

THE SOLUTION



Fall 2007

Keeping Community Solutions Employees Connected

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

So often we only hear about what people feel is wrong with the criminal justice system. The good (and sometimes heroic) deeds that Community Solutions' staff and clients perform doesn't seem to make the headlines.

Did you know that recently a resident of **Hartford House**, who is employed as an Assistant Manager at an area McDonald's, took quick action to help protect the safety of her Manager during an attempted robbery at the restaurant? During this incredibly frightening ordeal, she remained calm and pulled her Manager into an office, locked the door, hit the panic button and called the police. The staff and residents at Hartford House, upon hearing of the situation, held a "Hero's Party" to celebrate her brave actions.

Another client, this one from **Silliman House**, quickly assisted a fellow passenger on a city bus, who had a seizure. He helped keep him safe and acted as a calming force to not only the victim, but the other passengers as well. The city presented him with a 30 day bus pass and the program held a party in his honor.

When CSI operated the Day Reporting Centers in Kansas, a client in Wichita jumped in to save a drowning child from the swimming pool at the hotel where he worked. Surely the parents are grateful to this day that this man was out in the community when the crisis occurred.

Not only are our clients sometimes "Silent Heroes," but our staff members also regularly do some pretty fantastic things.

Were you aware of that one of our staff members (now at **Bridgeport AIC**, but formerly from **Hartford House**) was instrumental in ensuring that a client with a long family history of breast cancer went to get a follow-up mammogram? A good thing. She was diagnosed with the disease and underwent treatment. Who knows how much it would have spread or what the outcome would have been if it went undetected.

Earlier this year, a **Cheyney House** employee administered first aid to a client who had passed out in the program. She instructed staff to contact 911 and accompanied the client to the hospital. Her keen observation skills and decision making abilities ensured the client's recovery.

The list could go on and on and doesn't even address all of the wonderful community service projects that CSI staff and clients complete (tens of thousands of hours each year) or the civic organizations that benefit from the staff and clients' time and work, or the dedication that staff show to each other, our programs, the clients and their families.

These actions may not make the headlines of the local paper, but the impact they have is much more lasting.

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Congratulations!

Congrats and welcome to the following new employees:

Patrick Austin	05/14/07	Georgia FBIT
Tauris Batiste	05/30/07	Louisiana MST
Terry Borjeson	03/14/07	Central
Rosanne Brown	07/16/07	Central
Jessica Buccolo	04/18/07	Florida FFT
Jason Calixte	03/11/07	Coventry House
Dawn Correll	05/10/07	Johnston House
John Coulbourn	07/09/07	Florida MST
Shayna Gilbert	06/04/07	Louisiana MST
Christian Goodlin	05/14/07	Coventry House
Veronica Hall	03/12/07	Louisiana MST
Tony Harley	07/02/07	Florida MST
Evan Hawes	07/02/07	Florida MST
Melanie Hinxman	07/09/07	Florida MST
Brenda Hobdy	07/09/07	Louisiana MST
Joseph Jean-Philippe	05/14/07	Johnston House
Chovanique Kibble	04/30/07	Louisiana MST
Lynn Kozlowski	03/05/07	Pennsylvania MST
Mary Martin-Looman	07/02/07	Florida MST
Pamela McKenzie	07/09/07	Georgia FBIT
Stella Meehan	05/02/07	Accounting
Dornell Mister	07/02/07	Florida MST
Nel Navarro	05/23/07	Coventry House
Charlotte Nehme	04/20/07	Coventry House
Michael Otto	07/09/07	Pennsylvania MST
William Pearson	04/03/07	Florida FFT
Angela Pia	03/22/07	Training
Molly Porter	07/09/07	Georgia FBIT
June Roberts	04/20/07	Coventry House
William Roberts	04/23/07	Johnston House
Wendy Sanclemente	04/18/07	Florida FFT
Allison Schiefer	03/05/07	Pennsylvania MST
Raymond Smith	04/12/07	Florida MST
Alfreda Sykes	04/30/07	Louisiana MST
Kenneth Tallman	06/11/07	Pennsylvania MST
Kevin Tomberlin	07/09/07	Georgia FBIT
Rossalin Williams	05/14/07	Louisiana MST
Chandra Wilson	07/02/07	Louisiana MST
Kervinel Works	07/09/07	Georgia FBIT
Melissa Arnold	05/26/07	Watkinson
Marisol Barresi	05/29/07	BSFT
Tiffany Bell	06/02/07	Cheyney
La'Kia Belle	06/11/07	BSFT
Margaret Berry	04/30/07	Connecticut MST
Nicole Bleau	04/23/07	New London AIC
Dennis Bolden	06/27/07	Watkinson
India Brantley	06/10/07	Drapelick
Elder Brown, Jr.	05/24/07	Watkinson
Carlene Buchanan	04/23/07	Cheyney
Michael Buchanan	06/12/07	Drapelick

