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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO...

Mental Health Loses Funding



The MHA has suffered seriously from government funding cuts. While agency reserves will help us to absorb these losses in the short term, we must redouble our efforts to increase our private funding to continue our programs. One program has already been eliminated - the Drop-In Center in Ft. Pierce, which the Department of Children & Families did not fund for the coming fiscal year - a loss of \$100,000.

The State of Florida, with the nation's highest rate of mental illness in the country according to a report in the Press Journal, reduced funding for mental health from \$14.2 million to \$1.5 million for non-recurring programs. The hit for the MHA...\$300,000 for our new Walk-In Center. The loss of \$67,500 from the County, and the \$100,000 cut from DCF, represents 50% of the MHA's public funding which means we must increase our private fund raising efforts an additional \$425,000 to maintain our current programs.

We are not discouraged and have the time to build on our past fund raising efforts. The success of the MHA's TurtleTrax events and MHA's Annual Fund will be key components of our 2008-2009 development plan, implemented by Mary Hynes, our new Director of Development (see article). The plan will focus on increasing individual philanthropic support through special events, the Annual Fund, major gifts, and donor stewardship. Ongoing research and grant writing will seek funding from both private foundations and corporate entities.

We are very proud of our Board of Directors in this endeavor. They actively spearhead our fund raising efforts and provide the support, dedication and guidance to help us move forward. As always, we welcome your comments and appreciate your continued support.



Kristine D. Sarkauskas

State Mental Health Council Develops Legislative Agenda for 2009

At a meeting in Tampa in April the State MHA Policy Council held a strategic planning session to develop a legislative agenda for 2009. Three basic goals and the strategies for implementation were developed:

1. To educate and ensure passage of a substantial bill including the mental health community's recommendation for parity.
2. To educate and reinforce State funding for Medicaid Services.
3. To educate and reinforce access to continual State funding for mental health programs.

A substantial number of facts were developed that led to these goals and the strategies to meet them, including:

- Increased productivity of 5 to 10 times is the return on mental health investment.
- Medicaid cuts lead to:
 - Increased Emergency Room costs
 - Cost shifting by Department of Health
 - Reduced care, sicker people
 - Increased unemployment
- More incarcerations. Jails are the #1 mental health providers in Florida and costs are substantially higher than providing community mental health care; \$125K for person in prison.
- 1 in 5 people have a mental illness during their lifetime.
- Florida is 48th in mental health funding per capita.

Detailed strategies were discussed to deal with these problems and meet the goals. They included educating the public and the legislature, developing partnerships with other agencies and relationships with civic, charitable, and professional trade associations. Tactics to implement the strategies were outlined.

MHA Board members Ann Zugelter and Beverly Whiteley attended this meeting and reported back with enthusiasm, but recognition that a lot of hard work will have to be done to meet the goals.



Busy First Year For Walk-In Center

by Susan Rux, Director of Operations

The first full year of the Mental Health Walk-In Center has been abundant with opportunities to assist children, individuals and families in crisis. More than 1100 people have sought help from the MHA in this program alone. Utilizing the brief treatment model, staff has been able to focus on the client's presenting problem and provide them with tools and strategies to regain control of their life. Our community resource staff have provided over 200 referrals helping people to obtain assistance with utilities, rent, food, entitlement programs, housing and medications.

Our largest source of referrals has been by word of mouth between friends and families; this is followed by referrals from community agencies and the MHA marketing efforts. Anxiety and depression are the most common issues for which clients are seeking help. Twenty five percent (25%) of clients are from the Sebastian/Fellsmere area. Twenty percent (20%) of those seen are children.

In addition to the Walk-In Center Program, we have served more than 2600 clients through other MHA services. Clients have participated in support groups; psycho-educational groups such as substance abuse programs and depression/anxiety classes; and drop-in center programs.

The MHA was fortunate to benefit from the help of two students from the Florida Atlantic University - Social Work Intern Program. Hilda Navarette completed her Master's of Social Work Degree and spent 2 semesters counseling clients. Elba Gamez is completing a summer internship for her Bachelor's of Social Work. Both of these individuals have helped the MHA open new doors for Spanish speaking clients.

With budget cuts and financial uncertainties looming, the MHA prepares to do more with less. We know in this very stressful time, with the high cost of food and gas, and increasing foreclosures causing more families to be homeless, that people need the MHA now more than ever. We welcome the opportunity to serve those in crisis and help them regain hope and direction in their life.

