

Linking Lives

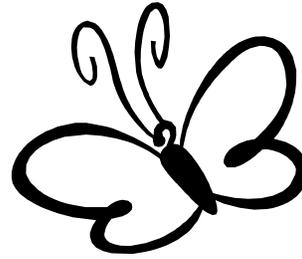
A Place to Heal

Imagine finding yourself in crisis. You've lost your job or someone you love, or a crippling depression has taken over your life. Maybe you feel trapped in a situation that you know is unhealthy, but you don't know any other way to live. Imagine having no idea where to turn and no means to pay for care. Even if you have a sense of what might help you, how do you access care when you have no way to afford it?

Then picture yourself finding a place where you can get help—a place where services are available to you *simply because you need them*. You encounter people who ask questions to get to know who you are and what you are experiencing—who will partner with you on your journey of healing.

This is what your support of *Spiritus Christi Mental Health Center* makes possible: a safe place to heal and grow for those who cannot otherwise afford services.

In this newsletter you will read about one woman who found the courage to call us for help. And because she encountered a helpful and welcoming presence when she called, she came for an appointment. Once



here, she found a safe place where she could heal and learn new skills for managing an incredibly challenging set of circumstances.

You'll also read about others for whom even just making that first phone call is too great a barrier. Providing a safe place for poor minority young men affected by violence means taking that safe place to them. In so doing, these teens get to experience a type of healing and support they never dreamed was possible.

We hope you will be encouraged to know your generosity and support is creating safe places for those with very few options in our community. Thanks to you, our staff and volunteers are able to meet people where they are and accompany them where they want to go.

With Gratitude,

Maureen & Amy

To receive this bi-annual newsletter by email, send your address to mmarlow@spirituschristi.org or call 585-325-1180.

Overview of Programs

- **On-site Clinical**—psychiatric & therapeutic consultations for uninsured & under-insured youth & adults
- **Community Health Outreach**—individual, family & group therapeutic consultations and psychosocial support for minority youth affected by violence
- **Living Room**—weekly peer support for those struggling with problems in living
- **Mental Health Support Group**—weekly support group for those who have a loved one struggling with mental health issues or who have mental health issues themselves
- **Wesley's Mothers**—an anonymous meeting for mothers of incarcerated children

Found Worthy

We often hear the phrase, "I'm so depressed." It is used to describe feelings by teens who may not have gotten their desired boyfriend, test score or birthday present. It is used by an adult who can't get their desired vacation date off from work or get help around the house. In reality, the word should be disappointed, not depressed.

I learned the true meaning of depression when I found myself mentally and emotionally drowning in a sea of uncontrollable events: loss of my job, physical challenges, multiple deaths and illness. They say lightening does not strike twice but, in my case, it continued to strike over and over again! I could not seem to get my breath and found myself sinking deeper and deeper. I became shut off from the outside world. It became a huge challenge to do seemingly simple daily tasks of life and self-care.

I came in contact with an old friend. We were catching up on our lives and I confided how awful and hopeless I was feeling due to my job being taken from me during my surgery, and how I no longer had medical insurance or income to be able to get help. I was very scared. She gave me the phone number for *Spiritus Christi Mental Health Center*. I called the Center and an Angel named Maureen answered the phone. I did not know where to begin so she began asking me questions. I will never forget her calming voice and the feeling I got in my heart and soul.

I was placed in the care of a therapist named Sandra, my "worker bee Angel." Sandra has blessed my life with peace and with an anchor in the storm. She has shown me that I am OK and that, with hard work, I can survive difficulties in life and the evil of others. It is out of my control what is done to me or what happens in life, but it is my control of my reactions to it all that I have to continue to work on.

I am incredibly grateful to the Center! They did not make me feel worthless because I no longer had insurance and a job. They gave me care and helped me to acquire support for medications. They helped me back to life to be able to begin this journey back to health and to learn how to move forward. My goal is to learn to live each moment, each day, in a healthy, proactive way.

It scares me to think of where I was prior to help from SCMHC, and where I would be without their help now. I don't believe that the words exist to explain my feelings and appreciation to every single person who

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makes the Mental Health Center work in our community! I am so blessed to have my two Angels so willing to work with me.

I pray that others who battle mental illness will understand that they are worth life, love, medical and mental help, whether or not they have the insurance or monetary requirements society deems necessary to acquire the help!

Gratefully Yours,

JH

the **Reel Mind**

THEATRE & FILM SPRING SERIES

Addressing the social stigma of mental illness, providing a message of hope that recovery is possible

May 8, 7pm: CRAZY ART & "Metamorphosis" art show (opens 6pm)

Memorial Art Gallery, 500 University Ave

May 18, 8pm: GREY GARDENS: THE MUSICAL
Live Performance! Blackfriars Theatre, 795 E. Main St.

May 22: COMPLAINTS OF A DUTIFUL DAUGHTER

June 12: THE BOY INSIDE

June 26: SEARCH FOR SANITY & special sneak preview of ECHOS OF THE PAST

All shows followed by Q&As and take place at 7PM at the Cinema Theatre, 957 S. Clinton Avenue, unless otherwise noted.

