



Serving over 1000 Westchester County residents per year

HDSW RECEIVES GRANT AWARDS FROM WESTCHESTER COUNTY AND FROM HUD

We have a lot to celebrate at HDSW this year, as our Supported Housing Program has grown by an additional 64 persons!



The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has just notified us that we will be receiving rent subsidy funds to help 10 chronically homeless individuals to move from County shelters or the streets to apartments of their own. The Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH) will provide funds for case management staff services to these tenants.

Additionally, HDSW was selected by DCMH to take over programming for 54 persons who already live in HUD-subsidized rental units throughout the County. These units are being relinquished by another agency. HDSW will assume the leases on the apartments and hire new staff to provide support and supervision.

Supported Housing is our most independent level of housing. It offers persons recovering from mental illness the stability of a home of their own for as long as they want or need it. The HDSW case manager offers ongoing support, links tenants to health and treatment resources and to social and recreational activities, helps them with money management and other self-care skills, and advocates on their behalf on housing issues. Our staff also encourages and supports tenants to return to work. Tenants pay 30% of their income as rent.

It is this support and stability that enables persons to maintain their housing over time, increasing their quality of life and decreasing their dependency on

higher cost residential and treatment services. Supported housing programs save taxpayers money, since shelters and hospitals are far more expensive, fiscally, psychologically and spiritually.

Since HDSW began its Supported Housing Program in 1990, 319 persons have moved into a home of their own, including over 40 families headed by a parent with mental illness, caring for over 100 children. In the ensuing sixteen years, 88% of these individuals and families have maintained their housing, despite issues of poverty, serious illness, and the challenges of parenting. We are very proud of our tenants and of our staff who serve them with such care and competence, and are very grateful to our government funders for supporting us in this work. ■

Andrea Kocsis, LCSW
Executive Director



HDSW Executive Director, Andrea Kocsis, and staff enjoy an orientation lunch at a local Mamaroneck eatery. Pictured are: Heather Howe, Supported Housing Case Manager and Social Work Intern; Janice Beckford, Human Development House Assistant Counselor; Andrea Kocsis, Executive Director; Bello Chucks, Supported Housing Case Manager; Donna Cappelli, Business Manager and Yvonne Morales, Supported Housing Case Manager.

Message From The President

MISSION POSSIBLE



The HDSW Mission Statement was created during the merger process by a committee comprised of HOPE House members, residents, staff, administration and board members. Since the merger of Futura House Foundation and Human Development Services of Port Chester, the agency has grown by 200%. It is with this growth in mind that we once again gathered a representative group of club members, staff, administration and board members to re-evaluate the Mission Statement. The committee was charged with insuring that the Mission Statement be inclusive of all the services HDSW currently provides, in addition to keeping an eye towards future programming.

The committee researched the state of the art and created a mission statement that represents the agency's scope of work and commitment to those we serve. We thank those who participated in the creation of the new HDSW Mission Statement.

HDSW Mission Statement

Human Development Services of Westchester is a social service organization providing quality psychiatric, rehabilitative, and neighborhood stabilization services in Westchester County.

Human Development Services of Westchester is dedicated to empowering the individuals and families we serve to achieve well-being.

■ Marjorie Zeidner, President



Members of the Mission Statement Committee meet to re-define the mission statement.
Top Row: Gloria G. Karp, Board, Andrea Kocsis, LCSW, HDSW Executive Director.
Bottom Row: Sue Larsen HDSW Supported Housing Supervisor; Heather Howe, HDSW Supported Housing Case Manager and Shelley Bender, HDSW Executive Assistant.

Glen Island Fun



The HDSW staff and their families gathered at Glen Island Park in New Rochelle for the 2nd Annual Staff Picnic last September. Foods from all nations made up a huge pot luck feast which was enjoyed by all. Some of the attendees posed for this photo.

HDSW Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Foundations for Their Support:

Louis R. Cappelli Foundation

HDSW has recently been granted \$3,000 from the Louis R. Cappelli Foundation of Valhalla to provide recreational and enrichment activities for at-risk youth in our Supported Housing Family Program. The Louis R. Cappelli Foundation's mission is to make grants in support of philanthropic activities, with a focus on programs addressing the special needs of youth in Westchester and Sullivan Counties in New York, and Fairfield County, Connecticut.

