This year, we helped over 300 people struggling with mental illness, trauma, poverty, or other challenges to get the assistance they needed to live more healthy and fulfilling lives. Some met with a psychiatrist and are using medication to treat their conditions. Others met with a therapist to heal and to work through difficult issues. Some gave and received support through one or more of our peer support meetings. Many got connected to other resources in the community – housing, job training and employment services, Medicaid, and specialist care. And the young men and their families in our Urban Youth Outreach had a skilled ally to help them through one of the most vulnerable times of their lives.

None of this happens without you. Your gifts of time, money and other resources make all this possible.

We were awarded $40,000 in grants this past year - the most we’ve ever received in a single year! We are thrilled to have the increased support and partnership of so many reputable foundations. While we ended the year with a $6,800 shortfall, that shortfall is $5,000 less than last year’s, which means we are making progress! With only $5,000 left in our contingency fund, one of our goals this year is to keep from dipping into that fund at all. Will you help us raise the $40,000 needed to make this possible?

Your efforts make all the difference for those who have very few options for mental health care.

Here’s how you can help:

- Walk with us on October 23 & ask your friends, family, & coworkers to sponsor you (see p. 3 for more info)
- Sponsor someone who is walking
- Give directly to the Center
- Spread the word. Share this newsletter with a friend and tell them about your own experience of being a part of this outreach
- Ask to receive the newsletter via email, saving printing and postage

Everything you do to help the Center translates into relief and gratitude for hurting, struggling and courageous people. We so appreciate your support!

With Gratitude,
Maureen, Amy & Eileen
I am a 19-year-old guy with painfully low self-esteem--I have not asked a girl out on a date since 7th grade. While traveling across country with friends, I am introduced to marijuana. As if by magic, nearly two decades of debilitating fear and insecurity instantly subside, and for the first time, I know what it is like to feel confident and smart: like a worthy human being. I feel connected to those around me in a way I did not realize was possible. I have found the answer! For the next several years, with the aid of alcohol and drugs, I am no longer just surviving each day—I feel alive! I date pretty women, sing karaoke, and dance in public. I actually like myself. Life is great.

Many stories of addiction begin like this. Alcohol and drugs act to ease an unidentifiable emptiness/loneliness characteristic of potential addicts. Unfortunately, the disease of addiction is progressive, and over time it takes more and more to feel ‘high’ and being ‘sober’ becomes increasingly uncomfortable, then unbearable. I am 23 when this happens to me.

I try to quit. There is so much I want to do. I want more than anything to be a good husband and father someday. I want my parents to feel proud. I want to help people. Realizing my life is gradually falling apart, and these substances are slowly killing me, I begin ‘coming to’ each morning, promising myself that tonight I will stay home and rest. And rest is needed, for by now I live in a perpetual hangover, and I’m having difficulty keeping food down. But each afternoon, unbelievably, my mind tells me that a few beers are just what I need to feel better, and the thought of drinking excites me! I forget the morning’s remorse entirely. I drink until the bars close, stumble to bed, and wake up the next morning feeling sick, bewildered and ashamed, with a sincere promise not to drink or use drugs tonight. Just one night! This vicious cycle repeats itself for nearly 2 years! My willpower and sense of morality are of little use. Am I crazy? How do I explain this strange lack of control to the people who love me? I simply cannot. So I avoid everyone I care about. I am alone... lost... hopeless. ‘Just stop drinking’ sounds so easy—-it is not. I am trapped. I am 26 years of age.

The mental obsession and self-delusion that led me to rationalize ‘just one more drink’, by telling myself things such as, ‘it’s not as bad as I thought’ or ‘I’ll quit tomorrow’ is what separates the addicted from those who are not. It is what destroys trust, wrecks homes, and steals futures. It is nearly impossible to understand unless one has experienced it. We die from isolation and loneliness well before our bodies give out.

I am presently 42 years old and have not had a drink or drug for 16 years. I am not special or more deserving than the majority of addicts, who, heartbreakingly, will never escape this insanity. I am sober by Grace only. After nearly dying of an overdose, I said, “God help me.” I sought out the only person in my life who tried her best to show compassion. Although she had refused to enable me by offering money or lodging, I never doubted her love for me. So, when I hit bottom, I went to her. On June 28th, 2000, I entered an inpatient treatment center, where I was introduced to a 12-step program full of people who had experienced the madness of addiction, yet had somehow found a way out. They offered hope to the hopeless. They showed me how to live without drugs or alcohol and, since that day, I have never had to be alone with my problem. We remind each other that we are unable to use alcohol/drugs safely, which the disease makes it easy to forget. Through the practice of the 12 steps, I have allowed God to relieve me of the shame and inexpressible emptiness that made drinking necessary.

Today, my lovely wife and I are attempting to conceive our first child, and I regularly volunteer at Spiritus Christi Mental Health Center. By providing therapy to people who otherwise could not afford it, I can instill hope in others. Even as a child, I loved listening to people’s stories, and now it has become my life’s work. I am blessed beyond measure.
Kathe was a volunteer therapist with us from 2006 until the time of her death. This tribute was submitted by one of the people who consulted her here at the Center.