For tickets, please contact cowingcreek@gmail.com or visit www.thereelmind.com

Responding to Violence

by Eileen Hurley

Six years ago, the Mental Health Center began its *Community Health Outreach Initiative* with the hope of helping to change the trajectory of the lives of poor minority youth affected by violence. We knew that minority youth were disproportionately affected by trauma, including violence, poverty, incarceration, lack of access to health care, marginalization and low social status. We also understood that these same factors which impact minority youth health outcomes served as barriers to accessing health care.

Given these facts, we decided to bring mental health care and psychosocial support for young men affected by violence to the places where these teens are found—jail, school, home and neighborhood. Through the Community Health Outreach we have encountered violence's serious harm to health as well as the young men's extraordinary abilities to heal. The collective document which follows is a recording of some of our program participants' responses to violence.

Speaking of Violence

Each and every one of us has been touched by violence. Really, we've been living with it as long as we can remember—at home, in school, on the streets and around our neighborhoods. Violence creates hell on earth: when I die, I'm making it to heaven from living through hell.

A lot of us don't know how to get out of the lives we are living. We are the victims, victimizers and innocent bystanders to physical, mental, emotional, sexual and social violence on a regular basis. I'm hurting. Please get to know me. Don't judge me. Some of us are standing up to stop the dying and fighting and shooting. Here's how:

Finding Safety

Most of us can think of a place in our lives where we don't have to worry about violence: my grandmother's living room couch; my bedroom; the rec center; my neighbor's kitchen. These are the spaces we feel most at home, where we can be ourselves, safe. Even if I can't be there for real, I can go to my friend's mom's house in my mind, and I feel better.

Getting Help

We also get relief from stress around certain family members, friends, coaches, teachers and counselors—people who will listen to what we've been through and walk us through situations. I decided to put my feelings out there after anger from my brother's and mother's deaths put me through a lot of psychological bull. My

counselor helps keep me out of trouble by bringing my anger down and understanding my sadness.

Taking Responsibility

A few of us blame ourselves for choosing the street life, while others of us believe the streets chose us. We all agree that we can't make a change alone though. I've got three choices now: change, death or incarceration. I don't want to end up extinct, locked away and forgotten by the world.

Giving Help

Some of us share our experiences with others who might be going through similar situations, to try to help them. We think it's important to reach out to the younger kids. This builds us up too. I'm not going to lie, I felt really good when I heard I stopped another kid from fighting and making the same mistake I made.

Being Somebody

True story: respect can be earned in places other than the streets, through means other than violence. My job is my number one priority now. They treat me like I'm somebody there. They even gave me my own extension on the phone. I cried when I got my first paycheck; that's the first legal money I ever got.

Community Health Outreach Worker Eileen Hurley, RN, LCSW offers individual, family and group therapeutic consultations and psychosocial support for minority youth affected by violence at various locations throughout Greater Rochester.

Household Auction

TO BENEFIT
THE MENTAL HEALTH CENTER
SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 2012
10AM–1PM
AT SPIRITUS CHRISTI CHURCH

CALL MAUREEN OR AMY FOR MORE
INFORMATION OR TO DONATE ITEMS



Spiritus Christi Mental Health Center

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Rochester, NY 14614

Phone: 585-325-1180

Fax: 585-325-1191

Email: mmarlow@spirituschristi.org

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday—Thursday

Daytime and evening sessions by
appointment

CENTER STAFF

Maureen Marlow, RN, CASAC—Director

Eileen Hurley, RN, LCSW—Community

Health Outreach

Amy Durkee—Administrative Associate

Bruegger's Collection Box Project

Throughout August, Bruegger's will display collection boxes in their Rochester-area stores to raise funds and awareness for *Spiritus Christi Mental Health Center*. Thanks for the support, Bruegger's!

Two Other Ways to Give:

our **United Way**
Donor Designation
number is **2403**

Our **SEFA**
(for state employees)
number is **66-00124**

Join Our Team!

Give us a call to volunteer

NEEDED:

Psychiatrist or Nurse Practitioner to prescribe and manage medications for participants (2-4 hrs/month)

Therapist (hours negotiable)

Special Thanks to these funders:

The John F. Wegman Fund—\$4,000 to provide care for young men affected by violence & **Rochester Female Charitable Society—\$2,500** to fund mental health visits for the uninsured and underinsured.

Many thanks

for your gifts of time, funds, and expertise. You are impacting the lives of more than 300 people in our community!

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR MEDIA PARTNERS AT



"You'll Like
What You Hear"

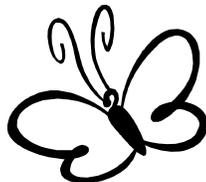
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Liliana Yohann, MS, Pharm D., Pharmacist Consultant



"SCMHC is saving my life. I had nowhere to turn when I lost my job. The wonderful staff are helping me put my life back together after the loss of a 33-year marriage, home and the death of close family members. The kindness and generosity shared at the center is the foundation of my healing and new life."

- Current Participant