



CONNECTING

Creating A New Mental Health Service Delivery System for Our City

May 23, 2003

Congratulations to New Quarterly Awards Recipients

Employee achievement is symbolic of our growth and development

by Martha B. Knisley, DMH Director



Martha B. Knisley, DMH Director, congratulates awardees and challenges employees at first formal awards program.

Another deserving group of DMH employees was recognized for exceptional service to the agency and community. The second series of quarterly awards was presented during a special ceremony at Saint Elizabeths Chapel on April 22.

DMH Director Martha B. Knisley referred to the awardees as "champions" working with others to achieve and realize worthwhile objectives. "We have a lot of work that needs to be done. We are accomplishing that work through the cooperation and support of employees like those honored

on this occasion, and by others who will be recognized in future ceremonies," the Director said.

"The challenges before us bestow upon every employee and manager a unique opportunity to be involved in the creation of a system of mental health care that rivals any in the nation. We are striving to achieve this goal every day, in measurable ways," she added.

John Gibbons was honored with the "Access Award." Mr. Gibbons, a supervisory health systems specialist in the Division of Certification, Office of Accountability of the Mental Health Authority, was cited for his willingness to transport Access HelpLine employees back and forth to work during the recordbreaking February 2003 snowstorm. The Access HelpLine, which never closes, provides a

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DMH Partnership Council to Help Develop FY05 Budget

The DMH Partnership Council, chaired by Senora Simpson, is taking an active role in helping the Department develop the FY 2005 budget. The members made this commitment at a recent one-day retreat. "The Partnership Council's legal mandate is to advise the DMH Director on a variety of issues, and nothing is more significant than the budget," said Chairperson Simpson. "I welcome the members' input," said DMH Director Martha B. Knisley. "The Partnership Council members are true advocates for DMH and our budget before the District Council. Their involvement in the budget planning process will enrich the end product, our FY 2005 budget.

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The Third Annual Judge Aubrey E. Robinson, Jr. Memorial Mental Health Conference

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direct link between DMH and citizens in need of the range of mental health services and related information.

Meanwhile, the "Support Our Services 'SOS' Award" recognized **Shirley Grow**, a senior budget analyst, who is a familiar face in the Office of the Chief



"Support our Services" award recipient Shirley Grow, left, and Budget Officer Carolyn Casey, right.

Financial Officer at the Mental Health Authority. She provides a range of helpful assistance to virtually every entity within DMH on budgetary issues and concerns.



Mental Health Specialist Jendayo Grady, recipient of "The Celebration Award"

Jendayo Grady, who is part of the DMH Delivery Systems Management School Mental Health Program of the Mental Health Authority, received the "Celebration Award," which recognizes exemplary service to children, families and other special population groups.

Mr. Grady, a mental health specialist, will be among graduates receiving a doctorate in psychology at Howard University this

month. His current assignment with the Department is at Spingarn High School.

The "Customer Service Award" was presented to the staff of the **Sobering Station**, a new, far-reaching initiative of the Community Services Agency. The



The staff, which created the city's first Sobering Station, received the "Customer Service Award."

employee group, led by Michele May, assumed lead roles in creating the District's first sobering station, where intoxicated individuals were given a safe place to sleep, shower and eat nightly during hypothermia season. More than 200 men and women used these services and perhaps saved their lives from being lost to hypothermia during the severely cold and snowy winter.



"The Mission Award" was presented to 22 individual nursing units at Saint Elizabeths Hospital.

"The Mission Award" honored the collective contributions of the entire **nursing staff of Saint Elizabeths Hospital**. Within this category, individual award certificates were presented to the 22 nursing units working at the John Howard Pavilion, the Continuing Treatment Units, and at

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HIPAA Training Nears Completion

Phase One of the awareness training for the new federally mandated Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA) is almost complete.

Ninety-eight percent of the workforce at DMH has received HIPAA awareness training in preparation for implementation of the HIPAA Privacy Rule.

The questions and answers raised at the training sessions soon will be available in the HIPAA Q&A section on the DMH Intranet site.

