

## **Welcome TRN® Association of Monterey Bay**

During the final week of March 2021, we expanded our Trauma Recovery Network (TRN) with the inauguration of the TRN Association of Monterey Bay. This new network serves the counties of Monterey and Santa Cruz, California.

The mission of the TRN Association of Monterey Bay is to assist their diverse community members in times of emergency, with pro bono services of 6 - 10 EMDR therapy sessions at no charge, and to address the overwhelming traumatic effects of local emergencies.

Elizabeth Ramirez, MFT serves as the TRN coordinator and shared her insights into what led their group to come together.



*Colorful homes along Monterey Bay in California.*

*"The Monterey Bay TRN was formed when three Spanish bilingual EMDR clinicians felt distressed by the impact of an onslaught of crisis on the most vulnerable populations in our area: the local fires destroying the homes and compromising the health of the survivors, as well as COVID-19 hitting disproportionately those working in food production and distribution, who are essential workers and live in close quarters due to financial need. Many do not have access to services and do not speak English. The great divide between those who can and those who cannot get the help they need inspired us to be the change we wanted to see."*

Members of the Monterey Bay TRN place great importance on conducting their work in a culturally and linguistically inclusive way. With Latinos and Hispanics making up 60% of the population in Monterey County and roughly 30% of the population in Santa Cruz County, bilingual services and an understanding of the local culture are imperative to the effectiveness

of their work. That is one of the reasons they are comprised of a Steering Committee speaking both English and Spanish.



*Strawberry fields in Monterey, CA. 1 in 5 households relies on income related to agriculture in Monterey County.*

Eager to help their community, members are taking referrals from the Central Coast Alliance for Health, as well as reaching out to areas hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic. Recently, they were able to assist a mother with a young, home-schooled child, whose husband suffered a heart attack.

In need of support, but unable to reach out to her neighbors due to the COVID-19 lock down, their family situation turned dire when local fires led to evacuation orders, the power being cut off, and their access road to town becoming blocked. Elizabeth shared, *"While all ended well for the young family, the mother remained traumatized. After receiving EMDR therapy through our TRN, she was supported to regain her strength and resiliency."*

We are excited to see the impact the Trauma Recovery Network of Monterey Bay is making and will continue to make in their community where the need is so great. With the addition of the Monterey Bay TRN, we now have nine TRNs throughout California, serving both northern and southern regions of the state.