

FELTON AUGUST 2019 NEWSLETTER

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Lives Transformed



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Felton Spotlight: Joe Turner Director of Quality Management



Dr. Joe Turner, Felton’s Director of Quality Management, is dynamic, earnest, genial and a passionate communicator, whether he is talking about Felton’s programs or his morning commute. His engaging focus and ability to be fully present leave an indelible impression on those who meet him.

Young Joseph grew up in what he describes as “a small, poor rural area in central Pennsylvania. We lived outside of a small town, and we only had one neighbor.”

The Turners were a family of four. “I have one brother who is about two years older than I —my mother and father were older in age when I was born, (40 and 50, respectively), so it was like being raised by your grandparents,” he shares.

“Two related values were communicated to me growing up: the importance of hard work and the requirement to help and support others who have less. Although my parents were not able to attend college, they encouraged my academic skills and interests.”

Psychology appealed to Joe, and the love of listening and supporting other people led him to California with doctoral studies at UC Santa Barbara and a post-doctoral fellowship at UCLA. Keeping it in the UC family, a job at UC San Francisco drew Joe to the Bay Area.

Since 2007, as a Quality Management professional in the Community Mental Health arena, Joe has created quality management systems within public and private behavioral health systems. The strategic processes he developed included quality improvement, quality assurance, performance management, program integrity, management information systems and electronic health records.

Most recently, Joe created and implemented a Medicaid Specialty Mental Health Services clinical documentation improvement program for the Behavioral Health Services division of the San Francisco Department of Public Health. It was implemented across all levels of care, including Acute Psychiatric Hospital, Psychiatric Emergency Services, Adult Residential, and Outpatient services at the organizational and private provider levels.

He joined Felton Institute in December of 2018. Joe recalls, “Felton’s involvement in mental health research (the SAMHSA-funded Early Psychosis project) and relationship with UCSF was highlighted in a San Francisco County Mental Health provider meeting. In my experience as a health services researcher, this was unique, impressive and made Felton stand out in my mind.”

Since becoming a member of the Felton team, he’s also been impressed by the professional diversity of the administration staff, which is composed of entrepreneurs, clinicians, and those in education development. “What I find most rewarding is that Felton provides for both breadth and depth that are not typical in community mental health. I love to think, learn and analyze processes and problems—this includes thinking about clinical services, organizational development and health policy. What I find most challenging is that I can get myself overwhelmed with ideas and work,” Joe says.

To mitigate the intensity of the job, in his spare time, Joe enjoys urban hiking, spending time with friends in small group settings and following national politics and public policy on news and podcasts. And when it comes to a personal motto, he looks to psychology, Joe confides, “I’m prone to stress, anxiety and rumination, so I try to remember the phrase -don’t believe everything your mind says.” What Joe’s colleagues note is that on a daily basis at Felton, he embodies his parents’ life lessons of hard work and helping others.

Felton Receives Warm Alameda Open House Welcome



The city of Alameda warmly welcomed Felton Institute to its new Alameda site with a day of celebration on August 15, 2019.

Alameda Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, Deputy Chief of Staff for Supervisor Wilma Chan Vanessa Cedeno and Alameda Chamber of Commerce President Michael McDonough spoke at a lively ribbon cutting ceremony attended by guests from local businesses, community members, partners, and non-profit agencies. More than 100 guests and employees supported and participated at the event.

The engaging open house festivities included poster presentations, building tours and a walk down the history hall featuring photos of Felton's legacy of service. In her speech before the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Mayor Ashcraft said, "the services Felton provides are invaluable, especially during the challenging times we are currently facing. I am in awe of the over 100-year history. I am looking forward to learning about that, and having Felton Institute in Alameda...it will benefit our residents and also the people from across Alameda county because we work collaboratively."

Board President of the Alameda Chamber of Commerce Michael McDonough presented Felton Institute with a membership plaque. Vanessa Cedeno presented a certificate of commendation to Felton President and CEO Al Gilbert. Cedeno commended the agency's commitment to service, saying "Felton has done tremendous work and the personal stories of the staff and history speak to the commitment to providing service and ensuring access to all in need."



The Open House program was hosted by Felton CFO/COO Marvin Davis and COO of CYF and TAY Services Yohana Quiroz who shared their personal stories that inspire their years of dedication to Felton. Al Gilbert provided a warm welcome to all and drew laughs when he joked that he taught the program salsa dancers, the Purple Parsleys, some steps.