The DMH and HIPAA team are working on the pre-emption analysis that reconciles HIPAA rules with the DC Mental Health Information Act. The work includes modifying standard policies and procedures to reflect the results of the pre-emption analysis.

Phase Two of the mandatory training begins in June and will be based on the modified policies and procedures. This training will be done in two parts. All staff will receive general training on the updated policies and procedures and more clinically-focused staff members who have direct consumer contact will receive detailed policy, procedure and forms training. Training dates will be announced in future editions of this publication.

Meanwhile, the HIPAA Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) regulations will go into effect in October 2003. Information systems, finance and billing staff are currently working to update systems and processes to ensure full compliance by that deadline date.

Another Look At Restraints/ Seclusion

Kevin C.A. Elphick, director of Crisis and Emergency Services, with the Community Services Agency Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP), says there is a clear and growing national trend for psychiatric providers to re-examine and strategically reduce the use of restraints or seclusion in their facilities. "Instead," he says, "providers are emphasizing planned interventions prior to crisis states, interventions that would defuse situations before they could reach proportions requiring the use of restraint or seclusion."

Mr. Elphick and other DMH staff, advocates and consumers of mental health services attended a recent three-day training event in Philadelphia, where the use of restraints and seclusion was broadly examined. The National Executive Training Institute sponsored the training program.

"In some ways, we already were anticipating this trend," Mr. Elphick said, referring to the fact that DMH developed initiatives to reduce the use of these procedures as early as 2001. "Since then, we have substantially reduced their use and specifically trained staff in de-escalation techniques designed to avert crisis situations."

Tell Us About Academic Successes

The academic accomplishments of children and other close family members, including a spouse, are a special source of pride worthy of our applause. We want to acknowledge all DMH employees and/or their children who will graduate this year from college or professional school.

Please send the information to larry.brown@dc.gov and include your name, relationship to the graduate, the graduate's name, date of graduation, college or professional school and degree awarded. We look forward to sharing the information in forthcoming editions of this newsletter.

The Third Annual Judge Aubrey E. Robinson, Jr. Memorial Mental Health Conference

Top Federal Official Headlines Mental Health Conference

Mayor Williams and DMH and DOH Directors Sign Pact on Co-occurring Disorders



Charles G. Curie, administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, says fighting co-occurring mental illness and drug addiction is his agency's top FY 2004 priority. Mr. Curie was the

keynote speaker at the Third Annual Judge Aubrey E. Robinson Jr. Memorial Mental Health Conference, sponsored by the State Mental Health Planning Council and the Department of Mental Health last month.

The one-day conference, "The Road to Recovery: Mental Illness and Substance Abuse," featured Mayor Anthony A. Williams, DMH Director Martha B. Knisley and Department of Health Director James

A. Buford signing the charter agreement pledging DMH and DOH to create the structure to provide comprehensive, integrated mental health and substance abuse services. Mr. Curie commended Mayor Williams, saying his leadership propelled DMH and DOH to the forefront of the United States on co-occurring disorders and it was tremendous to hear an elected official articulate these issues.

Human Services Committee Chair, Councilmember Sandra (Sandy) Allen and At-Large Councilmember Phil Mendelson moderated two panels at the conference, which was attended by more than 200 consumers of mental health and substance abuse services and their families, advocates for people with mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders, service providers, and DMH and DOH employees.

While interviewing for the top SAMHSA position, Mr. Curie was asked what would be the one thing he would do to make a difference. He told the White House and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services he would address co-occurring disorders.

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Mayor Anthony A. Williams led the signing of an unprecedented consensus agreement between the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Health. Mayor Williams is pictured with DMH Director Martha B. Knisley and James A. Buford, Director of the Department of Health. Burton E. Wheeler, Jr., chair of the Mayor's State Mental Health Planning Committee, is in the background.



Staunch Supporters include (left to right) Ms. Jacqueline Washington, Judge Robinson's daughter, and his wife, Mrs. Doris Robinson, and Judge Norma Holloway Johnson, who succeeded Judge Robinson in presiding over the Dixon Court Case.