Janice Caban	06/25/07	Chase
Wayne Cina	03/05/07	CT MST
Lindsey D'Angelo	03/05/07	Torrington Transitional
Jennifer Danielewicz	05/30/07	CT MST
Melissa Diaz	07/05/07	Safe Home
Chelsea Ennis	05/21/07	New London AIC
Kathy Fielding	04/28/07	Silliman
Garfield Fitzpatrick	07/09/07	Waterbury AIC
Timothy Fraylon	05/27/07	Cheyney
Maria Giordano	03/05/07	Chase
David Gossman	06/11/07	Cheyney
Eric Hudson	03/19/07	Waterbury AIC
Doug Jackson	06/25/07	Chase
Rachel Keels	04/09/07	Torrington AIC
Michael Kiczuk	03/20/07	Cheyney
Frederick Lester	03/16/07	Drapelick
Barbara Lipsche	04/16/07	New London AIC
Noelia Lopez	06/04/07	Safe Home
Effie Lucas	06/25/07	Torrington AIC
Jose Maldonado	05/04/07	Watkinson
Zane Marks	03/18/07	YCC
Don Maxwell	04/04/07	Waterbury AIC
Kristin Moran	03/28/07	Watkinson
Karl Morrison	06/18/07	Chase
James Papp	04/30/07	Torrington AIC
Cheryl Perkins	04/10/07	Safe Home
Courtnee Peters	06/18/07	Danbury AIC
Clifton Petteway	07/07/07	Waterbury AIC
Lisa Portal	05/17/07	Drapelick
Tiffany Rauls	04/23/07	YCC
Latef Roberts	04/23/07	Employment Re-Entry
Tomiko Robinson	04/04/07	Waterbury AIC
Timothy Russaw	04/30/07	Cheyney
Sarah Rutkowski	03/19/07	Torrington AIC
Claudette Sands	06/25/07	Chase
Lakisha Sands	05/21/07	Cheyney
Albert Scott	03/09/07	Drapelick
Deonna Sheppard	06/11/07	Silliman
Lakeisha Sims	05/29/07	Chase
Chantelle Spellman	06/15/07	Torrington Transitional
Ronald Stokes	04/24/07	Drapelick
Lisa Thompson	03/06/07	Safe Home
Tammy Walton	04/26/07	Safe Home
John Whipple	06/27/07	Employment Re-Entry
Yanike Whittingham	03/24/07	Drapelick
Douglas Williams	03/09/07	Drapelick

Welcome

COMMENTARY BY ROBERT PIDGEON, CEO



Message from the CEO

A few months ago, you will all recall, there was a triple murder in Cheshire, CT, involving two of our ex-clients. Both of the individuals accused in the murder of three members of the Petit family in Cheshire successfully completed the Berman program, and one completed the program at Silliman House. The other was returned to custody for testing positive for cocaine while at Silliman. The crimes committed in Cheshire were shocking and tragic, even for those of us who have spent a long time in the system and had thought we were beyond being appalled; such offenses make us call into question what we do, how we do it, and how to do it better.

What we do is the easiest of the three to examine: we provide needed services combined with public protection. How we do it is more difficult, but fortunately there has been significant research over the last thirty years that helps us decide the probable best course of action to take. The third element to question is the most difficult: how to do it better. When a horrible crime occurs and we are involved, albeit indirectly, we should always second guess ourselves about our role. In the Cheshire case, we did just that. Did we miss something? Did either of the accused individuals say or do anything that would have allowed us to predict they were capable of such violence? Did we do all of the projective testing that was required? Could we account for the nature of their behavior outside the program, at work or on furlough?