When I first met Kathe I was afraid, lost and depressed. From that day on and for nearly 10 years, Kathe became my guide and angel. She helped me explore, unearth and understand the deepest and darkest parts of myself. I could trust her implicitly and she never judged me. In her presence I felt safe, understood and genuinely cared for. I remember her encouraging me to take care of and to love myself. Having been in co-dependent relationships up to that point in my life, I exclaimed, “How do I do that?!?” I really had no idea. In time, I learned. If Kathe were here today, I would tell her, that as a result of her influence in my life, I am now in a healthy, positive, fulfilling place as well as in a loving, respectful and trusting relationship. She would just simply smile and say: “You did all the hard work.” I came to see that she was an answer to a prayer—a prayer I said many times in many ways when I felt extremely lost and alone. God was listening. Kathe was appointed my shepherd. She exemplified Jesus’ example of how to live humbly, with great love and without passing judgement on others. She was human too and admitted to her mistakes. She taught me by example that sometimes we have to ‘back up,’ revisit and pick ourselves up again; and that is OK. We are always a work in progress.

Kathe’s passing leaves a hole in my heart. However, as time passes and I grieve her loss, I find myself celebrating her life. Her sense of humor, joy-filled laugh, wisdom, humility, compassion and empathy will be missed by many. I can recall her hilarious stories, and especially the wisdom she taught me by her example of living it. I am filled with joy and gratitude at the immense blessing she has been and always will be in my life. What she has taught me will always live within me. Her spirit will live on in all those she has touched. This world is a much better place because she selflessly offered guidance, wisdom and love one person at a time—without reservations and with an extraordinary amount of patience.
FINANCIAL SUMMARY
7/01/15—6/30/16

Revenue
Spiritus Christi Annual Collection $ 16,292
Contributions 15,998
United Way & SEFA 19,025
Grants 40,000
Special Events 23,254
Transfer from contingency fund* 6,789
Total Revenue: $ 121,358

Expenses
Salaries, tax, benefits $ 112,072
Occurrence ($11,200 in-kind) 751
Supplies/emergency client needs 3,916
Copy, Print, Postage 791
Insurance 1,238
Mileage Reimbursement 1,561
Professional Fees ($71,880 in-kind) 0
General client expense 1,029
Total Expenses: $ 121,358

Net Profit/(Loss) $ 0

*Transfer to cover net loss of $6,789

MORE WAYS TO GIVE:
UNITED WAY
Donor Designation
Program # 2403

SEFA
Donor Designation
Program #66-00440

Wish List
• “Forever” postage stamps
• Amazon, Office Max
  and/or Staples gift cards
• RTS bus passes
• Salvatore’s, Wendy’s,
  Target & Marshall’s gift
cards
• TracFone Airtime Cards
• L and XL black or gray
  hoodies

Thank you to our funders
Fiscal Year 2015-2016
Canandaigua Nat’l Bank—$1,000
Daisy Marquis Jones
Foundation—$10,000
Fred & Floy Willmott
Foundation—$3,000
Gannett Foundation—$2,000
John F. Wegman Fund—$2,500
Kyras Foundation—$5,000
Polisseni Foundation—$1,500
Wilson Foundation—$3,000
Mary Mulligan Charitable
Trust—$2,500
Women’s Club of Pittsford—$500
Wymann-Potter Foundation—
$5,000

SPECIAL THANKS TO
OUR MEDIA PARTNER:

Tony Jackson, LMHC Intern, St. John Fisher College
Mary Kearney, LCSW, Retired
Michael Kelly, Esq., Advocate
Rita Kiernan, LCSW, Retired
Patrick Lane, Esq., Advocate
David Markham, LCSW, Private Practice
Rick Massie, LMHC, Retired
Paul Mastrodonato, Consultant, Non-profit Works
Thankamma Mathew, MD, Retired
Jerry McElroy, Advocate
Ese Moynihan-Ejaithe, LMHC, Private Practice
Liz Powers, The Living Room
Wayne Ross, LMHC Intern, St. John Fisher College
Jeanne Ryan, Wesley’s Mothers
Paula Saowers, The Living Room
Keith Wilson, LMHC, Private Practice
Liliana Yohonn, Pharmacist, Consultant

Thank you to our funders
Fiscal Year 2015-2016
Canandaigua Nat’l Bank—$1,000
Daisy Marquis Jones
Foundation—$10,000
Fred & Floy Willmott
Foundation—$3,000
Gannett Foundation—$2,000
John F. Wegman Fund—$2,500
Kyras Foundation—$5,000
Polisseni Foundation—$1,500
Wilson Foundation—$3,000
Mary Mulligan Charitable
Trust—$2,500
Women’s Club of Pittsford—$500
Wymann-Potter Foundation—$5,000

SPECIAL THANKS TO
OUR MEDIA PARTNER:

Tony Jackson, LMHC Intern, St. John Fisher College
Mary Kearney, LCSW, Retired
Michael Kelly, Esq., Advocate
Rita Kiernan, LCSW, Retired
Patrick Lane, Esq., Advocate
David Markham, LCSW, Private Practice
Rick Massie, LMHC, Retired
Paul Mastrodonato, Consultant, Non-profit Works
Thankamma Mathew, MD, Retired
Jerry McElroy, Advocate
Ese Moynihan-Ejaithe, LMHC, Private Practice
Liz Powers, The Living Room
Wayne Ross, LMHC Intern, St. John Fisher College
Jeanne Ryan, Wesley’s Mothers
Paula Saowers, The Living Room
Keith Wilson, LMHC, Private Practice
Liliana Yohonn, Pharmacist, Consultant