The Third Annual Judge Aubrey E. Robinson, Jr. Memorial Mental Health Conference

Significance of New Charter Agreement



DMH Chief Clinical Officer Steven Steury, MD, said the Charter and Consensus Agreement between the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Health Addiction Prevention and Recovery Administration will lead to

significantly improved treatment for individuals with co-occurring psychiatric and substance abuse illnesses.

He says that in addition to improved service outcomes, the city also will realize savings by the reduction of multiple treatment domains. Over the next six months, the two District agencies will work with public and private providers to adopt a comprehensive, continuous, integrated model for designing a permanent system of care within the context of existing resources.

Dr. Steury says dual diagnosis will be an expectation, not an exception: "District public

mental health providers will have a high index of suspicion that the person will have both psychiatric and drug problems. Therefore, all DMH and APRA-supported treatment sites are required to have the ability to diagnose and treat co-occurring illnesses."

He said the new emphasis also brings challenges and advancement opportunities for employees as well. "The more you know about co-occurring disorders, the more valuable you will be to your employer and the greater will be your chances for promotion." Dr. Steury urges social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists and nurses connected with DMH to consider taking courses in co-occurring illnesses to fill continuing education requirements.

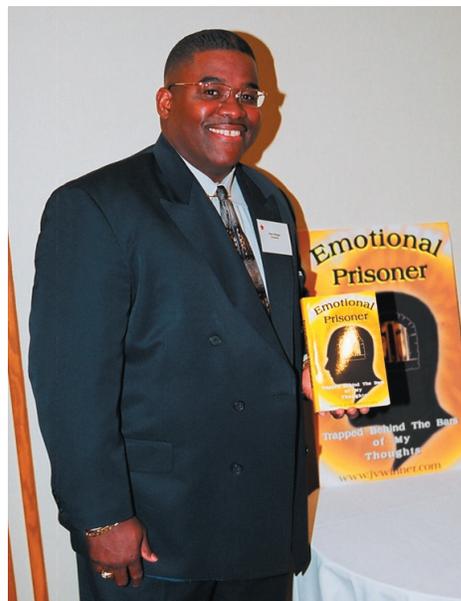
He points out that 40 staffers at DMH and APRA currently are being trained so they can train employees at their work sites in the care of patients with co-occurring disorders.

Looking at the past, Dr. Steury says the District and other localities often have done poor jobs of

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Councilmember Sandy Allen, who chairs the Committee on Human Services, which has oversight of the Department of Mental Health, served as moderator of a panel discussion focusing on issues related to mental illness and substance abuse across the life span.



A fiery presenter was Jose Villegas, III, author and distributor of *Emotional Prisoner*, a personal recollection of the author's inner emotional battles.

Multicultural Center Employee Nominated for Mayoral Award

Thomas Van Le, MSW, of the Community Services Agency Multicultural Center, was nominated for the Mayor Anthony A. Williams' Outstanding Service Award. Mr. Le, along with the other nominees, is being saluted at the Asian and Pacific American Heritage Month Celebration May 13, sponsored by the D.C. Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs. Mayor Williams also is conducting a town hall meeting with the API community that day.

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Top Federal Official Headlines Mental Health Conference

He emphasized that facilitating recovery means getting real about co-occurring disorders and that DMH and DOH are on the right track.

Mr. Curie said President Bush's and DHHS Secretary Tommy Thompson's commitment to mental health issues is tremendous and that Secretary Thompson set ending chronic homelessness as a priority and complimented District government and its community partners for taking on this issue within the context of co-occurring disorders. He also said SAMHSA is preparing for a major national conference on co-occurring disorders this fall.

DMH Director Martha B. Knisley praised Curie as "a real supporter." "We have a friend in Rockville [the location of SAMHSA's headquarters]," she said.

