



# Connecting

Creating A New Mental Health Service Delivery System for Our City

March 2005

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## State Mental Health Council and DMH Accepting Proposals for FY 06 Block Grants

The **D.C. State Mental Health Planning Council (SMHPC)**, in cooperation with the Department of Mental Health, announced that they are accepting project proposals for the FY 2006 state mental health block grants. The deadline to submit the grant proposals to the SMHPC/DMH Project Review Committee (PRC) is June 1, 2005.

**Juanita Reaves, Ph.D., Planning Officer, Office of Programs and Policy**, said the PRC is extending its outreach to the greater DC community to generate ideas for innovative projects that promote mental health.

“Someone outside of the system may have good project ideas and we want to tap into their creativity,” said Dr. Reaves.

These block grant funds finance mental health services for children with serious emotional disturbances and adults with serious mental illness. In the past, block grant funds allocated to DMH averaged nearly a \$1 million. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Mental Health Services administers the funds.

During FY 2004, SMHPC initiated a new review process to enhance project development and consumer participation in projects that receive block grant funds. DMH and SMHPC created a Project Review Committee consisting of three DMH members (the Director of the Office of Programs and Policy, and the OPP Directors of Child/Youth Services and Adult Services) and three SMHPC members (a child advocate, an adult advocate and a volunteer member). The PRC then recommends projects to **DMH Director Martha B. Knisley** for final approval.

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### Message from Martha B. Knisley, Director



#### Recovery in Action – March 22

We use the term "recovery" to describe our philosophy of care, but not everyone knows what it means. Briefly, it means restoring the relationships, dignity, and self-respect lost to mental illness. "Recovery in Action," day-long conference March 22 at Gallaudet University's Kellogg Conference Center, marks the beginning of our system-wide focus on making recovery real for consumers, family members, providers and other mental health stakeholders. Join us for this first annual adult recovery forum. Call (202) 673-4374 to register.

#### Emergency Response – Anthrax

I want to thank the DMH employees who dropped everything March 15 to respond to the threat of anthrax. Some employees offered comfort and assurance to hundreds of postal employees and others who possibly had been exposed to anthrax at the V Street, NE post office, while others staffed the Department of Health's Health Emergency Center. We got the call in the morning and not long afterwards everyone had gathered at DC General where antibiotics and information were distributed. One postal employee who had worked at the former Brentwood Post Office said the operation was much smoother this time.

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Tuesday, March 22, 2005, 8:30 a.m.  
Gallaudet University, Kellogg Center

### "Recovery D.C." Partners for Recovery Adult Recovery Forum

The Department of Mental Health along with Partners for Recovery are sponsoring a day-long forum Tuesday, March 22, to celebrate recovery. The forum will take place from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm at the Kellogg Center at Gallaudet University, a short walk from the New York Avenue Station on the Red Line, or on bus lines 90, 92, 93, or X3. The Kellogg Center is located on Brentwood Parkway, just north of Florida Ave., NE. The focal point of the day will be the screening of *Inside Outside: Building a Meaningful Life after the Hospital*. This film, produced by two former patients

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## The Bells Rang Loud & the Band Played On at 150<sup>th</sup> Hospital Kick-Off Event

While the bells rang during the 150th anniversary kick-off ceremony at St. Elizabeths Hospital the Ballou High School marching band rocked the chapel. The March 1 ceremony was a spirited occasion attended by local VIPs as well as the greater St. Elizabeths Hospital community.

**Joy Holland, CEO of St. Elizabeths Hospital,** said that the song “Yet

Still I Rise” sang by **hospital music therapist Crystal Bass,** captured the spirit of the hospital as it moves forward. She announced that the kick-off was the beginning of the sesquicentennial celebration. “We’re going to celebrate all year long.”

**Martha B. Knisley, DMH Director** was exuberant in her statement



that St. Elizabeths Hospital is the most revered mental health hospital in the world. She said, “I’m going out on a limb but we could not do what we do without our nurses.” The crowd clapped in agreement.

