

Mariposa Center Highlights Mental Health Advocacy at Newport Beach Film Festival with Presentation of 'Isabel's Garden'

Orange County-based mental health non-profit organization partners with Newport Beach Film Festival to promote mental health awareness through powerful film



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-- [The Mariposa Center](#), a mental health non-profit dedicated to serving the people of Orange County, was invited to present the feature film, Isabel's Garden at [The Newport Beach Film Festival](#) on October 24th at Costa Mesa's Starlight Triangle Cinemas, due to the film's close alignment with the experiences of Mariposa's clients. The film, which explores themes of loss,

grief, and family dynamics, mirrors the real-life challenges that many Mariposa clients face and provides a powerful opportunity to engage the public in meaningful conversations about mental health in Orange County.

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“We're so excited to be working with the Newport Beach Film Festival! Being able to increase awareness of the struggles Orange County residents face through art is a very rewarding experience,” said Lauren Justice, Director of Mariposa's ECMT Program, who presented at the festival. “Films like 'Isabel's Garden' open the doors to meaningful conversations in our community.”

Directed by Kit Rich and starring Fear the Walking Dead's Karen David, Isabel's Garden tells the story of Maya Carlile, an ambitious television reporter whose world is turned upside down after the sudden death of her husband, Diego. Thrust into the role of caregiver for her 15-year-old stepdaughter, Isabel, Maya attempts to learn how to manage her depression while adjusting to new family roles and redefining her own identity.

“The film's portrayal of loss and resilience speaks deeply to the experiences of many we serve,”

said Dr. Krista Driver, President & CEO of Mariposa Center. "Maya's journey highlights how much we all need tools, resources, and community to find our way through difficult times."

According to a study published in *Death Studies*, individuals who lose a partner while parenting dependent children face unique challenges that can significantly affect their adjustment process. The study highlights that sole responsibility for children increases demands on the surviving parent but can also provide a sense of purpose during the grieving process ([Anderson et al., 2022](#)).

"This research aligns with what we observe in our practice," added Driver. "We see how each family member carries different pieces of the same loss, and addressing those varied experiences is key to meaningful healing."

Mariposa Center's Mission

The Mariposa Center was selected to present "Isabel's Garden" at the Newport Beach Film Festival due to its mission of supporting individuals and families facing trauma, grief, and mental health challenges. As a nonprofit committed to reaching underserved communities, Mariposa provides essential resources and compassionate care that help clients regain stability and hope.

Central to Mariposa's approach is the Enhancement Care Management & Treatment (ECMT) program, which offers comprehensive support beyond traditional mental health care. ECMT assists clients dealing with complex issues like homelessness, reentry from incarceration, and immigration challenges, meeting people where they are, and providing resources for real change.

"Through ECMT, we're able to offer flexible support at the moments people need it most."
- Lauren Justice, Director of ECMT Program, Mariposa Center

An Invitation To Make A Difference

The Mariposa Center invites community members, philanthropists, and advocates to join in its mission to enhance mental health support for Orange County residents. By contributing to the center, donors can play a vital role in expanding programs that address the critical needs of those facing similar challenges depicted in "Isabel's Garden."

"We believe that collaboration is key to making a lasting impact," stated Driver. "We welcome anyone who shares our vision to partner with us in creating a healthier community."

About "Isabel's Garden"

Isabel's Garden explores themes of loss, resilience, and personal growth. As Maya grapples with

her husband's death and a suspension from work, she forms unexpected bonds that challenge her perspectives and priorities. The film also features notable performances by Gabriela Flores, Valery M. Ortiz, and Jayne Taini.

About Mariposa Center

For over 47 years, the Mariposa Center has been dedicated to transforming lives through innovative counseling programs and therapies. Serving individuals impacted by trauma, addiction, anxiety, and depression, the center offers comprehensive services tailored to meet the unique needs of each client.

Join Us in Making a Difference

Your support can make a lasting impact on the lives of those struggling with mental health challenges in our community. To learn more about how you can contribute to the Mariposa Center's efforts, please visit our website or contact us directly.

"Together, we can build a stronger, healthier Orange County," urged Justice. "Every contribution brings us one step closer to that goal."

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