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MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

1211 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

www.mhasp.org

MHASP CEO Wins Heinz Award


Joseph A. Rogers, president and CEO of the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, has been honored by the Heinz Family Philanthropies with the 2005 Heinz Award for the Human Condition, which includes a medallion and an unrestricted cash prize of \$250,000.

The Heinz Awards, created by Teresa Heinz in 1993 to honor the memory of her late husband, U.S. Senator John Heinz, recognize outstanding individuals for their contributions in the areas of Arts and Humanities; the Environment; the Human Condition; Public Policy; and Technology, the Economy and Employment.

Accepting the award on May 24 at a formal ceremony and dinner at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., Rogers said, "In the 20 years that I've been working at the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, we have seen some significant changes, including the movement from a hospital-dependent mental health system to a community-based system. We have also seen people with mental illness move from being passive recipients of care to playing a vital role in providing services to their peers. We've developed new and innovative models of peer-to-peer support, and we have seen these models replicated throughout the United States and in other countries, supported by research that proves their effectiveness. All this has given me great pride, not only in my work, but in the work of my friends and colleagues at the

Mental Health Association and the many others active in the peer-support and advocacy movement of people with mental illness."

On June 29, Rogers' achievement was celebrated at a reception in Philadelphia's City Hall. Mayor John F. Street, presenting Rogers with a citation on behalf of the City, said he was "not surprised to find that Joseph has received public recognition for the work he has done. He is a role model for people all over the country."

Said Teresa Heinz Kerry, who chairs the Heinz Family Foundation: "For close to a quarter-century, Joseph Rogers has been a front-line crusader in the struggle to reform the delivery of mental health services . . . He has not only shattered stereotypes about our attitudes toward those who require mental health care, but he has advanced a sea change in thinking about the role consumers can and should play in seeking such care. His life's work is one of courage and inspiration, which has brought hope to countless Americans." 



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Recovery Takes Center Stage in Philadelphia

A conference about recovery, peer support and systems transformation — *Philadelphia: Believing in Recovery, Creating Opportunity, Fostering Hope* — drew close to 500 attendees on May 9 and 10 at the Philadelphia Hilton on City Avenue.

Dr. Arthur Evans, director of the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Mental Retardation Services (DBH/MRS), provided an overview of the City's vision for recovery. "His presentation set the tone for a very inspirational two-day event," said Chris Simiriglia, MHASP's

senior division director, who organized the conference, sponsored by DBH/MRS and the Institute for Recovery and Community Integration at MHASP, with PRO-ACT and the Philadelphia Community Support Program Committee.

The speakers offered numerous definitions of recovery. "Recovery is not the same as being 'symptom free,' 'stable on medication,' out of the hospital, or even having a job," said Ken Braiterman of the Copeland Center for Wellness and Recovery, in Vermont. "Those concepts are about not being sick. Recovery is about being well."

Nor is recovery a panacea, said Dr. Evans, adding that it would not solve larger societal problems, such as poverty or stigma. But, he added, research shows that people can and do get better with the right supports, many of which are outside of formal treatment. These supports include basic resources, such as a livable income, affordable and safe housing, and reliable transportation; positive attitudes; a sense of meaning and purpose; freedom of choice; positive relationships with family and friends; meaningful activities involving employment, education, and/or volunteer and advocacy work; peer support; and access to recovery-oriented mental health services.

"Dr. Evans wrapped up these two exceptional days with a peek into the future," Simiriglia said. "He outlined the City's plan for moving the behavioral health system toward one based on hope and anchored in recovery."

Other speakers included Dr. Mark Salzer of the University of Pennsylvania and the UPenn Collaborative on Community Integration, Dr. Sandra Bloom of CommunityWorks, Phillip Valentine of the Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery, Dr. Michael Vergare of the Jefferson Health Network, and Shery Mead, a consultant from New Hampshire. Panel discussions provided information about the peer specialist initiative and training program in Montgomery County, and local peer programs for persons with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders.