“The ringing of the chapel bells announces the start of a new day,” said Nathaniel Howard, president of the Congress Heights Community Association. He said the bells are a tradition of renewal and of breaking down barriers. “The bells are ringing so loud that the community hears you {St. Elizabeths Hospital}.”

Former Councilmember Sandy Allen said that her first visit to the hospital was during her youth as a candy striper (nursing-aide volunteer). Ward 8 Councilmember Marion Barry acknowledged the hard work and dedication of hospital staff and his commitment to provide mental health to “all we can.”

Dr. Janet Houston Harris, historian for the District of Columbia, said that she is leading an effort to restore the cemeteries at the hospital where soldiers from the Spanish-American War, Civil War, and World War I and II are buried.

Additional sesquicentennial activities are noted on page 4.

### *Director’s Message, cont. from p. 1* **Hearings, Hearings and More Hearings**

This month we testified before the new DC Council Committee on Health about our FY 2004 and 2005 performance and we testified before the District of Columbia Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

At the March 9 COH hearing, I reported our progress in implementing the Court-ordered Plan and success with meeting certain exit criteria. Earlier this year, we advised the Court Monitor and *Dixon* plaintiffs’ attorney that we had met Exit Criterion 14 – Demonstrated Increase in the Percentage of Total Resources Directed toward Community-based Services. The performance measure is that 60 percent of the total annual DMH expenditures will be directed toward community-based services. Since 2003, DMH has plowed every available dollar from its efficiency projects into community services. When we began this effort we only allocated 41 percent of the DMH budget into community services. This year we hit the 60 percent target.

I testified, “This represents a major milestone in *Dixon*. Every state in the nation has hit this milestone with the exception of Delaware. Given that the original complaint in the *Dixon* case over 30 years ago was for the District to develop a community-based system of care, we have achieved in these past years a shift in actual resources that would enable us to meet this target.”

Thank you to all the mental health stakeholders who attended the hearing. Your involvement strengthens the system we are building together.

On March 10, I testified before the Senate about our new array of mental health services for children in the foster care system. Between FY 2004 and 2005, DMH received \$5.1 million in federal funds to: 1. Reduce the backlog of court-ordered evaluations of foster care children’s mental health needs; and 2. Create a new infrastructure of evidence-based mental health services for foster care children.

Here’s a little background. Sen. Mike DeWine (R-Ohio), Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-La.) and other members of the DC Subcommittee last year determined to fund improvements in the Child and Family Services Agency’s operations. They also learned from foster care providers and others that certain mental health services — Multi-systemic Therapy, intensive home care, and mobile response and stabilization — were needed urgently. Additionally, Family Court representatives identified long wait times for psychological and psychiatric assessments as impediments to foster care children receiving the services they needed. With the senators’ support, we are making a difference in these young people’s lives.

### **Early Out Reminder**

Eligible DMH employees have until April 2 to decide if they want to retire early. Call the DMH Division of Human Resources at 673-7522 for more information.



Barry is a 10-year-old African-American male in the fifth grade. He has worked informally with the school mental health clinician for a year. Barry is the fourth of six children and they live with their parents.

Barry was referred to the school's teacher assistance team primarily because he was very disruptive in class, exhibited poor peer relations, had low self-esteem and had frequent temper tantrums. The teacher assistance team recommended that Barry meet with the clinician twice weekly for a half-hour per session.

The first counseling session with Barry was very unpleasant. He reluctantly joined the clinician in the office and refused to talk. During the second meeting, Barry was still a little reluctant but was willing to engage in a card game with the clinician. In the course of playing cards, the clinician took the opportunity to ask Barry questions that were pertinent to establishing the initial framework for future sessions.

Subsequently, the clinician and Barry have continued to play cards. The clinician said that Barry communicates far more than was imagined. He attributes the improved relationship to the bond formed between them. As a result, they have a strong and productive therapeutic alliance.

