

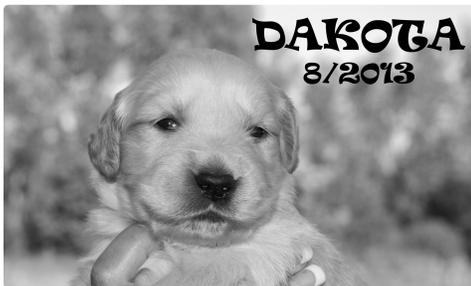
Horizon Health Services adopts Therapy Dog Program

Horizon has two new special “staff” members who are making quite the impression in the Horizon community. They do have a few unusual work requirements – such as supervised walks and regular treats – but what they bring to the table is well worth the extra effort.

Horizon is proud to introduce two golden retriever puppies, Dakota and Hope, as the “stars” of our therapy dog program. The two pooches provide emotional support for residents and put smiles on the faces of everyone they encounter.

Although the program is new, comfort dogs have paid visits to the Horizon Village residents for over a year now, thanks to Colleen Babcock, Horizon’s new Family Support Specialist. Colleen created her own unofficial therapy dog program by bringing her dogs to Horizon Village twice a month.

Due to an overwhelming positive response of both residents and staff, Horizon joined Colleen in investing and training two therapy dogs. Colleen adopted two golden retrievers, named Dakota and Hope, who were born on June 30, 2013. Golden retrievers were chosen for our program because of their overall pleasant demeanor and their uncanny ability to sense people’s sadness and cheer them up.



Diane and Bill Bly of the Horizon Village staff subsequently adopted Dakota and are raising and training her from their home. Dakota hangs out near Diane’s office at the Horizon Village Wellness Center every Tuesday through Saturday, and has regular scheduled “office hours” for residents to visit. Plus Dakota gets to participate in group activities – what fun!



Hope takes a nap

Hope, who was adopted by Erin Ryan, Horizon’s CFO, will work with the clients of Horizon’s Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) program on Bailey Avenue. PROS is a specialized program for clients with significant mental illness who are working on achieving rehabilitation goals to maximize their independence in the community. Hope brings emotional support and comfort to clients in these efforts.

The introduction of therapy dogs is consistent with Horizon’s mission to employ innovative and effective techniques and approaches to assist our clients. Therapy dogs have proven their worth in providing healing love and cheer to medical and elderly patients, and have proved valuable in providing comfort to trauma victims. According to a research article by the US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health, “the presence of a companion animal is associated with health benefits, including improvements in mental, social, and physiologic health status.” Dakota and Hope are already making a difference at Horizon.



From the Desk of Anne

Anne Constantino
Horizon President
and CEO

Horizon has joined with more than 50 community groups and launched a major public education initiative in WNY called “Project Hope”. The goal is to reduce prescription painkiller abuse, especially among young people. Prescription painkillers are the same type of drug as heroin. They are very addictive and very lethal if used incorrectly.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of WNY has led the effort for this campaign. Parents, who have battled this issue, many of whom have lost their children, have been on the forefront of education and advocacy.

Most prescription painkillers are prescribed by dentists or family physicians. Often the remnants of these prescriptions end up in family medicine cabinets and 55% of individuals report obtaining prescription drugs from family or friends for free. Once that supply is used up, pills are readily available for purchase on the street. When the pills are too expensive, heroin is an available and affordable option.

What can we do? We must understand the issue and the risks. Families need information and access to treatment. Addiction is a matter of life and death. As a community we need to:

- Get information – tragedy from addiction is preventable.
- Ask for help – don’t be ashamed or afraid. You are not alone.
- Remember that recovery is possible – Every day I see people that have turned their lives around and are living healthy productive lives. Recovery is the way out of addiction.
- Visit Project Hope’s website – Painkillerskill.org to get more information.

We would like to thank BCBS for their leadership in this effort. Thank you to the parent advocates who have the courage to share your stories and insist that we do better to save lives.

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www.horizon-health.org



Help today. Better tomorrow.