Dr. Evans' and Dr. Salzer's PowerPoint presentations are available at the following Web site: <http://www.mhrecovery.org>. LC

Symposium spotlights need for services tailored to Asian-American community

On May 19, 2005, MHASP hosted a one-day symposium on cultural competence and behavioral health in Asian communities. The symposium, at the Loews Philadelphia Hotel, was called *Asian Communities in Philadelphia: Experiencing Behavioral Health Challenges and Moving Toward Awareness, Treatment and Recovery*.

"The goal was to highlight some of the challenges and opportunities we have in providing culturally competent, appropriate and consumer-friendly mental health services to the most diverse and fastest-growing population in Philadelphia," said Eric Ashton, MHASP's director of children's public policy, who organized the symposium. ("Asians" include people with origins in the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.)

Ashton estimated that some 165 individuals attended the symposium, which was open to the public. Arthur C. Evans, Jr., director of Philadelphia's Department of Behavioral Health and Mental Retardation Services (DBH/MRS), opened with "a powerful presentation about the importance of rooting out health disparities in the city and ensuring that language, race, culture, and ethnic background are not a barrier to access to health care and behavioral health services," Ashton said.

Other speakers included D.J. Ida, executive director of the National Asian American and Pacific Islander Mental Health Association; and M. Teddy Chen, director of the Mental Health Bridge Program at the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center in New York City. "Dr. Ida talked about how we must recognize differences and work with the consumer, as well as the family, to ensure that cultural norms and practices are validated during treatment and in other services," Ashton said. "Dr. Chen spoke about the importance of providing a 'bridge' between primary health care and mental health care for members of Asian populations. He reminded us that we need to provide training and support for primary care physicians to provide mental health care, as mental disorders may be difficult to recognize in a busy doctor's office."

The symposium concluded with the Asian Mental Health Program at Hall-Mercer Community Mental Health/Mental Retardation Center at Pennsylvania Hospital. "The panel gave a local perspective on efforts to reach out and engage the community and provide services in ways that respect the culture of the individual and attempt to embrace the consumer and the family, where necessary," Ashton said.

Ashton thanked the Wedge Medical Center and the Philadelphia Foundation, as well as MHASP's National Mental Health Consumer's Self-Help Clearinghouse, for their generous support. LC

Fisher Takes Over as MHASP Board Chair

Dennis L. Fisher, who has served on the MHASP Board for over 12 years and held the offices of treasurer and vice-chair, has been appointed MHASP's chairman of the Board of Directors, following the resignation of Bill Lipp, who has left to work in a consulting capacity with MHASP's leadership.



"Dennis has been a longtime MHASP supporter and board member and on the cutting edge in the professional mental health community, and he brings all that experience and those talents and skills to his new role with us as board chair," said Joseph Rogers, MHASP president/CEO.

Fisher has worked in the behavioral health field in Philadelphia since 1976, including 12 years he spent work-

ing with older adults at Philadelphia State Hospital (PSH) as a registered music therapist. He is one of the original members of the Community Treatment Teams (CTT), which were created in 1989 to serve those discharged from PSH but which have since expanded their mandate; and he served as an intensive case management team leader for nine years. Most recently, he has become a

training specialist with CTT and the Behavioral Health Training and Education Network (BHTEN), and promotes behavioral health services based on the recovery model, with an emphasis on cultural competence. He has certifications in several areas, and for over 10 years he was a representative of the Pennsylvania Social Services Union. **LC**



MHASP director of information and referral Nancy Salazar congratulates Richard Askew, III, luncheon speaker and 10-year MHASP volunteer, at the **Second Annual Volunteer Luncheon**, June 15th at the Spaghetti Warehouse in Philadelphia. On hand were 65 volunteers who donate their time at the following MHASP programs: Bryn Mawr Consumer Center, Bucks County Compeer, Chester County Compeer, Delaware County Project SHARE, Information and Referral, Mainstream, Mental Health and Aging, New Life Consumer Center, Philadelphia Compeer and Norristown State Hospital Consumer Center.