The clinician also credits the extensive work with Barry's family as a critical factor in this success story. In addition, the clinician's unconditional care and support of Barry was an important element in building a positive therapeutic relationship. As a result, Barry is pleasant and almost enthusiastic during counseling sessions. He told the clinician that he practices shuffling cards at home in preparation for their card games during therapy sessions.

Barry's teacher and other school staff members have reported that his behavior improved dramatically last year. His disruptive outbursts are much less frequent and he engages more rigorously in his studies.

There was also a notable improvement in Barry's self-esteem and in his social interactions. Still, the clinician works to identify Barry's attributes and to help the student focus more on positive thinking.



*Continued from page 1*  
**Block Grant Proposals Due June 1**

The PRC recommended and Director Knisley approved the following 11 projects for funding this year:

- Infrastructure Development for the School Mental Health Program
- Homeless Services
- Forensic Rotation for Clinical Fellows
- Housing for Adults with Serious Mental Illness
- Training Institute
- Supported Employment
- Communicating Consumer Rights
- Transitional Services for Youth and Adolescents
- Youth Development and Job Training
- System of Care Family Liaisons
- Emergency Stabilization and Crisis Reports

The SMHPC is appointed by the Mayor. At least 50 percent of the 21 members must be either consumers or represent consumers, such as family members of children. A number of DC government agencies are required to be members, including DMH, DC Public Schools, Department of Human Services, Department of Corrections, Medical Assistance Administration, Rehabilitation Services Administration, and the DC Housing Authority. The other members are mental health professionals, family members or their representatives of children with emotional disorders and concerned citizens.

For more information on the block grant or the SMHPC, email SMHPC Interim Chair Burton Wheeler at [burton\\_w@hotmail.com](mailto:burton_w@hotmail.com) or call Dr. Juanita Reaves at 202-673-7597.

**May is Mental Health Month Calendar for Schools**

School mental health clinicians are encouraged to forward their May is Mental Health Month activities to [gina.douglas@dc.gov](mailto:gina.douglas@dc.gov).







## St. Elizabeths Hospital Sesquicentennial Celebration Continues

**May 5-6, 2005 Educational Symposium** -- "The Role of the Public Psychiatric Hospital in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" sponsored by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) in celebration of the St. Elizabeths Hospital Sesquicentennial. This two-day symposium will feature nationally known speakers who are recognized leaders and authors in the fields of clinical, forensic and administrative psychiatry and psychology. The APA will be providing CME credit for attendance. The March 30, 2005 early registration fee is \$150.

At the conclusion of the symposium, the Medical and Professional Society will sponsor a 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet. This high-profile event will bring together local and national politicians as well as mental health advocates and professionals to raise awareness of the need of improving public resources for the treatment of mental illness. Banquet tickets are \$100 per person. Both activities will be held at the Washington Convention Center. For more information on the educational symposium contact *Gary McMillan at the American Psychiatric Association at [GMcmillan@psych.org](mailto:GMcmillan@psych.org)* or call (703) 907-8648. Mr. McMillan is the APA Director, Melvin Sabshin Library & Archives.

An exhibit featuring a historical perspective of the 150 years at St. Elizabeths Hospital will be displayed throughout the two-day event.

Also, the APA is inviting mental health stakeholders to participate by either buying an exhibit booth at the symposium or buying a table for the banquet. Exhibit booths are \$500 per day or \$1,000 for the two days. A table at the banquet is \$1,500. For further information about a booth or a table, please contact Linda Edwards Smith at [l.edwardsmith@verizon.net](mailto:l.edwardsmith@verizon.net).

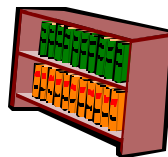
Approximately, 400 people are expected to attend the symposium and banquet.

