

Involving the family helps in recovery.

A mental health diagnosis can have a tremendous impact on family members, who often don't understand what is happening to their loved one.

"Family members often don't understand what it's like to suffer from a mental illness," says Amanda Wenner, MA, LMHC, program director at Horizon's Bailey LaSalle Clinic. "And that makes it harder for them to accept it or to help in any way."

That's why Horizon sought the opportunity to become involved in a learning and research collaborative with the University of Rochester and the NYS Office of Mental Health to provide Family Consultation services. Family Consultation is an evidence-based non-treatment intervention that is designed to identify the needs of mental health consumers' family members and offer them access to a spectrum of services.

"The goal is to more fully involve families in the consumer's illness, treatment and recovery," says Anne Smith, LMSW, executive director of the Family Institute for Education, Practice and Research at the U of R. "In that way, everyone becomes part of the treatment team for, hopefully, a more successful outcome."

Horizon implemented Family Consultation services in May 2007 and, to date, has conducted more than 115 sessions. "The idea is to educate families regarding mental illness, teach them how to assist their family member and support treatment, and help them navigate the treatment system, effectively communicate with the counselors and psychiatrist, and understand the medications and treatment regimen," says Wenner, who adds that participation typically includes one to three sessions with the family, requires the consumer's permission, and may be attended by the consumer.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Confidential consumer satisfaction data collected by the U of R indicates 100 percent "strongly agreeing" with the helpfulness of the service. "Consumers are pleased to have professionals explain their illness to their family members," Wenner says. "And they're grateful for the family's new understanding and support."

Horizon hopes to introduce the program in more of its clinics this year.

For more information on Horizon's Family Consultation services, contact Amanda Wenner at 716.833.3622. ♥



Horizon counselor James Dyckman consults with a consumer and her dad at the Bailey LaSalle Counseling Center.

thePathtoRecovery

Here is the true story of a consumer who overcame many obstacles to turn her life around. Last names have been omitted for privacy.

Amanda is a bright, articulate and determined young lady. At the age of 20, she is enrolled at a local college with the eventual goal of becoming a mental health counselor and she's about to move into her own apartment.

While that may sound like the typical life of a 20 year old, Amanda's life has been anything but typical. The daughter of a drug-addicted mother, Amanda herself started abusing alcohol when she was just 11 years old.

Then came marijuana and, eventually, cocaine. At 13, she was taken from her mother's care and placed in a foster home.

"I was in a lot of foster homes, many of which were bad," says Amanda.

"I started hanging out with the wrong people and, because I was in and out of the hospital a lot, I fell behind in my grades."

After completing another recovery program, Amanda was sent to Horizon's day treatment program. She completed that and is now in mental health counseling, all of which she says is helping her tremendously. She says Horizon gave her structure and routine and has taught her how to control her urges and actions and to deal with her feelings – all so she can stay clean.

"Amanda has had a lot of trauma in her life," says Jill Izydorczak, CASAC-T, MHC-P, Amanda's counselor at Horizon.

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From the desk of...

Anne Constantino
President & CEO

Recently, the media has been increasingly focused on the issues of addiction and mental illness. We are unable to look away as celebrities publicly experience the tragedy of active addiction and substance abuse. Their problems are played out on national television either as "news" or in reality television. We, as viewers, are able to glimpse human suffering and despair almost without realizing the enormity of the situation. This, of course, is not "entertainment" and it is certainly not "news." In most families, in every community, there are individuals suffering from addiction and/or mental illness. They and their families are only too familiar with the chaos, anger, fear, despair and hopelessness often associated with these conditions.

Does all of this media coverage improve conditions for individuals with addiction or mental illness or their families? Although the media attention identifies the issues and problems, it does not adequately – or professionally – depict the answers.

We don't see enough of the other side. Real-life treatment is hard work... but can be very effective. People can and do recover from serious addiction and serious mental illness. That is the most important message. ♥

Hello
My name is
Judy Tejada, CASAC, LMHC
Senior Program Director
Bailey LaSalle Counseling Center

Judy Tejada said she was very surprised to hear her name called during Horizon's recent Recognition Day and to learn she was being given the President's Award. But when you hear Judy talk about her job, it's no wonder she was chosen for this prestigious award. Her dedication is clearly obvious.