Former Congressman Joe Hoeffel Joins MHASP Board

Joseph M. Hoeffel, 54, a lifelong resident of Montgomery County who served Pennsylvania's 13th District as a Member of Congress from 1999 to 2004, has joined the MHASP board. He is a mid-term replacement for MHASP board chair Bill Lipp, who resigned from the board to work in a consulting role with MHASP's leadership.

"We're thrilled that Joe Hoeffel is joining the board," said MHASP President/CEO Joseph Rogers. "We have an excellent board, and his joining us will enhance our ability to make invaluable connections, particularly in the area of policy development. We look forward to many exciting times."

As Hoeffel's official biography notes, "Joe worked hard in Congress on promoting fiscal restraint, balancing the federal budget, creating more jobs, reforming education, protecting the environment, expanding health care, and improving international relations. . . ."

"Joe secured over \$165 million for local projects in the 13th District. He brought a public health center to Norristown, helped establish the Center for Sustainable Communities at Temple University-Ambler, and secured funds for the



Schuylkill Valley Metro, Title I education, riverfront development in Norristown and Northeast Philadelphia, the Montgomery County Community College and the Abington Arts Center, among others. . . .

"Joe is now practicing law with the well-known Philadelphia law firm of Kohn, Swift & Graf, P.C., where he is building a government relations consulting practice."


Joe Hoeffel's official biography is available in its entirety at <http://hoeffel.civactions.net/bio> **LC**

NMHA Honors 13 MHASP Staffers


At the annual meeting of the National Mental Health Association (NMHA) in June, 13 MHASP staff members were recognized for their long service: (alphabetically) Christina Corp-Francis, Dwane Dykes, Esther Elliott, John Farmer, Glenda Fine, Mary Hurtig, Bill Krum, Edie Mannion, Ernie Peebles, Joseph Rogers, Susan Rogers, Nancy Salazar and Jeanie Whitecraft.

Bill Krum has served more than 30 years at MHASP. Glenda Fine, Joseph Rogers and Nancy Salazar have served more than 20 years. The others have more than 15 years of service to their credit.

Thirty-six people achieved this distinction this year, according to a letter from NMHA president/CEO Michael M. Faenza. He wrote, "I would hate to think of where we would be without your contribution — what our network would look like — how states and local communities would be different without your leadership and [that of] others like you."

Each recipient was given a clock, which was chosen "to symbolize the countless hours you have given, and for the timeless example you have provided to us . . ." The awards were presented at the NMHA Delegate Assembly on June 11, 2005. 

2005 Annual Board Luncheon

The 2005 Annual Board Meeting Luncheon of the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania (MHASP) will be held at the Belle Voir Manor in Bucks County on October 20th from noon to 2:00 p.m. This event is open to all MHASP members. If you are interested in attending, please contact Angela LaPadula at 215-751-1800, ext. 270. 

Recovery Bracelets Spread Message of Hope

The Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania (MHASP) has launched an awareness campaign to promote the idea that people with mental illnesses can and do recover and live productive lives in the community.

In May, the agency arranged to produce 10,000 orange silicon wristbands with the words "Embrace Recovery."

"This simple theme reminds all of us that consumers have the power to rise to their potential while balancing the


demands of living with mental health challenges," said Eric Ashton, MHASP's director of children's public policy.

"Wearing these bracelets spreads the word that recovery is real," Ashton continued.


"The recovery movement encourages us to move past merely accepting mental illness. It empowers consumers to take charge of their lives and the decisions



that affect them."

"Embrace Recovery" wristbands can be purchased from MHASP. Call (215) 751-1800, ext. 265, or visit www.mhasp.org to order your wristbands today. 