Prenatal Addiction and Post-Partum Services

A Family Testimonial

“Anne – just wanted to thank you and your staff for being the catalyst (you, Horizon staff, Ann and Bill – her counselors) in giving my sister the foundation to heal. She began her road to recovery with you 2 years ago this September. She left TLC after 7 months of intense treatment on July 29th and has remained sober since then. She attends meetings daily. She starts back at her job tomorrow and with the help of AA, her faith, and the foundation she has been given by Horizon and TLC she will continue beating this lifelong illness and get her daughter back. Three months ago it was like a switch was flipped – her attitude, acceptance of responsibility for where she ended up and her zest for life have returned. I know there are still mountains for her to climb but thankfully the foundation she has cannot be taken from her.”

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♦♦♦♦
**PAINKILLERS
KILL MORE
THAN PAIN.**

painkillerskill.org

Although drug abuse among prenatal women is not common, the detrimental effects for women who do and for their children can last for generations. As the abuse of opiate drugs including heroin and pain medications has escalated in recent years, so has the rise of prenatal addiction on these substances.

According to a study by the National Institute of Drug Abuse, young women aged 15 to 25 had the highest rate of prenatal substance abuse. This study surveyed women who used substances such as alcohol, nicotine, and other substances of abuse like heroin, cocaine and marijuana. Clearly significant were their higher risks of miscarriage, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, low birth weights, birth defects and drug withdrawal for both the mother and the fetus. More difficult to measure are the long term effects that prenatal drug abuse has on children – since other factors, like family stability, socio-economic conditions and child neglect or abuse, also play a role.

Horizon Health Services provides comprehensive treatment services designed to address prenatal addiction.

Horizon Health Services provides comprehensive treatment services designed to address prenatal addiction. This includes our working closely with

clients' medical providers to ensure coordination of their behavioral health and medical care.

Horizon substance abuse staff members are among the most knowledgeable in their fields and include physicians certified to prescribe medication assisted treatment.

After delivery it is not uncommon for women to experience Post-Partum Mood Disorders. These disorders are often triggered by intense changes in hormone levels and environmental stresses. Women with histories of mental illness or substance abuse have a higher chance to experience them. There are several symptoms associated with Post-Partum Mood Disorders but a few characteristic ones are a pervasive sense of sadness, loss of interest and enjoyment in life, sleep disturbances, weight gain or loss, thoughts of worthlessness, and withdrawal from family and friends. Horizon offers individual and group counseling services and other supports to help women recover from post-partum depression.

If you or a loved one is currently pregnant or struggling with post-partum symptoms or depression, and would like to speak with a counselor, call Horizon's Admission Department at 831-1800 to get effective and confidential help.



Hope Line available 24/7 through Horizon Health Services

Now Horizon Health Services is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week!

Making excuses or ignoring a problem, won't make it disappear. If you suspect your child, friend or family member might need help, don't wait and see if things will get better, please call 1-855-969-HOPE right away. Our

experts can review early warning signs and symptoms of substance abuse and get your loved one back on the right track to lead a healthy and fulfilling life. Our counselors will help you discover methods to encourage a loved one to accept help and engage in treatment. Counselors will provide direction and assistance with linking to appropriate treatment.

Employee Spotlight

JAKE HAACKER

As an information technology consultant for healthcare facilities and behavioral health clinics across New York, Jake Haacker first crossed paths with Horizon as a consultant in 2007. In 2011, he decided to make a full time commitment to Horizon as director of its Information Technology Department. Working for Horizon was an easy decision for him, says Haacker.

“Horizon’s culture set them apart from the rest,” he said. “Employees sincerely believe in our company’s mission. Recovery. Changing Lives. Saving Lives. It sets us apart from other companies where staff members just punch the clock. It’s a great feeling to be able to bring innovative ideas to the table and then to see them implemented shortly after.”

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He says one of the most rewarding experiences for him is to hear clients’ success stories, knowing how computer technology played a role in their recovery.

