



by Peggy Goldwater Clay

JACQUELINE DUPONT-BAUM

SOUTH COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES

When Jacqueline Dupont-Baum was 12, she started visiting a local nursing home and often took some of the elderly home with her for the holidays. Dupont-Baum, who was born and raised in Fullerton, also adored her grandparents. Her grandfather, Ernest Mitchell, a Greek immigrant, died of Alzheimer's disease in 1990. Her grandmother, Ya Ya, is now 89, and still bright and perky.

In keeping with her love for the elderly, Dupont-Baum graduated from USC's graduate school of gerontology, where she was a part-time researcher. She did her post-doctorate work at Ashworth University in England in geriatric medicine and Alzheimer's research. She is currently a gerontologist and CEO of two assisted living companies.

Dupont-Baum, a mother of four, has served as a board member for the Salvation Army and the Alzheimer's Association of Orange County, but her priority has always been South County Senior Services, where she has been on the board for eight years.

Question: Why did you get involved with South County Senior Services?

Answer: I got involved eight years ago. They were in desperate need for funding for their Adult Day Care Center. My response to them was, "Let's have a ball!" I had chaired many galas in the past and many other events. I sat down with Dr. Marilyn Ditty and her staff at the center, and planned the first *Captain's Ball*. My goal was to make sure this ball would be fun and not another boring black-tie gala. I chaired the gala for the first four years and then passed it on to friends. The rest is history. The ball has raised more than \$700,000 net profit to date. It continues to be such a blessing to not only the day care, but also to the Meals on Wheels program and transportation program for older adults. I also joined the board because I really wanted to belong to an organization that supported older adults and that offered direct care services. Many boards I serve on support education, advocacy, help lines, etc.; however, very few actually are the operators of direct services to the elderly.

Question: What services does the center offer?

Answer: The program offers comprehensive medical treatment, including nursing services, occupational therapy, speech therapy, nutrition, music therapy, and counseling. Other very important services are adult day health care, Alzheimer's adult day care, case management, senior transportation, and Meals on Wheels.

Question: Who is eligible to use these services?

Answer: South County Senior Services serves the needs of adults 18 years or older with disabilities or impairments who are at risk of institutionalization.

Question: What are your hopes for the future?

Answer: It is my hope that we as a society will respect and honor our older adults in the same way we honor and adore our children. Also, that older adults will receive more funding for diseases that affect them directly, and more services for the needy. I think we have lost our respect for seniors who have dedicated their lives to us in times of war, famine, and crisis. It is the older adults of our country who have made the United States a world-class country. It is now our time to support them with respect, adoration, and the services so badly needed.



"We must always strive to respect and love our elderly, who have made this country what it is today."

For more information on South County Senior Services, visit www.southcountyseniors.org.

