

Spring Newsletter
May 2016



SPIRITUS CHRISTI
MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

Linking Lives

Working Among Heroes

It's the morning after our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. We spent time evaluating the event, as we always do, and then found ourselves sort of basking in the post-event glow. Such incredible people volunteer here — receptionists, lawyers, psychiatrists, peer advocates, therapists, and more — they are skilled, dedicated, and they clearly love those we serve.

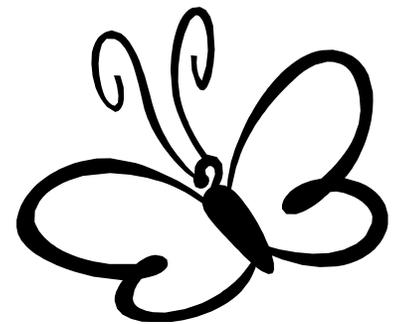
One of our therapists, who also has a thriving private practice, talked about how clients benefit from therapy visits at no fee. He said that, because his clients at the mental health center don't have to worry about mounting bills for their care, they come more regularly. He sees how this frees them up to concentrate on the work they need to do to get and stay well.

If you could spend time with those who consult here, you would

be so impressed with them. They work hard. They take incredible risks. They show tremendous courage and resilience.

And of course there's you. Your investment in their lives makes all the difference. Not just for them, but for our whole community. You are amazing!!

With deep gratitude,
Maureen, Amy & Eileen



OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

On-Site Clinical: *Psychiatric and therapeutic consultations for uninsured and underinsured youth and adults*

Urban Youth Outreach: *Individual, family and group therapeutic consultations and psychosocial support for minority youth affected by violence*

The Living Room: *Weekly peer support for those struggling with daily living issues*

Wesley's Mothers: *An anonymous weekly peer support group for mothers of incarcerated children*

To receive this bi-annual newsletter by email, please send your address to adurkee@spirituschristi.org.

Jonathan came to us in his late 20's, a few months after his younger brother's suicide. While he'd struggled with depression and anger for as long as he could remember, it was losing his brother that brought him to the point of desiring a change for himself. "I just wanted to get my life right," he recounts. "I couldn't make heads or tails of anything at that time. My plan wasn't working and I needed to try something else."

Jonathan's a bright guy and he was connecting the dots: An uncle who committed suicide, a suicidal father trapped in addiction, and then his brother's death. At his first visit, he said, "I think there's something better for me out there," and, "Someone has to be here to take care of my mother."

It took several months of trial and error to find the right medication for Jonathan, but he stuck with it. "Dr. Gloria was very respectful. She gave me options instead of just telling me what to do. I was worried that meds would change my personality, but they didn't."

In most cases medication only takes a person so far, and Jonathan's situation was no exception. In addition to the physiological factors, there are usually other influences at play with mental illnesses like depression. Certain behaviors and ways of thinking can keep us from living the lives we long for. In therapy, we can learn skills and strategies that not only reduce our suffering but actually help us to thrive.

With his mood stabilized thanks to medication and the first anniversary of his brother's death fast approaching, Jonathan started working with one of our volunteer therapists. In therapy, he was able to express his feelings of anger and grief. He discovered that his habit of "what if" thinking was keeping him from moving on, so he decided to make a change.

"My counselor told me I had a wise mind," says Jonathan. "She said people think a counselor will solve everything, but that's not how it works. People know what they have to do. They just need

someone to help them find the way through and to support them through it."

"The meds helped, but I still had to do the work. I had to change my habits and behavior. I'm 41 now. It took a long time. I had to let go of ways I was creating my own problems."

Jonathan still sees a psychiatrist at the Center, but he doesn't need to see his therapist regularly anymore. Every once in a while he'll call for a "tune up."

"I've had my bumps in the road the last few years. The last two years in particular I have seen things I needed to change for myself, not for anyone else – you know, not to try to keep a relationship or whatever, but just for me. I have learned how to be happy on my own."

"I think more clearly," he continues. "I let the past go now. I used to bring all the anger with me but now I let it go. Blame and denial are easier but they don't get you anywhere."

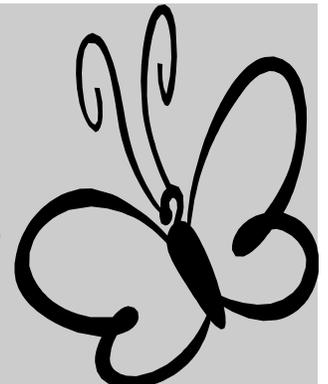
To others who are struggling, Jonathan advises, "People are here to help you but you have to find it within yourself to make the changes and to stay with it."

Jonathan has created a whole new life for himself. "For the first time, I'm excited about what the future has to offer. I still have my issues but now I know to stop and reflect on how to change direction when things are going bad. And to be happy for what I have. I enjoy the moments now, like watching my dog grow up."