Resource Guide Available on Web

An updated edition of the popular Mental Health and Aging Resource Guide is now available on the Web site of the Mental Health and Aging Advocacy Project, <http://www.mhaging.org>. The guide provides helpful facts in simple language about the unique mental health concerns of older adults. It includes information about a variety of services and other resources, including behavioral health and social services and how to access legal, financial, and advocacy supports. Listings of adult day services and services for non-English-speaking older adults have been added. 

Bell of Hope 2005 Largest Ever

Over 400 people were in attendance as Michael J. Covone (far right), deputy director of the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Mental Retardation Services, was honored with the Bell of Hope Award at MHASP's sixth annual Bell of Hope Award Dinner and Silent Auction, on May 25, 2005, at the Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel. Julia Danzy (right), director of Philadelphia's Division of Social Services, presented the award. Along with the award ceremony and dinner, emceed by KYW TV's meteorologist Kathy Orr, the evening included a silent auction (below, right). MHASP proudly acknowledges the support of the organizations, businesses and individuals whose generous gifts allow the Association to continue to provide effective advocacy and a wide variety of peer-support, educational and outreach programs.



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Homeless Services Division Provides Shelter, Housing and Hope

The 42 staff members of MHASP's Suburban Homeless Services Division are patient: They don't give up on people, said division director Kim Ransom-Pierce.

"We've had some people who used drugs, and relapsed. We try to keep working with them," she said.

The division — which includes seven programs: Connect, Connect-by-Night, Connect-to-Permanency, Halfway There, One Night at a Time (ONAT), the Centralized Homeless Outreach Center (CHOC), and the new Montgomery County Permanent Housing Program, slated to open on September 15 — helps people who are homeless and have mental illnesses and/or substance abuse disorders reclaim their lives. (The CHOC serves all homeless adults in Montgomery County, not only those with mental illness or co-occurring disorders; the Permanent Housing Program will serve chronically homeless people with disabilities, including serious mental illness, co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders, and HIV/AIDS.)

Ransom-Pierce is excited about the newest program, which will provide scattered site housing for 12 people, who will pay 30 percent of their rent while the pro-

gram pays 70 percent. Residents will have either successfully completed transitional housing programs or be people from shelters or the street who are believed able to make a successful transition into permanent housing with the proper supports. "Participants are expected to obtain and remain in permanent housing, increase skills and income, and achieve greater self-determination," Ransom-Pierce said.

She is also pleased to report the long-awaited opening of the CHOC in Building 53 at Norristown State Hospital, on June 28. She estimates that the program has been providing services (from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.) to some 50 people a day, the same people who spend their nights at the ONAT shelter. Services include case management, life skills training, transportation, and telephone and mail service.

Meanwhile, Connect-by-Night, which provides emergency shelter in Delaware County, is serving 30 to 35 consumers a night, down from the 50 to 55 it serves in cold weather, said Ransom-Pierce. The program gets referrals from some of the agencies in the county; other clients come through word of mouth.

The program picks up clients from the 69th Street Terminal and takes them to a church-based shelter for the night. "The

clients stay at the church from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. and then go back to 69th Street. At 7 a.m., Connect, two blocks from the terminal, opens its doors to provide case management services," she said. As of July, Connect has 84 consumers on its case management roster. The case managers also run groups on such topics as life skills, HIV/AIDS, co-occurring disorders, résumé writing, self-motivation, and planning for the future.

A different Delaware County church hosts Connect-by-Night each month; however, in July, it was hosted by St. James Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

Most of the churches host the program the same month each year. "Trinity Lutheran Church in Havertown, which hosts us in June, had a fundraiser for us and another [non-MHASP] program on June 11. They sold dinners for \$8 apiece, raising \$1,000. Congressman Curt Weldon [of Pennsylvania's 7th Congressional District] showed up and thanked the congregation for their support," Ransom-Pierce said. In the past, the church also donated new sleeping mats and \$400 in tokens, as well as providing an extra month's shelter when another church was being renovated, she said.

One Night at a Time, which serves 40 to 50 clients a night year round, provides the same services as Connect-by-Night, in Montgomery County.