MHA Moving to New Location

The MHA will move from its current location to 820 37th Street on August 1, 2008. This new building will accommodate a need for larger space and a better layout. We are most appreciative for a grant from the John's Island Foundation for capital expenditures, and for their strong support of the MHA. Look for our announcement of an "Open House" in November to greet our supporters and celebrate the move!

Mental Health Psychiatric Outpatient Center

The recently announced formation of a University of Florida psychiatric outpatient clinic and academic training center in Vero Beach is exciting news for our community and the MHA. The center will provide a source for our walk-in center staff to refer people with illnesses that may require long term care. For example, of the more than 1100 people we have seen in our first year of operation, a majority suffer from depression or anxiety and a significant number are diagnosed as bipolar, suicidal, or schizophrenic. We are indebted to the Robert F. and Eleonora W. McCabe Foundation for making this happen through their collaboration and financial contribution to the University of Florida's Department of Psychiatry. The community is fortunate to have such strong support for the provision of mental health services.

Plans call for the center to begin operations in the late Fall and include the creation of an Eminent Scholar Chair in U.F.'s Department of Psychiatry, based in Vero Beach. This person will be a Board Certified Psychiatrist and a national leader in the field of community mental health. He or she will lead the Center and its staff in providing training in mental health, continuing medical education (CME) for local physicians, and mental health treatment for the community, particularly those with limited access.

In addition to the McCabe Foundation, the Center will receive substantial support from four Founding Partners. "I am honored to announce that four Founding Partners have stepped forward to provide immediate charitable support so the new UF academic training center and outpatient clinic can open this fall," Mrs. McCabe said. "These four humanitarians each understand that making additional mental health care services available is a critical component to a healthy and thriving community."

The four Founding Partners include Mr. Harry Bolwell through the Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Foundation; Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Ireland; Mr. and Mrs. Donald Rebar; and The L.W. Pierce Family Foundation. The founding partners will provide grants over the next four years to support the professional staff needed to provide training and mental health services in the community.

The college's Department of Psychiatry's chairman, Mark G. Gold, M.D., said "The College of Medicine currently operates one of the largest psychiatric training programs in the southeast. We see our partnership in Indian River County as an extension of our mission to educate the next generation of psychiatrists, to serve the community's mental health needs and to raise awareness of the benefits of early intervention."



New Development Director Named

The Mental Health Association is pleased to announce the appointment of Mary E. Hynes to the position of Director of Development. In this position, Ms. Hynes is responsible for preparing the annual fund raising plan, supporting goals, and implementing the plan under the direction of Kris Sarkauskas, President/CEO. Her work encompasses the annual fund drive, special events, major and planned gifts and donor Stewardship. She prepares appropriate supporting materials, meets with prospective donors, prepares grant requests, trains volunteers and staff, and makes presentations to individuals and organizations.

Ms. Hynes comes to the Mental Health Association with a long experience in fund raising. Recently she was Director of Development & Marketing for the Senior Resource Association. She has worked as a Development Manager for the VNA and Hospice Foundation, Riverside Theatre, Save The Manatee Club, and the North Carolina Coastal Land Trust in Wilmington, NC. Prior to moving to Vero Beach she was the Director of Development for the Seven Hills School in Cincinnati, Ohio from 1988 to 1999. She has a BA degree from the State University of New York and is a Board member of the Indian River Chapter of the Association of Fund Raising Professionals.

The Mental Health Association looks forward to her leadership in managing our development activities and is particularly pleased to have such a talented and experienced individual on staff in this time of need.

MHAngels

Volunteer Opportunities 2008/2009



New Volunteer Newsletter Coming Soon



It's Okay to Get Help!

BE AN ANGEL

Volunteer Information

Call 772.569.9788

ask for Katie



FROM THE MHA'S CLINICAL DIRECTOR...

It has been a very busy year so far, with no signs of things slowing down! We have been grateful for the opportunity to serve so many struggling individuals, children and families through our Walk-In Center. The challenging economic climate has affected us all, and has raised the level of stress, anxiety, depression and family discord.

We have been working diligently this past year, on development of the Eating Disorders Program, as originally reported to you this time last year. During the months of April and May 2008, our Clinical Staff received 30 intensive hours of training in this highly specialized field. We were fortunate to have Joann V. Hendelman, R.N., Ph.D, from Palm Beach Gardens, who brought with her twenty plus years in private practice specializing in eating disorders, lead the training team. She is the President of the Board of Directors of the Alliance for Eating Disorders Awareness and Chief, Department of Psychology, including St. Mary's Medical Center and Good Samaritan Medical Center. Mark R. Kruntorad, LMFT, specializing in family therapy with families dealing with eating disorders, and Johanna S. Kandel, Founder and Executive Director of The Alliance for Eating Disorders Awareness, national speaker, prevention specialist, and in recovery, completed this very rich experienced team of trainers.