"The meds helped, but I still had to do the work . . . I had to let go of ways I was creating my own problems."

SCMHC WISH LIST:

- Forever postage stamps
- Amazon gift cards
- Wegmans gift cards
- Sunoco or Hess gas cards
- Bus passes
- Tracfone minutes cards



Farewell to Patricia Kendall

On March 1, 2016 — the 11th anniversary of The Living Room peer support meeting — co-founder Patricia Kendall gave up her fight with cancer. Almost every Wednesday for the past 11 years, Patti and her fellow facilitators created a safe and welcoming place along with folks struggling with mental illness, trauma, poverty and other problems.

Patti was known for her deep care for others. In addition to the time she dedicated to the Wednesday afternoon meetings, Patti spent hours throughout the week on the phone with Living Room members.

Members talk of her great sense of humor and the way she made newcomers feel welcome. She let you know you mattered. She was a good friend.

Paula, Steve, Liz, and the rest of the Living Room's members continue to carry on the mission on Wednesday afternoons from 1:00 to 6:00.

We miss you Patti. No one will ever take your place in our hearts. Thank you for your love and care.



Living Room co-founder Patricia Kendall



TURNING THE ART WORLD INSIDE OUT

MAY 17, MEMORIAL ART GALLERY,
6 pm EXHIBIT, 7 pm FILM: A
fascinating look at the phenomenon
of "outsider art," and its movement
from the asylum to gallery wall.



PLANET ASPERGER

MAY 31, CINEMA THEATRE, 7 pm: A
moving account of four individuals trying
to fit into a world they don't understand.



HOLLYWOOD BEAUTY SALON

JUNE 14, CINEMA THEATRE, 7
pm: In a special beauty salon at a
Philadelphia recovery center,
lives are shared and, ultimately,
rebuilt. Special Guests! Filmmaker
Glenn Holsten & Rachel "Hollywood" Carr!



The Unquiet Journey

MIND/GAME: of Chamique Holdsclaw
JUNE 28, CINEMA THEATRE, 7
pm: The remarkable story of the
woman once hailed as "the Michael
Jordan of women's basketball," and
her triumph over mental illness.
Special Guest! Filmmaker Rick
Goldsmith!



\$28/series \$8/tix reelmindfilmfest.org 585.444.3664

Urban Youth Outreach

We recently asked one of the young men in our Urban Youth Outreach if he'd be willing to say a few words to you who support this program. Here's what he had to say:

"In a world where people seem to have grown to not care about others, Miss Eileen goes above and beyond to make sure people like me have hope. Sometimes, I wonder if the people who are paid to help are really just doing it because it's their job. Like, do they really care? But I never worry about that with Miss Eileen."

You should know that this help makes a big difference for people like me."

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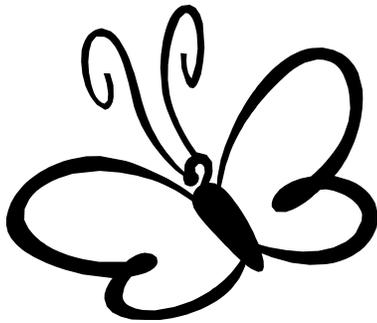
121 N. Fitzhugh St.
Rochester, NY 14614
Phone: 585-325-1180
Fax: 585-325-1191

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday - Thursday
9 am - 5 pm

CENTER STAFF

Maureen Marlow, RN, CASAC — Director
Eileen Hurley, RN, LCSW — Urban Youth
Outreach Coordinator
Amy Durkee — Associate Administrator



MORE WAYS TO GIVE:



**United Way
Donor Designation
Program #2403**



SEFA #66-00124

Ask your campaign manager
for either pledge form, or
contact us directly for one.

*Your support makes
all the difference!*

VOLUNTEER

To Make a Difference!

Nurse Practitioners & Psychiatrists:
Prescribe and manage medications
for participants, 2-4 hrs per month

Therapists: Hours negotiable

Thanks to Recent Funders

DAISY MARQUIS JONES FOUNDATION
\$10,000
KYRIAS FOUNDATION
\$5,000
JOHN F. WEGMAN FOUNDATION
\$2,500
MARY MULLIGAN CHAR TRUST
\$2,500
ROCHESTER FEMALE CHAR SOCIETY
\$1,500
RONALD McDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES
\$2,500
WYMAN-POTTER FOUNDATION
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**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR
MEDIA PARTNERS
AT:**



"You'll Like
What You Hear"

***From Current
Participants:***

*"This has been a haven for
me. I have an outlet for things
I cannot share with family or
friends."*

*"Thank you for all you and
SCMHC have given me in
care, compassion, and
patience. I don't know where I
would be without your help.
The center has made, and
continues to make, a signifi-
cant positive impact in my
life."*

*"I am lucky to be here. My
therapist is very engaged and
committed to working with me
and provides a great feedback
loop."*