

For immediate release
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BLUE SKIES CAFÉ
GRAND OPENING SET FOR MARCH 20
WITH FOOD BY JESSIE & LAURENT
AND INNOVATIVE JOB TRAINING PROGRAM BY BUCKELEW PROGRAMS

(San Rafael, March 10, 2009) The grand opening celebration for Buckelew Programs' Blue Skies Café at the Connection Center on the Marin County Health and Wellness Campus in San Rafael will be held on Friday, March 20 from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. There will be live music and light refreshments served. An official grand opening program at 12:30 p.m. includes a ribbon-cutting ceremony, presentations, door and raffle prizes, as well as coupon giveaways.

"From Novato to Sausalito and San Rafael to Bolinas, Marin residents who come to the County's Health and Wellness Campus will not only be able to get top quality healthy food and drinks, but also a chance to experience an innovative and positive job training program in action," said Buckelew Programs Executive Director Steve Ramsland.

Delicious sandwiches, salads and side dishes at Blue Skies Café are prepared by San Rafael-based Jessie & Laurent, who have become famous for their catering business and healthy hand-prepared meals delivered to doorsteps around the Bay Area. Most ingredients are organic, including Equator Estate Coffees & Teas from San Rafael. Fresh baked muffins, cookies and other snack items round out the casual menu.

Buckelew Programs, which serves adults with mental illness, operates and staffs the café with client trainees who work beside a vocational counselor and café supervisor. Over a six-month period, the paid Blue Skies Café trainees will develop expertise in preparing specialty coffee drinks, customer service, use of the cash register, inventory control and accounting.

"Our café staff is really wonderful," said Laura Lee Sanford, Buckelew Program's vocational counselor who works beside the trainees. "They enjoy helping customers and take great pride in doing a good job. Everyday I see them gaining confidence and watch their self-esteem grow. They all have success stories that are truly inspiring."

Buckelew Programs provides clients with pre-employment counseling, vocational training, job development, placement, and job-coaching. Besides the Blue Skies Café, Buckelew Programs also operates Blue Skies Janitorial Services, and Blue Skies Personnel Services, a staffing service that places qualified clients in temporary and permanent jobs through collaboration with local businesses and government agencies.

Blue Skies Café is located in the Connection Center at the Marin County Health and Wellness Campus, at 3240 Kerner Blvd. (near Bellam). To RSVP for the grand opening event, call Cameron Duncan at 415/457-6966 x386.

About Buckelew Programs

Buckelew Programs is a non-profit organization that provides affordable housing, employment, and recovery support services for transition-aged youth and adults with mental illness in Marin, Sonoma, and Napa counties. Its mission is to assist individuals with mental illness to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities. Every day, Buckelew Programs staff and volunteers experience how people with mental illness are living healthy, productive lives. Currently, over 900 clients are living interdependently in their community with support services from Buckelew. Established in 1970, Buckelew Programs had revenues of \$9.5 million in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008. There are 120 employees throughout the three counties.