



# Linking Lives

## ◆◆◆◆ Invitations to Live, or Die ◆◆◆◆

Amy's father-in-law used to talk about *invitations to live* and *invitations to die*. We all have the power to make these invitations every day, and the type of invitations we make have real consequences. *Invitations to die* are words and actions that communicate to another that they don't matter, or that they are unworthy of love and respect. Examples include rolling our eyes at our partner or child; crossing the street to avoid a person sleeping on the sidewalk; or taking out our frustration on a cashier. *Invitations to live* are words or actions that acknowledge another's dignity and worth. Examples include offering encouragement; really listening to another person; hanging a rainbow flag; or posting a "Black Lives Matter" sign in your yard.

Everyone deserves invitations to live. *Everyone*. You may be picturing someone as you read this – someone you are sure doesn't deserve such an invitation. And if that person hurt you or someone you love – or is currently hurting you or someone you love – you may not be the person to offer the invitation. That's okay. Because you, too, deserve to live.

What does this have to do with our mission? The people you support at the

Center have often experienced a barrage of invitations to die – collectively, they have experienced trauma, abuse, addiction, injustice, the stigma of mental illness, disregard for their grief, and isolation. Invitations have a cumulative effect; they pile up and become more than the sum of their parts. Your support of the Center is an investment in invitations to live – invitations that, over time, also have a cumulative effect.

Speaking of invitations, we want to invite you right now to consider one or more of these action steps:

- ◆ Walk with us on Oct. 27, and ask your friends and family to sponsor you (see p. 3 for details)
- ◆ Sponsor someone who is walking
- ◆ Give directly to the Center (by check or at [smentalhealth.org](http://smentalhealth.org))
- ◆ Share this newsletter with someone who doesn't know us yet

Your help translates into *invitations to live* for struggling and courageous people. We so appreciate your support!

With Gratitude,  
Maureen, Amy, & Eileen

**This year your support made it possible for 278 people to get the help they needed in individual, couple, family, and group sessions.**

**This represents over 3,276 therapeutic sessions.**

⇒ **127** persons received counseling, medication, &/or chiropractic care  
⇒ **50** persons attended peer support meetings or yoga

⇒ **38%** of those in clinical care were uninsured  
⇒ **62%** were under-insured

⇒ **101** young men (age 16-26) and their families were served through our Urban Youth Outreach

### Overview of Programs

- **On-site Clinical** — psychiatric and therapeutic consultations for uninsured and underinsured children and adults
- **Urban Youth Outreach** — individual, family, and group therapeutic consultations and psychosocial support for minority youth affected by violence and trauma
- **The Living Room** — weekly peer support for those struggling with daily living issues
- **Chiropractic Care & Yoga** — for back care and overall wellness

Thirty-five years ago, I had my first episode of what was eventually diagnosed as bipolar disorder. My symptoms first occurred when my daughter was six months old. My son was three at the time, and I had just discovered that my husband of 14 years was seeing someone else. For me, the bipolar episode was brought on by a lack of sleep and a crisis in my marriage. For two weeks I slept three hours or less each night. I was so manic! At one point I thought I was Jesus' sister and the next Messiah. My husband finally realized I needed help and took me to the Emergency Room.

The first psychiatrist I saw didn't know what was wrong with me, but he prescribed some medication, including sleeping pills. The other medications only made me feel out of it, but once I was getting enough sleep I started to feel more like myself. After I left the hospital, I kept taking the sleeping pills but threw the rest of the meds in the trash.

I knew I needed to leave my marriage, but the time wasn't right. For the next three and a half years, I prepared by buying the things I would need at garage sales and hiding them in our shed. During that time, I was drinking a six-pack of beer every night to self-medicate. Soon after my daughter turned four years old, I met someone who introduced me to *Re-evaluation Counseling*. People in this peer-run program learn how to engage in a kind of counselor/client relationship with each other. They meet for two hours, with each person deeply listening to the other for an hour. When the person I met did that for me – deeply listened to me for a full hour – it was like a dam broke and all my feelings that I hadn't let myself feel spilled out. It felt so good, and it gave me the courage and support to finally leave my husband, find a job, and start taking care of myself.

I couldn't take my kids with me, but I was able to stay in contact and to see them every other weekend.