The Wyman Foundation

HDSW has been awarded \$10,000 from The Wyman Foundation for HOPE House, to provide transportation services for HOPE House members to and from the clubhouse.

Westchester Community Foundation

The Westchester Community Foundation has awarded HDSW a grant for \$10,000 for HOPE House programming, in support of the Employment Unit and the Clerical/Education Unit. The Westchester Community Foundation (WCF) is a nonprofit community endowment for the benefit of Westchester County. Its mission is to develop and manage philanthropic resources, and to distribute them in a way that is responsive to donor interests and community needs. The Foundation actively promotes charitable giving on behalf of the area's non-profit organizations. WCF is a division of the New York Community Trust, the largest community foundation in the country with assets of approximately two billion dollars. ■

Consumer Corner:

This issue of the HDSW Newsletter proudly features a new column written by an HDSW consumer.

Learning From Mental Illness

What have I learned from being mentally ill: How has my sickness actually helped me become a better and stronger person? Let me explain.

Having gone through mental illness has changed me in many ways. It has made me a more compassionate and caring person toward others. I am more sensitive, perceptive and aware of feelings and other people's issues. I am more empathetic and understanding of others and their needs and I have become a good listener.

I have become a stronger person as well, as a result of having gone through what I have. I have a strong inner self that shows itself at various times.

I am also a deeper person as a result of going through what I have. I don't just see things superficially, black-

and-white, but go beyond the usual. There are many levels to my personality and I am a more complex person, mostly due to all the years I've spent in therapy. I can access different levels of my being in a more complete way.

Due to experiencing my illness, I have had to reconstruct my life together at several junctures of my life. Although this has been very difficult to do, I have been given second chances to create a happy and fulfilling life for myself. Having had several breaks in my life, I have been given the opportunity and been blessed to rebuild my life. This time around, I've got it right!

In these ways, having gone through mental illness has made me a better and stronger person. What is your experience? ■

WELCOME SPRING

Just as the HDSW Edgemont House residents and staff were thinking about sprucing up the gardens at the residence, along came our friends from the Sprain Brook Nursery.

Heidi Krautter, owner, and her staff have been donating beautiful plants, flowers, and holiday decorations to Edgemont House since the opening of the residence in 1989.

The landscapers at Sprain Brook Nursery recently spent the day raking, mowing, planting and mulching. The flowers they planted are blooming, and the grounds look magnificent. The residents are so pleased with the results and are committed to the watering and weeding of the gardens throughout the season.

Thank you Sprain Brook Nursery for bringing spring to Edgemont House!

Did You Know That...

A New Pension Protection Act went into effect in August 2006.

This Act has an important charitable giving provision which now permits individuals who are 70 1/2 and older to make direct transfers of IRA assets to qualified public charities, such as HDSW, without paying income tax on the withdrawals. These gifts are limited to \$100,000 per taxpayer per year. This provision is in effect for all gifts made during the 2006 and 2007 calendar years. This information comes to us from our friends at AmeriCares. For more information, visit the AmeriCares website at: www.americares.org and click on "Charitable giving incentive" or contact your financial consultant.



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(Donors to June & Jazz 2006 were listed in the Fall 2006 Newsletter)

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Cars, Cars, Cars

Late December brought one-time funding grants from the NYS Office of Mental Health through the Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health. This funding made it possible for HDSW to purchase additional vehicles to replace aging cars and mini-vans that are critical to the everyday service provision to our consumers. The agency was able to purchase three vehicles. The Community Residence program, the Supported Housing program and the Case Management program all received a new car or mini-van.

We would not have been able to purchase these vehicles without the assistance of the Gordon Ford Dealership in Rockland County. Richard Gordon, owner, Irwin Adelsberg, Sales Manager, and Tony LaFerrara, Senior Leasing & Sales Consultant, have made it possible for HDSW to purchase vehicles at state contract prices. The NYS Office of Mental Health makes the state purchasing contracts available to not-for-profit agencies with which they have contracts. The state contract prices are the lowest possible for a large variety of items, including: vehicles, washing machines, and computers. However, such purchases often take up to three months for delivery. The folks at Gordon Ford eliminate that wait.