With the help of this team, the MHA has chosen to focus on the highest risk group for developing eating disorders - *children and adolescents*. Since school counselors and teachers are in daily contact with this most vulnerable group, we have met with key personnel at the School District of Indian River County as well as with their physical MHA's education teachers. They have been very receptive to the MHA's offer to bring prevention education to their students.

Our Clinical Team is ready to provide outpatient counseling to those children and adolescents suffering with eating disorders. Our staff psychiatrist is available for psycho-pharmacological services for our clients in this program.

More individuals die as a result of an eating disorder than any other mental illness. This is a very serious illness and early intervention is crucial. The MHA is able to meet this need because of the generous endowment from the Rebecca Anne Streetman Memorial Fund for Eating Disorders. We are forever grateful to them for this opportunity.

MHA Welcomes Susan D. Harvey, CPA As New Financial Manager



Kristine Sarkauskas has announced the appointment of Sue Harvey, CPA, as Financial Manager. In this new, part-time position, Ms. Harvey will manage all accounting activities including the processing of revenues and disbursements, coordinating cash management with the President/CEO and Board Treasurer, preparation of financial reports, maintenance of financial records, ensuring compliance with accounting rules and integrity of financial statements.

Ms. Harvey comes to the MHA with outstanding experience as a financial manager. Graduating from Georgia State University, Cum Laude, in 1983 and securing her CPA in Georgia in 1984, she joined Aviation Supply Corporation of Atlanta, Georgia in 1993 and rose to CFO/Controller. She was CFO for the State Bar of Georgia through 2004, and has been Controller for Habitat for Humanity in Indian River County prior to joining the MHA.

Kris and the MHA staff are delighted to have her talents on board and look forward to working with her.

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION STAFF...

- Kristine Sarkauskas, *President/CEO*
- Carolyn Kravitz, *LCSW, CAP, Clinical Director*
- Susan Rux, *MSW, Director of Operations*
- Jeffrey Sledd, *Director of Marketing and Communications*
- Mary Hynes, *Director of Development*
- Carol Martin, *Program Administrator*
- Susan Harvey, *Finance Manager*
- Kathleen Kowanic, *Executive Assistant*
- Bonnie Hurd, *Community Resource Specialist*
- Kimberly Priest, *Program Assistant*
- Elizabeth Griffin, *Therapist*
- Jane Guiles, *LCSW, Therapist*
- Jeanne Howard, *LMHC, Therapist*
- Therese Cirner, *LMHC, Therapist*
- Roy Anderson, *Director, Our House Network*
- Hilda Navarrete, *Director, Welcome House*
- Tammy Macklin, *Director, Harbor Network*
- Jimmy Liddle, *Staff Assistant, Welcome House*
- Tom Masiello, *Staff Assistant, Our House Network*
- Philip Hadsell, *Driver, Our House Network*
- Richard Smith, *Staff Assistant, Harbor Network*
- Jackie Watkins, *Staff Assistant, Harbor Network*

Psychiatrist Srinivas C. Yerneni, M.D. Provides Services to MHA



The Mental Health Association has contracted with Dr. Srinivas C. Yerneni, a psychiatrist who was recently on the staff of IRMC's Behavioral Health Center, to provide professional services to its clients on a part-time basis. Dr. Yerneni is a graduate of the University of Rochester and did his psychiatric residency at the West Virginia School of Medicine from 1999-2003. He has been a psychiatrist for New Horizons of the Treasure Coast, and a staff psychiatrist and clinical instructor at the Rochester Psychiatric Center. He was Board Certified in 2006 and has experience in research, publications and presentations.

As a psychiatrist for the Mental Health Association, he will offer services to clients of the Walk-In Center, prescribing medications as needed, as well as individual counseling.

Presentation in Washington, DC Greeted with Much Enthusiasm — and Much Applause!

Kris Sarkauskas was invited to speak at the 2008 Annual Conference of the National Mental Health Association, Mental Health America, held in Washington, DC on June 4-7. She spoke during a session to new MHA affiliate leaders on developing an effective mental health organization and, from the reports we received, hit a home run! With a slide presentation and script prepared with the help of Director of Marketing/Communications, Jeff Sledd, the presentation received enthusiastic response from her audience and a lot of informal "thanks & congratulations" after her session. Kris reports that Jeff Sledd, who accompanied her to the meeting, was instrumental in rehearsing and coaching her, and with Kris' knowledge, enthusiasm and drive, the result was a very professional and well received presentation.

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