

# Staying in Touch

## Message from the Director

January 2009

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Dear DMH Employee,

After weeks of careful planning, the Implementation Plan for the closure of the DC CSA has been completed. I want to acknowledge the hard work of DC CSA staff who participated on transition

workgroups and helped craft critical aspects of the transition. I also want to thank other DMH employees who contributed to developing the Plan. I have appointed **Dr. Barbara Bazron**, Deputy Director of Programs, Policy and Planning, to lead the implementation. She will work closely with **Vivi Smith**, Director of Consumer and Family Affairs, and a team of employees to manage the implementation.

Under the Implementation Plan, the great majority of consumers will transition to private providers by August 1, 2009. The transitions will be completed by March 31, 2010. This schedule is designed to minimize disruption in care by allowing time for DC CSA consumers to become familiar with the private providers and to allow the providers time to build capacity at the proper pace. We also are setting up a team of people to assist consumers who may need extra help in making the transition. After the transition, we will monitor closely continuity of care to ensure that consumers continue to receive the level of support they need.

As we move towards a Reduction-in-Force, the Human Resources Division is making every effort to identify job opportunities within and outside government for displaced DC CSA employees, including with providers who are offering positions. I realize that the next year will be a difficult time for the Department but I am confident that this step will move us closer to a public mental health system able to serve a greater number of people with a wider array of services.

I encourage you to read the Implementation Plan which is posted on our website. I welcome your comments or any suggestions about ways to make this process smoother at [steve.baron@dc.gov](mailto:steve.baron@dc.gov).

*Steve*

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**Voluntary Early Out  
Retirement Programs  
Extended.**

*See Page 2*

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## Lens, Pens, Brushes & Friends Designs NASW Conference Logo

Members of the Lens, Pens, Brushes & Friends, the highly regarded program at Saint Elizabeths Hospital, recently completed the design of a new logo for the upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the National Association of Social Workers, Washington Metropolitan Chapter.

Lens, Pens, Brushes & Friends were asked to design a logo based on the theme of the conference—the concept of a labyrinth, or ‘evolutionary process’, by which people find solutions to their complex issues. And, they were asked to reflect that social workers guide people through difficult and confusing issues.

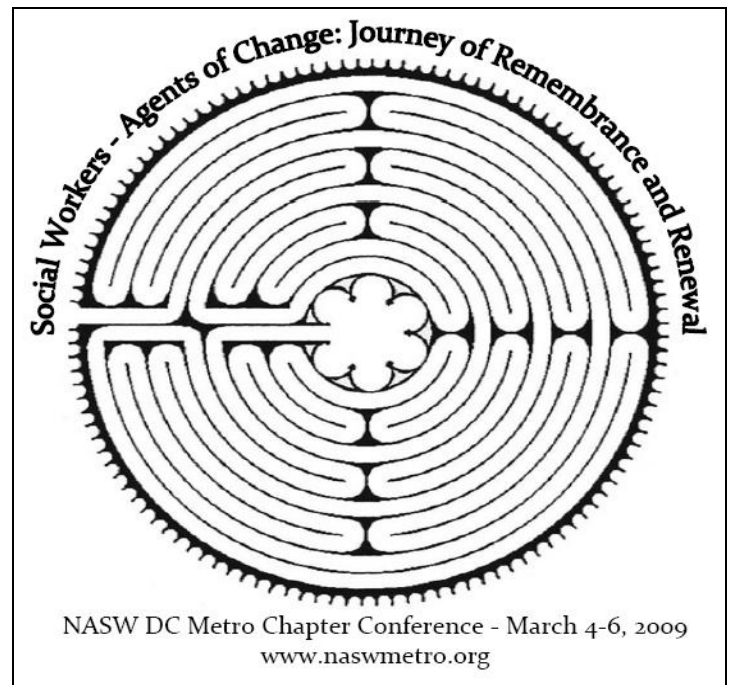
Designing the logo was a collaborative project that engaged patients and staff from other units and volunteers. The project was widely viewed by the patients as a reversal of roles. As one patient said, “Typically social workers serve patients; in this case, the social workers are our clients.”

The project was the brainstorm of **Edward Washington**, retired Chief of the Forensic Services’ Dual Diagnosis Treatment Branch and a member of the Metro Chapter. “It seemed like a great opportunity for the Metro Chapter to support the patients, and the process of developing the logo was very much in-line with the type of challenge that is important to their development,” he said.

Lens, Pens, Brushes & Friends, a volunteer-driven program based in the Forensic Inpatient Services, supports patient reintegration by creating opportunities for positive interaction with the community through creative expression.

## Human Resources News

**Retirement Programs Extended:** The eligibility period for the voluntary early out retirement program with incentives has been extended through March 31, 2009. And, the voluntary program without incentives has been extended to December 31, 2009. If you want an application or have any questions, contact your HR representative.



*The logo represents an ancient symbol of reflection and renewal.*

Patients and volunteers work together in four different disciplines—photography, painting, poetry and graphics. Their works were featured at the recent opening of the Urgent Care Clinic at DC Superior Court and have been shown at art shows and other special events. The program also has produced annual calendars and announcements for other projects.

**Temporary Appointments Available at DC CSA:** HR is seeking former DMH employees who retired with or without an incentive or who were voluntarily separated to work with the DC CSA in temporary appointments during the transition. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please refer him/her to **Perry Saunders**, HR specialist, at 673-3519.