**June 11-12 A Living History of Civil War Medicine** will be held on the hospital grounds. This program will provide educational and entertainment activities for people of all ages. Many activities will go on simultaneously on both days. The keynote speaker on June 11 is Eric Dean, author of the book, "Shook over Hell" on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in soldiers from the Civil War through the Viet Nam War. It covers many case studies on Civil War soldiers treated at St. Elizabeths Hospital.

Participating organizations include the National Park Service, the African- American Civil War Museum, the Fredrick Douglass National Historic Site, Federal City Band, 54th Massachusetts Infantry, a field hospital set up by the 28<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry Unit, and reenactments by other groups. Everyone is invited to attend this exciting event. For more information on this event contact **Evone Buter** at 202-645-8647 or **Dr. Suryabala Kanhouwa** at 202-645-9770.

### St. Elizabeths Hospital New Library Technician

**Barbara Randolph** is the new library technician at **St. Elizabeths Hospital Health Sciences Library**. She comes to DMH from the D.C. Public Library. Ms. Randolph is the library contact for document delivery and the table of contents service. Her direct phone number is 645-7380 and her email address is [barbara.randolph@dc.gov](mailto:barbara.randolph@dc.gov).



George shares his incredible stories during the forum

*Continued from page 1 — Recovery D.C.*

Patricia Deegan, Ph.D. and filmmaker Terry Strecker, explores the possibilities of life after the hospital. The film introduces the audience to a variety of individuals, and invites viewers to celebrate their successes. The makers of the film "wanted people to walk away from the film saying, 'If that person can recover, maybe I can too.'"

In addition to the screening of the film, participants will have a chance to hear from a panel of consumers in recovery' learn about power and the possibility of recovery, and hear about a service provider who has changed her perspective. There will also be a time of open mike for many more people to respond. We will also share a continental breakfast together and have a wonderful lunch.

Partners for Recovery includes the Department of Mental Health, DMH Partnership Council, Adult Mental Health Rehabilitation Services Providers, Consumer Action Network, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill DC Chapter, National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, and University Legal Services.

To register for the forum, call the MHA Office of Consumer and Family Affairs at 202-673-4374.

***Faces of Green Door***  
**Currently on Exhibit**



Walter F. by Photographer Nike Tirman

*Faces of Green Door* is now on exhibit in the Café at Green Door Core Service Agency. Three-dozen members participated in individual sessions with photographers Kevin Allen, Nike Tirman, and Maureen Jais-Mick, resulting in large black and white portraits that immediately catch the eye as members and visitors enter the Cafe. The project is ongoing, with new portraits being introduced quarterly.

*St. Elizabeths Hospital*  
**Trivia**

1. What was the name of St. Elizabeths Hospital before Congress changed the name?
2. What year did the federal government transfer the hospital to the District of Columbia Government?

- Answers:**
1. The Government Hospital for the Insane
  2. October 1, 1987

## Mental Health Training for Police a Big Hit

If you ask some of the members of the Metropolitan Police Department what they think about the training in mental illness, **Linda Kaufman, Director of Adult Services**, said chances are officers will give it great reviews. One member stated that the session is the best in-service training that he has had. Some have said that the training could be useful in hostage situations.

That's great feedback and Ms. Kaufman hopes that the information will provoke positive thoughts and feelings. When the training is over, her intention is for the officers to leave knowing that DMH can help and that they have a 24-hour helpline number, just in case.

"I want officers to think that every mentally ill person is someone's loved one," Ms. Kaufman said. The four-hour training session covers three major topics— what is mental illness; communication techniques; and accessing the Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP) and homeless services.

Much of the training is geared to what officers are likely to encounter on the streets and how they should respond. Ms. Kaufman said that people suffering from bipolar disorder in a manic stage is a common mental illness among the homeless. The training recommends that police use a calming voice when interacting with people they suspect suffer from mental illness.