During a recent discussion, Irwin Adelsberg, Sales Manager, stated that Gordon Ford has a commitment to working with agencies such as HDSW because we “do important work.” He went on to share his grandmother’s story of living with a mental illness. “In her day, the

only option was Rockland Psychiatric Center. She lived her life out there. There were no programs like HDSW back then.” Today Irwin’s Grandmother Sarah would likely live in a community residence program, receive outpatient services and attend HOPE House. Perhaps she would even have a Case Manager.



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A Day in the Life of Yolanda Lee, Case Manager, WestCAREs

It's 8:30 am and Yolanda Lee is in her car on the way to New Rochelle, to the apartment of Mrs. X. She calls for Mrs. X and the two of them drive to White Plains, where they have an appointment with the Department of Social Services, to help Mrs. X re-certify her eligibility for food stamps. The re-certification successfully completed, Yolanda drops Mrs. X back at



Yolanda Lee

her apartment and continues on to Mt. Vernon, where she stops at a local hardware store to pick up a replacement window blind she has ordered for her client, Mrs. Joe, whose living room blind has been broken. She arrives at Mrs. Joe's apartment and locates the building handyman, who installs the new blind.

Yolanda then receives an emergency call on her cell phone. Jimmy T., a client in his late 40's, also living in Yonkers, is having great difficulty breathing. She phones 911 and arranges for an ambulance to take him to St. John's Hospital. She phones another client living in Jimmy's building, who opens the lobby door and waits for the ambulance crew. Yolanda drives directly to St. John's Hospital, meeting Jimmy when the ambulance arrives with him. The situation is serious. Jimmy's kidneys are failing. He is admitted to the Intensive Care Unit. During the 10 months that Jimmy has been Yolanda's WestCAREs client, although he appeared in very poor health, he repeatedly resisted medical diagnosis and care, refusing release of needed medical records. This crisis becomes a turning point for the better. During the following week Yolanda visits him frequently at the hospital, consulting with his physician care team. Jimmy accepts an ongoing health regime to stabilize his condition. He adheres to a prescribed special diet. His kidney condition is chronic, requiring dialysis three times a week; he cooperates with the regimen. Since the acute hospitalization incident, Jimmy has developed a trusting relationship with Yolanda, is making appropriate decisions about his ongoing healthcare regime and needs, and is feeling a lot better.

The WestCAREs program is a collaboration among St. Vincent's Hospital clinical outpatient services, and two direct comprehensive service providers, The Sharing Community and Human Development Services of Westchester. The clients served are single adults with a history of long-term or repeated homelessness, often a revolving door of shelter care and back on the street. All have a psychiatric diagnosis of serious mental illness, and often a diagnosis of substance abuse as well. They are referred from the Westchester County shelter system to the program. The first task of case managers is to help the client access permanent housing. This is usually accomplished within one to two months. Then comes the long-term challenge of building a positive client-case manager relationship. Yolanda Lee has been a case manager with The WestCAREs program since 2001. She has extensive experience in mental health direct services. As she says, "Progress is slow, requiring persistence and consistency. Slowly, clients become self-directed, realizing that they do have options, and make more healthy decisions. Though living with mental illness, they begin to access community resources, may enter a substance rehabilitation or detoxification program, and begin to socialize. Their lives stabilize and improve."

The WestCAREs team is located at St. Vincent's hospital. Working with the program coordinator, Elizabeth Steiner, MSW, are a St. Vincent's psychiatrist, a nurse practitioner, and The Sharing Community and HDSW case managers. The program can accommodate up to 72 people. The team meets twice weekly for "grand rounds" to share information and review each client's current situation and progress. ■



Americares 2007

On Saturday, May 5, the Neighborhood Preservation Company (NPC), a housing and neighborhood revitalization program administered by Human Development Services of Westchester, participated in the annual Home Front Day sponsored by AmeriCares. The mission of AmeriCares HomeFront is to provide free repairs to either low-income homeowners or not-for-profit community centers, in order to improve the quality of life of the neighborhood and positively impact the entire community.