After I remarried, my kids (then ages 15 and 12), asked to live with me and my new husband. A month after they moved in, I had a major manic attack. Taking care of two teens with raging hormones proved to be too much for me. I spent about a week in the hospital while a psychiatrist tried various medications. Eventually, something worked well enough so that I could go home. After that I did pretty well until I had another major manic episode and again went to the hospital. The doctor who saw me there told me he thought I might

have manic depressive disorder and he put me on lithium. It only took a few pills to know that this was what I needed. It felt like a miracle drug! Years later, I developed problematic side effects from the lithium and had to find a different medication. It took four tries to find something that worked for me. On my current meds, I only have very minor episodes.

It's important for those with bipolar disorder to see a psychiatrist more than once. If a doctor only sees you when you're depressed, he could prescribe an antidepressant. If he sees you manic, he might give you anti-anxiety medication. Your doctor needs to see both symptoms of bipolar, and it will probably take a while to find the right medication and dose for you. Just don't give up! It will be worth it.

I'm writing this in hopes that people with bipolar disorder can realize it's possible to have a happy, fruitful, and productive life. I'm currently an usher in my church, co-chair of a women's group, a member of a book club, and a volunteer at Isaiah House. I'm also a facilitator in the Living Room here at Spiritus. It is a peer support meeting that meets every Wednesday from 1-5:30 pm. People are free to come any time and stay as long as they wish. When I'm not doing these things, I'm reading fiction and watching DVDs from the library. I hate to be bored!

*"I'm writing this in hopes that people with bipolar disorder can realize it's possible to have a happy, fruitful, and productive life."*

## THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS

### Fiscal Year 2018-2019

Canandaigua National Bank—\$1,000  
Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation—\$10,000  
ESL Foundation—\$3,000  
Feinbloom Supporting Foundation—\$6,500  
Fred & Floy Willmott Foundation—\$4,000  
Mary Mulligan Charitable Trust—\$2,500  
Polisseni Foundation—\$1,000  
Rochester Female Charitable Society—\$1,500

Wilson Foundation—\$4,800  
Women's Club of Pittsford—\$700

### Fiscal Year 2019-2020 (to date)

Social Justice Outreach Grant of First Unitarian Church—\$2,000  
Wilson Foundation—\$1,200  
Women's Club of Pittsford—\$720  
Polisseni Foundation—\$2,000

# UYO Program Changes

by Eileen Hurley

Since 2006, the Center has offered psychosocial support to 16- and 17-year-old young men and their families during the youths' incarceration in the Monroe County Jail and indefinitely after their release and reentry into the community. Our services will no longer be needed in the jail after October 1, when New York State implements the final phase of its Raise the Age (RTA) Legislation. RTA changed the age that a child can be prosecuted as an adult to 18 years old in criminal cases. Instead of jail, youth will now be detained in a specialized secure facility in Rush, N.Y., where they will receive more age-appropriate intervention.

*I met you when I was 18 years old, and I'm 26 now. I was a tough person to deal with, but you've stuck by my side for 8 years! Spiritus Christi took me in with open arms...you helped me overcome my fears...helped me out of homelessness ...and I hope we work together for many more years. - UYO program participant*

Due to these changes, the Center's Urban Youth Outreach will not be accepting new participants; but I will continue to be available to youth already enrolled, many of whom are now well into their twenties.

I want to thank you on behalf of all the youth and families that have benefited from your commitment to this program's vitality over the past 13+ years. Your unconditional love and compassion was a healing balm for hundreds of tender hearts hurt by exposures to violence of all kinds. Youth and their families especially value the

continuity of our care and attention. For example, several years ago, when I asked to have 16-year-old Chauncy released from his jail cell for a therapy session with me, the deputy asked, "Hasn't he burned all his bridges by now?" I replied, "My bridges are not flammable."

One youth describes the meaning of our consistent approach in this way:

*There is no better feeling than knowing that there is someone there for you who is honest, trustworthy, reliable, and consistent. Who does not care about the color of your skin nor your religious beliefs, but respects them and is genuinely there to help you succeed. No matter how many times you fall, they keep asking, "Are you okay?" and encouraging you to get up and keep trying. That's what Spiritus Christi has been for me.*

*For over 13 years, I have been with the Urban Youth Outreach program. I have been working with Eileen Hurley, who has been helping me and my family with every aspect of life to the best of her ability. From holding very important documents, to making sure that I am healthy mentally and physically, to helping with food, clothing, work, education, transportation, and to getting closer to my Lord. All this and more, while asking for nothing in return.*

*I feel that Spiritus Christi Urban Youth Outreach is a life-long program that has been helping me and is still till this day helping me. I hope for its longevity because there will always be people such as myself that need that little push, and that need to know that you are not alone. Thank you to all the people at Spiritus Christi Church.*

Thank you so much for all your love and care.