Mayor Williams said, "Recovering from mental illness is an intimidating, often painful undertaking before a person can realize tangible, positive results; and the same can be said for recovering from substance abuse. However, when the two disorders occur together, a positive outcome is rare unless the two disorders are treated together. Fortunately, we have two directors committed to finding real solutions by crossing operational

boundaries and sharing authority and responsibility for outcomes." He added, "The Charter and Consensus Document being signed today, pledging them to work together to assist people struggling with mental illness and substance abuse. The charter binds them to create a comprehensive, continuous integrated system of care model based on best practices in use in other cities."

Other conference participants included Burton E. Wheeler, Jr., interim chair of the DC State Mental Health, and Jesse Price and Effie Smith, co-chairs of the conference planning committee for the SMHPC; U.S. District Court Judge Norma Holloway Johnson, who provided a remembrance of Judge Robinson; Mrs. Doris Robinson and Jacqueline Washington, wife and daughter of the late Judge Robinson; SAMHSA representatives Dr. Nainan Thomas and Claudia Richards; Phil Magano, executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, who was appointed by President George W. Bush in 2002. The Council is part of the White House Domestic Policy Council; and Peter Parham, District of Columbia Public Schools.

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Significance of New Charter Agreement

treating people with combined mental health and substance abuse problems because rarely would one agency be willing to treat both disorders.

"If a patient came into a Core Service Agency intoxicated and depressed, we might say 'You're drinking, come back when you are sober and we can treat your depression.' Of course, it was not likely that the person would return. Now, we will do an assessment and treat both illnesses," Dr. Steury said.

While mental and substance abuse illnesses have their distinct challenges, he noted each disorder has parallel phases of recovery (acute stabilization, engagement and motivational enhancement, prolonged stabilization and relapse prevention, rehabilitation and growth) and stages of change.

To enhance the policy of cooperation stressed in the charter, Dr. Steury says DMH and APRA will

share clinical information in compliance applicable laws and policies, including the Mental Health Information Act and the new Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Attention also is being devoted to improving data collection on how many consumers have co-occurring illness.

DMH and APRA also need to revamp policy, materials and expectations that staff provide a welcoming atmosphere for patients with co-occurring disorders. "We can do this with no increase in funding because we can work smarter and work together," Dr. Steury said.

CSA Eligibility Fair Explains the Process

In observance of May as Mental Health Month, DMH's Community Services Agency brought together key resource organizations to provide "how-to" information for consumers, their family members and other stakeholders. Those in need of mental health services were able to sign up at the event, where representatives from various organizations were on hand to answer questions about eligibility requirements and explain the paperwork process. More than 60 consumers participated. Billed as a resource and eligibility fair for consumers of mental health services, the event was held at 35 K St., NE.

In addition to CSA's Supported Employment and Medicaid Eligibility offices, other participating organizations included the Social Security Administration; University Legal Clinic For the Homeless; Deaf Reach; Healthy Families /Thriving Neighborhoods (East of the River Family Strengthening Collaborative); Share Food Cooperative; Housing Counseling Service; Department of Human Services' Income Maintenance Administration and Rehabilitation Services Administration; University Legal Services; and the Wendt Center for Loss and Healing.

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the Acute Psychiatric Hospital. The Mission Award recognizes exemplary service that significantly influences and helps the agency achieve its mission, the kind of sustaining service nurses continue to provide consumers at Saint Elizabeths Hospital.

Employees and other interested parties may nominate employees and other stakeholders for the next series of quarterly awards. Nominations should be submitted to the awards committee by Tuesday, June 10, 2003. They should be e-mailed to lois.calhoun@dc.gov, or mailed to: Lois Calhoun, 64 New York Ave, NE, Fourth Floor, Washington, DC, 20002. She may be reached on (202) 671-4031.



For Job Well Done. (left to right) Brunilda Sandoval is among Enrollment Specialists acknowledging Sara Lee and Sandra Petty for support of consumer services. Special event is also shared by Ana M. Sandoval and Patricia Moses, in the background.



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(202) 673-7500

Government of the District of Columbia
Anthony A. Williams, Mayor



Department of Mental Health
Martha B. Knisley, Director