This year, the NPC elected to work with the Don Bosco Community Center, located at 22 Don Bosco Place in Port Chester. The community center reopened its doors in 2006 under the guidance of its Executive Director, Father Richard Alejunas. The center, built in 1928, meets the needs of residents of all ages. It offers a variety of youth programs throughout the year, is the site for the Day Labor Program and provides a food pantry and free lunches to the needy during the week.

There is also a clothing disbursement program, ESL classes, citizenship classes, and a medical clinic.

HDSW is fortunate to partner with general contractors from the area who donated their construction insight as we prepared for HomeFront Day. John Sorbella, owner of Facelifts, LLC., has helped us tremendously with the scope of work planned for that day as well as with the selection of the materials needed. Mr. Antonio de la Hoz, of HOME TLC, helped us oversee the work performed on HomeFront Day to ensure that it was a success. We thank both gentlemen for their time and dedication to this project, and the many volunteers who worked with us on AmeriCares Homefront Day, including Board, staff and clients of HDSW.

Each year, we have over 80 volunteers that help throughout the day to make this event a tremendous success!! ■

The HDSW AmeriCares Team



Opera on the Sound

On Sunday afternoon November 12th, seventy-five HDSW supporters attended a festive and lively benefit concert featuring singers from Career Bridges, at the lovely waterfront Mamaroneck home of Shirley and Sid Singer. The concert, entitled "The Madness of Love in Opera and on Broadway," included vocal selections ranging from Mozart's "Don Giovanni" to George Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess." The four young, talented

opera singers and piano accompanist, under the direction of David Schuyler Bender, Artistic Director of Career Bridges, in combination with the beautiful setting, post-concert refreshments, conversation, and opportunity to view the Singer's art collection, all created an extraordinary and memorable afternoon. Thank you, HDSW supporters and Shirley and Sid Singer. Vive l'opera! ■

"Wait A Minute"

When not busy at work at HOPE House as Clerical/Education Unit Leader, staff member Sidney Hecker is pursuing his hobby, the art of photography. Sid is a recognized photographer, currently teaching an evening photography course at Westchester Community College. Sid has introduced a number of HOPE House members to photography over the years. Photographs by HOPE House members have been exhibited and sold at June & Jazz silent auctions, and each month they grace the pages of the HOPE House newsletter. During January, 2007, an exhibit of Sid's photographs, called "Wait A Minute," was held at the Larchmont Public Library. According to Sid, "the challenge of photography and the reason it is so universal is that it can express virtually every human emotion, value and interest." The exhibit captured people, animals, and places in motion, spontaneously, or at a particular moment in time. Pictures were grouped by categories: nature, love and friendship, joy and humor, beauty and charm, nurturance, rhythm, wonder/awe, and hope.



Zebras galloped across an African plain, a bride and groom grinned joyfully across a table at each other during their wedding dinner, father and son quietly share a tranquil moment. Prints of the photographs were for sale. All proceeds of those sold were donated by Sid to HOPE House. Thank you, Sid. ■

**June & Jazz**

**June & Jazz**

**June & Jazz**

**Please join us for an evening of
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**For further information contact
Nada B. Glick at 914-835-8906 ext. 1002**

GUNG HEI FAAT CHOI! (CONGRATULATIONS AND BE PROSPEROUS)

The sounds of Cantonese could be heard in the HDSW offices as staff held their annual Chinese New Year luncheon in celebration of the Chinese New Year. With the help of our friends at the Dragon City Chinese Restaurant in Mamaroneck, staff were able to expand their knowledge of the annual celebration. The owners of Dragon City, Dickerson Wong and LiQing Fang, shared their family traditions and explained the various practices to prepare for the New Year.

Staff brought in the Year of the Pig with traditional Red Packets to insure good fortune and enjoyed a variety of Chinese specialties which also insure good luck when eaten. One such food is the dumpling (Jiaozi) which is eaten traditionally in northern China because the preparation is similar to packaging luck inside, to be enjoyed later.

We thank La Mour Davis, HDSW Supportive Case Manager, who once again worked diligently to bring us together to expand our cultural competence and celebrate the New Year!

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