## RIVERWALK 2019

To benefit Spiritus Christi Mental Health Center

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27**

11am — 3 pm, at Spiritus Christi Church

Come walk to raise funds for mental health care for the under- and uninsured

**WALK** ♦ **LUNCH** ♦ **LIVE DJ** ♦ **PHOTO BOOTH** ♦ **KIDS' CRAFTS** ♦ **AND MORE!**

Register online, find sponsorship forms, & learn more at [smentalhealth.org](http://smentalhealth.org) or call 585-325-1180

## SPIRITUS CHRISTI MENTAL HEALTH

121 N. Fitzhugh St.  
Rochester, NY 14614

Phone: 585-325-1180

Fax: 585-325-1191

[www.smentalhealth.org](http://www.smentalhealth.org)

### HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday - Thursday  
9 am - 5 pm

### CENTER STAFF

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

## VOLUNTEER

### To Make a Difference!

#### Nurse Practitioners & Psychiatrists:

Prescribe and manage medications  
for participants, 2-4 hrs. per month

Therapists: Hours negotiable

## MORE WAYS TO GIVE:

**UNITED WAY**  
Donor Designation  
Program # 2403

**SEFA**  
Donor Designation  
Program #66-00440

## ◇◇◇ WISH LIST ◇◇◇

- "Forever" postage stamps
- RTS bus passes
- Warm socks for men and women
- Subway, Wendy's, & McDonald's gift cards
- L and XL black or gray hoodies

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

7/01/18 — 6/30/198

### Revenue

Spiritus Christi Annual Collection	\$ 22,346
Contributions	\$ 47,984
United Way & SEFA	\$ 20,752
Grants	\$ 35,000
Special Events	\$ 35,681
Professional Fees (\$71,880 in-kind)	\$ 0
Occupancy (\$11,200 in-kind)	\$ 0

**Total Revenue: \$161,763**

### Expenses

Salaries, tax, benefits	\$141,694
Occupancy (\$11,200 in-kind)	\$ 755
Supplies	\$ 124
Copy, Print, Postage	\$ 563
Insurance	\$ 656
Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 1,030
Equipment	\$ 199
Education & Training	\$ 0
Fundraising	\$ 119
Professional Fees (\$71,880 In-kind)	\$ 72
Client expenses*	\$ 2,916

**Total Expenses: \$148,128**

**Net Profit/(Loss) \$ 13,635**

\*Food, clothing shelter, transportation

### ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS & AFFILIATIONS

Kate Auberger, LCSW-R, Unity Health Systems  
Andrew Bewley, mental health consumer  
Brianna Dean, MPA, Urban League of Rochester  
Shani Fagan, PA, Trillium Health  
Phyllis Hanton, mental health consumer  
Kim Hess, MBA, Monroe Plan for Medical Care  
Paul Mastrodonato, Nonprofit Works

### VOLUNTEER STAFF & AFFILIATIONS

Lynn Acquafondata, LMHC, Private Practice  
Jodi Aman, LCSW-R, Private Practice  
Lieve Bain, LCSW-R, The Children's School of  
Rochester & Private Practice  
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Nancy Dwyer, Fundraising  
Colleen Farley, Marketing Committee  
Jere Fletcher, Esq., Advocate

### SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR MEDIA PARTNER:



"You'll Like  
What You Hear"

Bj Gray, LCSW-R, Retired  
Marie Halpin, MHC Intern, St. John Fisher College  
Steve Hoffman, The Living Room  
Sandra Hope, LMHC, Private Practice  
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Tobi Keefe, LCSW, Retired  
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Liz Powers, The Living Room  
Paula Sauers, The Living Room  
Asha Sukha, RYS, Yoga Instructor  
Keith Wilson, LMHC, Private Practice



*This year, gifts from  
weddings, christenings,  
and memorial gifts totaled  
over \$15,000.*

*What a meaningful way to  
honor the lives and  
commitments of those we  
love! These gifts  
contributed to hope,  
healing, and meaning for  
others.*

*Thank you so very much!*