Dedicated employees are our keys to success.

In February Horizon honored several employees for outstanding achievements at its 2008 Employee Recognition Day.

"I maintain a proud belief that we are "the best" in our business," says Anne Constantino, president and CEO. "Our company thrives because of the dedication, hard work, continuous learning, excellence and leadership of all of our employees, and each and every one is integral and essential to our mission and to the success of our company."

The highest honor, the **President's Award**, which is given to an employee who "represents a solid work ethic, caring attitude, team player characteristics, high standards of productivity, care of our consumers and has a positive attitude" was presented to Judy Tejada, senior program director, Bailey LaSalle Counseling Center (see below).

Other awards included:

Corporate Operations Employee of the Year:
Ken Weiss & Michelle Doedema

Support Staff Employee of the Year:
Cathie Corbett

Rehabilitative Services Employee of the Year:
Patrick Mackenna

Mental Health Counselor of the Year:
Lisa Prefontaine

Addictions Counselor of the Year:
Seabron Johnson

Rookie of the Year: Maureen Hall

Make A Difference Award: Ralph Wilson

Special Appreciation Award:
Adrienne Roy & Cheryl Milligan

First Impressions Award: Aretha Jordan

Young At Heart Award: Marcia Valente

Worst Job in The Company Award:
Robin Bertini

In addition, 20 employees were given the **Dedicated Service Award** in recognition of their significant anniversaries of service to Horizon, and 13 employees received the **100% Productivity Award** for achieving 100% of their unit expectations in 2007. The "Med Unit Mongrels" – consisting of Tammy Szafran, Robin Bertini, Diane Cozzo and Shelly Imbs – were presented with the **Road Rally Award**.

Congratulations and thanks to all of our outstanding employees! ♥

Of the millions of young adults with serious drug and alcohol problems, fewer than one in 10 receive treatment.



"I believe there is an increasing need for behavioral health treatment in Western New York," says Judy. "And there aren't enough organi-

zations committed to doing what we do at Horizon or doing it with as much care and compassion. I find my job very rewarding and very satisfying."

Judy came to Horizon eight years ago as a counselor at the 1370 Niagara Falls Blvd. location and has since worked her way up to her current position as senior program

director. She says Horizon has given her opportunities she never would have dreamed possible eight years ago. "Our senior management staff is awesome," says Judy. "They are very committed to the entire staff, both personally and professionally. We truly are like a family here and that makes coming to work each day very pleasant."

She says that family feeling is extended to Horizon's consumers, who are very grateful for the work being done at Horizon. Judy says each and every staff member at Horizon is truly dedicated, and she is grateful to be a part of such a helpful organization.

Judy received her undergraduate degree from the College of Wooster in Ohio, and holds master's degrees from Ohio State University and Canisius College. She lives in Williamsville with her two daughters. ♥

Going that extra step to help consumers and their children

Medical Director Kristin Ahrens noticed that many consumers were unable to keep their clinic appointments because they lacked child care.

When she extended the invitation to bring their children along, more consumers were able to keep their appointments and get the care they needed. But there wasn't much for the kids to do in the waiting room, so Dr. Ahrens started bringing toys and books to the clinics. The kids loved them and soon, Dr. Ahrens was allowing the children to take home the books if they promised "to take good care of them."

"I began to do this more consistently when I realized how few of the children actually had books available to them and how few were able to consistently visit a library," says Dr. Ahrens. "The feedback from our consumers has been overwhelmingly positive."

In March, Horizon held a book drive, and employees and others donated more than 120 new and gently-used books so Dr. Ahrens could continue her practice of giving consumers' children books to take home. "My session with a consumer is for the consumer, but if I can make a small

difference in the life of a young child – and it takes just minutes to do this – then the session becomes much more valuable for the consumer," says Dr. Ahrens.

