the COVID 19 shutdown. And so we had to go and implement processes that allowed us from moving from in-person services to becoming more telehealth.”

“What we did is we had to update our policies and procedures to accommodate for those things and still follow the standards.”

The award, he said, will help D'Veal in securing additional contracts and funding in the future.

“We're applying to increase our contracts with Los Angeles County, whether it be Department of Mental Health or Department of Children Family Services, one of the things that they want to know is what our quality standards are.”

“Once they see that we're Commission certified, they're very satisfied with the standards, although they're still going to check and ask questions on how we address certain issues that may arise, but at least they have the confidence

that they know that we have the gold seal of approval.”

According to Rafaela Velado, administrative director at D'Veal, one of the recommendations TJC gave is to review policies constantly to meet the needs of clients.

In response to this, D'Veal has developed a team that will focus on policy review.

“We just presented two to three weeks ago all the new changes that we have made. And we are going to be reviewing one policy weekly to make sure that all the clinical supervisors understand the reason why that policy was developed and applied.”

Ariana Zepeda, Clinical Manager at D'Veal said the organization will gain trust and confidence because of the accreditation.

“This award is honorable for our agency as a whole. Our agency prides itself for this Joint Commission accreditation as we strive to excel in the quality services we provide on a daily basis to our consumers.”

Zepeda said D'Veal staff will continue to work together to continue to improve its practices by updating methods of performance, data collection strategies and by training staff.

“With this golden seal of approval, they're ensuring that we do not harm our clients... And also that we are providing the best quality care and treatment services,” Yesenia Ruiz, clinical program director at the agency said.

“Everything we do is kind of like a reflection of joint commission standards. So we want to make sure that we continue this and our mission, our values, our core competencies reflect the work that we're doing,” Ruiz added.

To make a donation or learn more about the services being offered by D'Veal, visit dveal.org, send inquiries to info@dveal.org or call (626) 296-8900.