Halfway There, also in Montgomery County, is a time-limited transitional housing program, which houses 16 people. "People can live there for two years; then they work with their case managers to find either additional transitional housing or permanent housing," Ransom-Pierce explained. They have in-house case managers and a drug and alcohol counselor, but some also have intensive case managers provided by other programs. Programming includes workshops in such subjects as credit repair and money management. Between 80 percent and 100 percent of residents move on to permanent housing, she said.

Connect-to-Permanency, a scattered-site
continued on p. 7



Sean Dwyer (left), a client of Connect/Connect by Night, explains his plans for the day to Suburban Homeless Services Division director Kim Ransom-Pierce (center) and Connect outreach case manager Juanita Wright (right) at the 69th Street Terminal.

housing program in Delaware County funded by the county and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), currently serves two women and five men. HUD stipulates that people in the program live alone; however, they may have pets. "We have contacts with apartment buildings in the area and it's the client's responsibility to seek out the apartment of their choice," Ransom-Pierce said. "The program pays 70 percent of the rent, the client 30 percent, based on their income"; the amount may vary depending on their gross income for a particular month. To qualify for Connect-to-Permanency, clients either have to have a

job or be receiving benefits, such as Social Security, and have a history of mental health and/or substance abuse. They also need to be employed consistently and free from substance abuse for at least the previous six months.

Ransom-Pierce recounted one success story: "We have a gentleman whose two years in the program were up in January. For his last six months in the program, he had a job doing security. After he left the program, he was able to stay in the same apartment building; they never had any problems with him and his rent was always paid on time. Last time we checked with him, he was doing quite well, staying on top of his rent — all his rent, whereas while he was in the program he was only paying 30 percent."

There have also been some failures, she said. "We continue to work with them for 60 days, but every once in a while we lose a person."

She recalled one such client. "We would get a weekly report through ACT NOW II [an MHASP employment program] that he was not doing well at his job. He eventually was fired. We tried to help him get another job, but he didn't do that." He was unavailable for home monitoring visits and he would not show up at the office for appointments. "After he lost his job he didn't have the means to pay his 30 percent of the rent, so we paid it for him for two months, but he was eventually evicted, due to drug activity in his apartment.

"We would have been willing to help him find another apartment, but he wouldn't cooperate so he was eventually dropped from the program," she recalled.

But the program has still not given up on him. "We have outreach case managers from Connect who go out three nights a week from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m., and he's one of the people on our list. If we have people we've not seen in a while, we look for them." To date, no one has run into him, she said. "I just hope he is getting help, wherever he is."

Several of the division's successful clients come back and lead groups, Ransom-Pierce said. "One gentleman talked about his experience with homelessness and his decision to take advantage of the resources available to him. He said the resources were always available but he didn't always want to step up to the plate.

Now he's working, and living independently. Before that, he was doing drugs."


Before her promotion to division director, Ransom-Pierce was program manager of Connect and Connect-to-Permanency. "I have a human resources background and a master's in business, and I bring to the division a focus on staff development, properly training the staff so that they can provide the appropriate services."

Forty percent of the division staff are themselves consumers, and an additional 10 percent are in recovery from substance abuse disorders, she said.

Ransom-Pierce is patient with staff, too. "I had an individual who, because of poor time management, found it hard to get everything done during the week. I helped this person create a daily task sheet to get them to focus on every aspect of their job and all the things they had to do on a daily basis. I also increased their supervision from biweekly to weekly or even twice a week.

"Within two months, their time management improved, paperwork was submitted before it was due, and there was more progress with meetings in the field. I think it came from encouragement and from the person knowing that I was available to them," she said..

"Before we started doing all these new things, the person was thinking that the job was simply overwhelming. But, in two months, their self-confidence and their performance improved." **LC**



is a quarterly publication of the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania (MHASP), a nonprofit, membership-based advocacy organization. The Association works to improve the care and treatment of people with mental illness and children with serious emotional problems and to prevent mental illness through research and education.

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