## Employee Spotlight: Edith Makenta

Several years ago, shortly after **Edith Makenta** took charge of the supportive housing program, a well intentioned colleague told her that “ the landlords of this City will never stand for people with mental illness signing their own lease and becoming tenants.”

Little did that person know. **Edith** is a woman who grew up hearing her parents tell her and her siblings that “ ...it can be done, you can do it, you can make it happen”. And, this is a woman who scuba dives... and writes poetry.

Today, 757 consumers have housing because of the supportive housing program—and, they sign their own leases. Plus, more than 250 landlords and 100 developers are partners with DMH and the annual budget for the program has grown from \$1 million to \$6 million.

As Director of Supportive Housing, **Edith** works with other District agencies, federal counterparts, and private businesses to increase the supply of supportive housing available for people with serious mental illness. She oversees \$14 million in capital funds transferred to DHCD to develop 300 new units of housing—with more than 200 ready for occupancy beginning this spring.

**Edith** has won a number of federal grants including the first Shelter Plus Care grant awarded directly to DMH and a grant to set up the Helping Hands Program that serves people dually diagnosed with mental illness and mental retardation, and transition age youth aging out of the foster care system.

In her work with the DC Housing Authority, **Edith** helped generate and oversees the Housing



**Edith Makenta**

First voucher program, and voucher programs that support consumers with the most severe needs, and consumers with disabilities.

**Edith** was born in Greenville, South Carolina. She received a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Pennsylvania, a bachelor of arts degree in sociology and economics from Knoxville College in Knoxville, Tennessee, and is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW). She is the proud parent of two adult daughters—Fatima Ruffin and Nefretiti Makenta.

## Mandatory Drug and Alcohol Testing of Safety Sensitive Employees

On December 30, 2008, Director Baron sent notice to all employees of the implementation of mandatory drug and alcohol testing of employees who serve children and youth (designated “Safety Sensitive Employees”). The government’s policy is to require drug and alcohol testing of every employee who, as part of his/her official job duties, has direct contact with children and youth, is entrusted with the direct care and custody of children and youth, and whose performance of duties in the normal course of employment may affect the health,

welfare, or safety of children or youth. If your position has been designated a “safety sensitive employee”, you will receive a personal notice 30 days prior to the testing. Further, all safety sensitive employees and their supervisors and managers must participate in mandatory alcohol and substance abuse training conducted by DMH.

If you have questions about this policy, you can contact HR on 673.3655.

## News from Saint Elizabeths Hospital

### Walt Valliere Joins Saint Elizabeths Hospital Executive Team as the Chief Administrative Officer

Over the past twenty-five years, **Walt Valliere** has held several executive leadership positions and provided management consulting services for national and international healthcare organizations including hospitals, clinics, reference laboratories, and large group medical practices.

**Walt's** professional interests and skills have been focused on managing and developing early stage and rapid growth healthcare ventures; designing and deploying quality management systems; redesigning and improving business processes; implementing healthcare financial best practices; identifying business development opportunities, including merger and acquisition targets, and leveraging systems and technology to improve patient care quality while reducing operating costs. In just a few weeks on the job, he has completed financial analyses on overtime and has helped to implement strategies to save money.

**Walt** has been active on the legislative scene, lobbying on various regulatory initiatives including HIPPA, the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. He also has served on numerous standards development and examination committees

An avid outdoorsman, tennis fan, Walt is a political junkie who never tires of debating the great issues of our day and the relative merits of various management theories. And, he shares his recipes for French foods along with his expertise in management engineering. A Texan by choice, he has lived in Virginia with his wife and four children for almost twenty years.

*written by Tamil Perry-Lloyd  
Public Affairs Officer, Saint Elizabeths Hospital*

### Hospital Doctors Receive National Recognition

**Dr. S. Kalman Kolansky** has been awarded the American Psychiatric Association's Irma Bland Award for Excellence in teaching residents. **Dr. Kolansky** is a faculty member in the Hospital's psychiatry residency training program in charge of child psychiatry training. This prestigious award is given in recognition of his innovations in resident teaching and his contributions to the field.

With this award, **Dr. Kolansky** joins a select few who have received both the Irma Bland Award and the Edith Sabshin Award for teaching Excellence by American Psychoanalytic Association.

**Dr. Lenore Teter**, attending psychiatrist, was selected as a recipient of the 17th Annual Nancy C. A. Roeske, M.D. Certificate of Recognition for Excellence in Medical Student Education by the American Psychiatric Association.

**Dr. Teter** runs an inpatient unit for individuals with chronic, severe mental illnesses—many of whom also have co-occurring developmental disabilities. She has been at the Hospital for different periods since 1985, and is a former director of psychiatry.

**Dr. Tanya Alim**, psychiatrist, was the lead author on a paper published in the December 2008 issue of the American Journal of Psychiatry. The study entitled, *Trauma, Resilience, and Recovery in a High-Risk African-American Population*, examined psychosocial factors associated with resilience and recovery from psychiatric disorders in a high-risk sample of African American adults exposed to a range of severe traumas, who participated in structured diagnostic interviews.

**Congratulations!**

*eNewsletter produced by Phyllis Jones, PIO  
Paul Davis, Photographer*