Director of Felton Early Psychosis Programs Adriana Furuzawa, Director of Business Development Dr. Robin Ortiz, and Senior Division Director Cathy Spensley provided a preview of the program information. In the patio area, the R&B band AM/PM entertained guests and upstairs, Marivel Mendoza provided a free salsa dance lesson.



Felton moved some of its administrative offices to its Alameda address at 1005 Atlantic Avenue in February of this year. Before Felton purchased the building, it was previously occupied by Argosy University. We thank everyone who contributed to the success of the Open House through attendance or service and send out special thanks to Julie and the Trader Joe's team in Alameda for their donation.

To learn more about Felton's programs, please visit felton.org.

Visit our website

CYF's Cradle to College Graduation

On August 9, 2019, jubilant preschoolers donned little purple caps and gowns and ceremoniously crossed the stage at Felton Institute's third Cradle to College Preschool Graduation at San Francisco State University.



Hundreds of staff and family members gathered to cheer on the tiny graduates. Many tears of joy were shed as each graduate's name was announced.

Felton President and CEO Al Gilbert said, "My heart is full right now, of joy- for both the children, their parents, their guardians. But also for the teachers because I know what kind of work went into this process."

He continued, "It's really exciting to see it come to fruition, to see the excitement. It's wonderful to see all the personalities that are onstage at the same time."

This year's guest speaker was Dr. Vincent Matthews, Superintendent of the San Francisco Unified School District. A San Francisco native, Dr. Matthews shared some of the life lessons learned from his mother growing up. He said that his mother believed in him, fought for what was best for him and encouraged him to take the prep classes he needed to get to college.



Dr. Matthews told the parents that “you are your child’s first advocate, first cheerleader, first teacher, and you need to make sure you tell them over and over and over again that they will be successful and they are going to do big things.” Everyone in the room was moved by his inspiring story and advice. Dr. Matthews is an exemplary role model for the graduates that he encouraged.



The pride of the parents, family members and teachers was palpable during the ceremony. Felton has a two generational approach, working with the parents and the students.

Felton’s COO of the Children, Youth and Family (CYF) and Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Divisions Yohana Quiroz said, “So, as we prepare children for kindergarten, we want to make sure that they’re ready socially and emotionally to assume their role as they enter into their new kindergarten classroom. And in our work with our parents, we make sure that we’re supporting their academic goals and personal goals, whether it’s employment or school.”



This graduation marks the first of many milestones for these students, and we at Felton look forward to seeing them receive many accolades in their future. They are now part of the Felton tradition of successful lives anchored on a solid foundation.

First Five Honors Madonna Stancil



On June 19th, 2019, First 5 San Francisco hosted the Excellence in Teaching Awards Evening at the San Francisco Children's Creative Museum in Yerba Buena Gardens. Madonna Stancil, Program Supervisor for Felton's Early Care and Education Program at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Center was among this year's award recipients, along with Delia Suarez, Gladys Marquez, Rhonda Coleman, Leslie Moncada-Lewis and Loren Smith.

Staff from First 5, Felton, and other San Francisco preschools and their families gathered at the museum for the heartwarming event. The museum was filled with lively children jubilantly exploring the interactive exhibits and posing at the photo booth. Several little ones and their parents dressed up as their favorite characters. More than 150 guests celebrated with their coworkers and loved ones.





Al Gilbert introduced Madonna, saying, “Madonna was determined that she wanted to bring the same kind of care, the system of care that we developed at our ECE site over at 2730 Bryant, which is our model center, to Felton’s Martin Luther King Jr. Center. She wanted to bring that to the community where she raised her babies.”

Madonna, who is known as a passionate and dedicated leader, was moved to receive her award and shared, “I do believe I was put here to serve, and serve children and this community, I’ve been in this field for 30 years. And for the past five, I’ve been in my community and it has really touched my heart to know that I’m doing right by the children in my community.”



Each teacher recognized that night has made and continues to make huge differences, not only in the lives of the children and families at their schools, but in the community as a whole as well.

Congratulations to Madonna and to all the award recipients!

First Five Honors Madonna Stancil

It's been a busy summer for Felton's Senior Division!