Self-management is also a critical element for police to learn because they need to know how to move out of difficult situations. "It's our choice to deflect the issue or to get insulted," explained Ms. Kaufman. The role-play exercises with police as mental patients helps the officers better understand what could be happening with some individuals.

Telling stories also is an important aspect of the training because the stories can help to dispel some of the myths associated with mental illness. One such myth is that consumers are not as smart as others. In one story, Ms. Kaufman tells of a man whose tire blew out in front of a psychiatric hospital. As the man was changing the tire, he noticed a man watching him from behind the fence. Suddenly the would-be mechanic dropped all the lug nuts into the sewer. He stood there not knowing what to do when the man behind the fence asked why don't you take a couple of nuts off the other tires until you can drive to the nearest gas station to purchase more lug nuts. The man changing his tire was amazed and said I thought you were mentally ill. The man responded, "I'm crazy but I'm not stupid."

The training is held every Thursday at 7 am and 11:30 am at the Metropolitan Police Department, Maurice T. Turner Institute of Police Science on Blue Plains Drive, SE, Washington, DC. The trainers are **Linda Kaufman; Susan Curran, Office Accountability; Beverly Maskittie, School Mental Health Program; Michele May, Homeless Services Coordinator**; Chet Grey, Downtown Business Improvement District; Mary Blake, Consumer Action Network; Barry Spodak, Police Trainer and psycho-dramatist; Marsha Stein, Training Consultant; Beverly McCollum, Pathways to Housing; and Gregory Ford, psycho-dramatist.

## Job Fair for Consumers in April

The **MHA Office of Consumer and Family Affairs** in conjunction with the **DMH Human Resources and the DMH Consumer Employment Services Division** are sponsoring a job fair for consumers on Tuesday, April 5, from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm. The job fair will be held at the Disabled American Veterans Headquarters at 807 Main Avenue, SW. For more information on the job fair, call **Frances Priester** at 202-673-4377.

On February 17, a Job Fair Preparation Forum was held at the Marshall Heights Community Development Organization office on Benning Road, NE. Trainers included representatives from the Department of Employment Services, Marshall Heights Community Development Organization, DMH Human Resources Divisions and the DMH Consumer Employment Services Division. Training topics included: Job Search Techniques, Interviewing-Do's and Don'ts, and Resume Writing and Application Completion. The job fair and preparation forum are projects under the Peer Recovery Specialist Training Program in the MHA Consumer and Family Affairs.



Picture taken at Job Fair Preparation Forum

## What's Up DMH?



**The Office of Programs and Policy Divisions of Human Resources and Housing; MHA Office of Consumer and Family Affairs; and the DCCSA Consumer Employment Services Division** sponsored a job preparation forum for consumers on February 17.

**Olga Acosta Price and Amy Mack, School Mental Health Program**, led a forum on a pilot public school program, "Junior Faculty Mentoring Program Research Seminar Consultation for Developing Research." The forum was held February 17.

**Joyce White, DCCINGS, and Orin Howard, School Mental Health Program**, gave a presentation to the DC Baptist Youth Ministers on February 11.

**Harriet Crawley and Inez Scope, DCCINGS**, provided mental health information to participants at the 100 Black Men Health Fair on March 12.

More than 15 District government agencies have joined forces with community organizations and resident leaders to offer five targeted communities with free services designed to promote economic self-sufficiency and overall social wellness. "Reclaiming Our Families through Unity in Our Community" Day will provide an array of free community services to residents in the Kenilworth Parkside, Eastland Gardens, Mayfair, Paradise Manor and Benning Terrace communities.

The *Reclaiming Our Families through Unity in Our Community* Day events will be held twice during the month of March.

### Reclaiming Our Families Thru . . .



**Saturday, March 19, 2005**

**Kenilworth Elementary School  
1300 44<sup>th</sup> Street, NE  
12 p.m. – 4 p.m.**

**Saturday, March 26, 2005**

**Benning Terrace Recreation Center  
4450 G Street, SE  
12 p.m. – 4 p.m.**