New or gently-used books can still be donated to Horizon by bringing them to any of Horizon's outpatient clinics. ♥



Dr. Ahrens enjoys a moment reading to two willing little listeners.

Two Horizon employees recognized for their achievements

Horizon Village Counselor III Patrick Mackenna was recently awarded the Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence by The State University of New York (SUNY).

The award recognizes students who have best demonstrated, and been recognized for, the integration of academic excellence with accomplishments in the areas of leadership, athletics, community service, creative and performing arts or career achievement. Patrick, a recent graduate of Niagara County Community College (NCCC) and a five-year employee of Horizon, was given the award for his involvement in initiating discussions between NCCC and Horizon Village to create an educational partnership offering both on-site courses and academic services for Village residents. He has received numerous awards from Horizon Village for his career achievement and community service with Habitat for Humanity and the Adopt-A-Highway project. Congratulations Patrick!



Patrick Mackenna (right) is pictured with NCCC President, Dr. James P. Klyczek

Anne Constantino, Horizon president and CEO, has been selected as a finalist for Business First's 2008 Health Care 50, honoring 50 movers, innovators, strategists, outstanding caregivers and pioneers in the health care field. The recognition celebrates the achievements of these individuals, who are making a difference in medicine, research, insurance, finance and other health-related industries. Congratulations Anne! ♥

Grant brings young adult facility a step closer to reality

A \$150,000 grant recently awarded to Horizon Health Services by the Grigg-Lewis Foundation, Inc. and payable over three years, will be used toward the construction of the planned young adult inpatient addiction treatment facility on the organization's Horizon Village campus in Sanborn, NY.

"We're grateful to the Grigg-Lewis Foundation for recognizing the importance of this type of facility and for its generous contribution to our efforts," says Horizon President and CEO, Anne Constantino.

Horizon plans to build a 30-bed facility exclusively to serve young adults, who will receive family treatment, on-site GED classes and pre-vocational counseling and preparation. In addition, the plan calls for a large recreational facility to be constructed on the campus to serve the Village's 80 residents. Total capital cost of the project, which is expected to generate 30 new jobs and millions of dollars in revenue, is \$6.2 million, which Horizon hopes to raise via fundraising and state aid. ♥

"The Path to Recovery" continued from page 1

"But she is extremely motivated and very strong. She has really turned things around for herself."

Now clean for just over a year, Amanda has been living with a caring and loving foster family who have stood by her and given her the support and structure she needs to succeed in her recovery. "I really connected with Jill, my counselor, which made all the difference for me," says Amanda. "And my foster parents have made me feel loved and worthy."

Amanda knows recovery isn't easy – in addition to attending school and her sessions at Horizon, she regularly attends 12-step program meetings, too.

"Recovery is definitely possible," says Amanda. "You just have to be focused and do everything your counselor tells you to do because it's for your own good." ♥

Check us out online

Horizon's website is full of helpful information on chemical dependency, alcoholism, gambling, mental health issues and so much more. We're constantly updating our site to provide valuable information on the services we provide to



assist consumers and their families, as well as links to other helpful organizations.

Here are five things you'll find on our website right now:

- FAQs about alcohol and chemical dependency
- Profiles on community leaders who make up our boards of directors
- Explanatory presentation about our planned Horizon Village Young Adult Facility
- Admissions application for Horizon Village
- Information on our three Medical Unit locations (open to the public)

Visit our website at www.horizon-health.org.

Problems with mental health are one of the top three reasons Americans seek medical treatment; the number of mental health visits has increased 30 percent since 1996.

Horizon is the largest and most comprehensive outpatient provider of integrated mental health, chemical dependency and medical services in WNY.

HorizonHealthPulse is published for the employees, consumers, Board and friends of Horizon Health Services. Please share this newsletter with a friend. If you would like additional copies of this newsletter or if you have any questions or comments about its content, please call Pat Chrzanowski at 716-831-1800 or email her at pchrzanowski@horizon-health.org.

President & CEOAnne Constantino
Medical DirectorKristin Ahrens, M.D.



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INSIDE: Involving the family aids in recovery.

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