Senior Division Director Cathy Spensley shared, " On July 10, 2019, we were very pleased to receive generous funding from Recology, thanks for San Francisco Supervisor Shamann Walton, who secured the funding for us to offer English as a Second Language (ESL) classes again in Visitacion Valley."



Present at the press conference to announce the classes were (from left to right) Rex Tabora, Executive Director of Asian Pacific American Cultural Center and our partners at 66 Raymond; SF Supervisor for District 10, Shaman Walton; Felton CEO Al Gilbert, and our funder, Paul Giusti of Recology.

On August 5, 2019, Felton played a key role in supporting San Francisco's Office of Economic and Workforce Development and SF Dignity Fund in hosting the first ever Hiring Fair for Older Adults. Over 400 seniors attended the job fair at the War Memorial Building, with 30 hiring companies. Over 100 interviews were conducted that day, many by Felton, who is a leader in hiring mature workers.

Cathy Spensley notes, "Mayor London Breed (above, in red) was overheard saying that the hiring fair was one of the best she had ever attended." Joshua Arce, Director of SF's Office of Economic and Workforce Development,(to the Mayor's left), spearheaded the successful event for the Mayor, with the help of Cathy Spensley, Amy Yu, and Edith Yamanoha of Felton's Senior Division. Over 30 non-profit, for-profit, and city employers took part in the event.

The sound of music has filled the air at the 66 Raymond Senior Center! This spring and summer, Felton started a choir for older adults and adults with disabilities there. Cathy Spensely adds, “UCSF research has demonstrated the health and mental health benefits of singing in a choir.”

And a few weeks ago, the Guitar Center Music Foundation generously donated 15 ukuleles to the center! Many thanks to Chris and his team at the Guitar Center and to Felton Grants Manager Candy Marie Bickett for creating music magic for Felton seniors. We are looking forward to many ukulele concerts to come!

Felton and You: Felton & Anchoring Families

Felton Institute’s Children, Youth and Family (CYF) division is dedicated to building up the family as the basic unit of society. We believe that a family that is anchored in wellness and health provides a strong foundation for our community.



Some hard facts:

- The number of San Francisco residents who live under the poverty level has increased by 13,000 since 2013. The poverty level for a family of four is set at \$25,000 a year.
- Data shows that California has shown the lowest birth rate since the Great Depression. This is surprising for the state of California, which has one of the world’s ten largest economies.
- A well-circulated factoid is that San Francisco’s child population matches its dog population: 85,000. According to census data, it has the lowest percentage of children of any of the largest 100 cities in America.

Where have the families gone? Where have the children gone? In an interview last year, the billionaire Silicon Valley investor and a co-founder of PayPal, Peter Thiel described San Francisco as “structurally hostile to families.” Factors such as prohibitive housing costs, the urban tech renaissance, and the increasing standard of living have heightened family struggles for thousands. Many residential areas of San Francisco still have their share of the very young and the very old. Felton strives to meet the needs of these underserved demographics.

Programs include:

- Hands-on, comprehensive, and intensive peer-based outreach and case management to ensure access to an array of social services.
- Innovative, research-based and expanded mental health services for children, adults and the elderly.
- Programs geared towards improving emotional, psychological and physical health of children, youth and families.
- Food and nutrition programs, early education and childcare services for the children of low-income families.



During a visit to Felton Institute's Family Developmental Center in the Mission District in San Francisco, Governor Gavin Newsom remarked, "If we are serious about closing the achievement gap and income gap, we must get serious about closing the opportunity gap. That begins with education."

Just this month, Felton Institute's Cradle to College Preschool Graduation welcomed its newest group of young students, providing them with a head start for their bright academic futures.

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Felton Institute's programs are anchored in the relationship-based approach. Family involvement is highly encouraged, and parents are required to take part in their children's development and growth plan. The concept of family is not limited to relatives.

The Foster Grandparent Program provides opportunities for older adults to volunteer and be active in their community. They offer support, love and wisdom to the children in preschools, elementary schools and various community settings. The foster grandparents are tutors, mentors, and friends, all with the same goal: to help children and youth succeed. To learn more about the Foster Grandparent Program, please watch here.



Most of us have heard the saying, “It takes a village to raise a child”. Felton has created innovative programs and services, aimed at making families stronger, increasing resources, and supporting the achievements of our young people.

Please support Felton Institute and continue your investment in family. To donate, text FELTON to 41444 on your mobile device, it’s quick and easy.

You may also give online at:

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