“Technology and healthcare go hand-in-hand,” he said. “We have adopted a slogan ‘Our job is helping you do yours’ which illustrates our commitment to customer service and satisfaction. I enjoy seeing how technology enables staff members to both help clients in their recovery and to improve our organization through staying technologically up to date in an ever-changing field.”

Being “cutting edge” in the use of technology to improve efficiency and services is one of Horizon’s core goals. Haacker oversees development and management of Horizon’s entire electronic infrastructure – including the maintenance, design, support and implementation of over 350 desktop and laptop computers, 100 mobile devices, 300 VOIP phones, 40 Servers, email usage, SharePoint, Intranet, SAN Storage and computer backup and recovery.

Haacker, a lifelong resident of Buffalo and North Tonawanda, studied at the University at Buffalo majoring in Business Administration and Management Information Systems.

After college, Haacker worked at TenEleven Group Inc., an IT support and behavioral health software company. That experience would prove essential for his work at Horizon, especially when it came to a Tower Foundation funded significant upgrade to Horizon’s computer infrastructure in 2012.

“Our IT Team was able to upgrade over 350 Windows XP computers spread across 20 locations and three counties while continuing to service staff with daily support requests,” he said. “Along with the major desktop effort, the team replaced Horizon’s email server, 18 Anasazi application servers and installed dual storage area network devices to provide data replication. The project was successfully completed in six months because of the hard work and dedication of the whole IT Department.”

When Haacker, who also serves on the Zoning Board of Appeals in North Tonawanda, isn’t busy overseeing Horizon’s technology network, he enjoys family time with his wife of seven years, his five-year-old daughter and two-year-old son. Like a true Buffalonian, he’s also a die-hard Bills and Sabres fan.



Jake Haacker
Information Technology
Consultant

Recovery Coach Program at Horizon

Since its inception earlier this year, Horizon’s Recovery Coach Program has filled a special niche in supporting clients’ finding their personal path to recovery from substance abuse.

A recovery coach serves as a critical support for clients identifying their personal goals for recovery and their following through on these goals to improve their lives.

“We are partners along the journey, meeting people where they’re at and walking alongside them at a pace set by them,” Beth Reed, a recovery coach for Horizon Health said. “We are there to celebrate successes and help re-frame “failures” as learning opportunities.

A recovery coach focuses on clients’ day-to-day hurdles of life – like their dealing with difficult interactions, or exploring the “pros and cons” of a specific life decision, or providing critical emotional support in their transition from residential treatment back into the community. In essence, a recovery coach focuses on encouraging and supporting the client to make healthy life and recovery choices, working with clients through the “thick and thin” of the process.

“Coaches typically work with clients long-term and during any stage of recovery,” Reed said. “Services are not contingent upon clean-time or successful completion of treatment, and often help clients stay engaged in treatment and/or the recovery community.”

In recent years, recovery coach programs have gained popularity nationwide. The NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse and the Association of Substance Abuse Professionals have recognized it as an important part of substance abuse treatment. At Horizon, it has been consistently demonstrating its impact in making a difference for our clients – further expansion of this important new and effective resource seems guaranteed.

Your gift is appreciated!

Horizon Health Services is a Section 501 (c)(3) charitable organization that depends on your generosity to serve the recovery needs of the Western New York community. We're the largest provider of mental health and addiction treatment services, having served over 10,000 local individuals and families in the past year. Horizon truly appreciates your charitable gift.

- **By Mail:** Horizon Health Services, 3020 Bailey Avenue, Buffalo, NY, 14215.
- **By Phone:** Contact Sharon Oehler in Horizon's Finance Department at 716-831-1800 to donate over the phone.
- **By Website:** Visit www.horizon-health.org and select the "Make a Donation" box on the bottom of our home page to make a secure, on-line donation.

All donations are tax deductible within the full extent of the law.



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

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Visit our website at www.horizon-health.org and learn more about the programs we offer, resources for helping loved ones, fast and easy bill pay and how to make a donation.

Stay connected as we keep you current on mental health and addiction news in our community through our blog, Twitter, or Facebook.

INSIDE: Horizon Health Services adopts Therapy Dog Program

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