After looking carefully at all of these questions, I think we did do everything right; we did not miss a thing that would have helped prevent this tragedy, to the great credit of the program staff at Berman and Silliman. There was absolutely nothing unusual in the behavior of either of the individuals accused of this crime while they were in our programs. We did it by the book.

Now we, the Parole Board, DOC, the courts, the legislature, and the public have to see if the book is right. The Governor has appointed a Task Force, DOC has changed the rules about releases and furloughs, and the Parole Board is being asked tough questions. The Legislature is considering amending statutes, and the public wants to know how everyone is going to ensure their safety.

The immediate impact for us has been to make our jobs a bit more difficult because of the changes implemented by DOC. These changes, in my judgment, are prudent actions taken by Commissioner Lantz in a time of immediate difficulty; in the long run we will likely see systemic changes that will create a system of justice grounded in good research and effective public policy. For now, we need to lobby for laws that make good policy sense, and do not create knee-jerk responses to a tragedy that, in the end, can have unintended consequences that do not serve the public well. Those of you working in the Adult Division are most directly affected by the changes. We support DOC in its efforts and will do what we can to ensure the change that is sure to come is for the better. DOC is committed to that end, and so are we. Your excellent work in the programs has created a positive and collaborative relationship with DOC, and has allowed me to respond to the many press inquiries about the case by saying confidently that I know we did right in this case, and will continue to do so in the future.

CSI recognizes the following staff who recently celebrated their anniversaries with the organization:

Employees who recently celebrated 5 years

Jovanka Mena	04/07/02	PA MST
Edward Palasek	04/08/02	Central Office
Linda Qin Zhang	05/06/02	Contracts
Annesio Yakee	05/05/02	Johnston House
Karen Yencho	07/01/02	Safe Home
Robbie Nelson	07/01/02	TCC
Christopher Robinson	07/05/02	Watkinson
Sean Ball	07/29/02	Drapelick
Yelena Rudyak	07/31/02	Accounting

Employees who recently celebrated 10 years

Elsa M. Paulino	06/18/97	Food Service
Brian G. Walsh	07/10/97	Danbury AIC
Robert Pidgeon	08/08/97	Central

Employees who recently celebrated 15 years

Sheen L. Lee	04/13/92	Watkinson
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CONGRATULATIONS!!

REMEMBERING JOHN

Community Solutions lost a valued employee in August. John Stein, Area Director for Youth Services, and his wife Mary Lou were killed in an automobile accident on August 19, 2007. John had been with CSI for 7 years and served as Area Director for 4 years. As Area Director, he oversaw the MST and BSFT programs in Pennsylvania and the former Oakbridge School in Bloomfield. He was scheduled to oversee the new Maryland MST programs at the time of his death. John will be missed by all those who knew him.

In Loving Memory of



*John M. Stein
&
Mary Lou Stein*

"A beautiful life that came to an end, they died as they lived, everyone's friend. In our hearts a memory will always be kept, of one we loved, and will never forget."

John M. Stein

Date of Birth: June 14, 1949

Date of Death: August 19, 2007

Mary Lou Stein

Date of Birth: April 11, 1954

Date of Death: August 19, 2007

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Youth Services Highlights

SAMHSA Announces First Science and Service Award Winners

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has selected 20 organizations to receive the agency's inaugural Science and Service Awards. These awards recognize exemplary implementation of evidence-based interventions to prevent and treat mental illnesses and substance abuse.

The new annual awards program provides recognition to public sector organizations and community-based groups and coalitions that have worked to improve their communities and the lives of individuals by providing the best services possible.

"The success that these organizations have demonstrated and the positive impact that they've had on individuals and families is visible proof of the importance and direct benefit of using the latest strategies to prevent and treat mental illnesses and substance abuse in our communities," said SAMHSA Administrator Terry Cline, Ph.D.

Four awardees were chosen in each of five categories: substance abuse prevention; treatment of substance abuse and recovery support services; mental health promotion; treatment of mental illness and recovery support services; and co-occurring disorders.

The 20 awardees were selected based on independent reviews of 115 applications, as well as site visits. To be eligible for an award, an organization had to demonstrate successful implementation of a recognized evidence-based intervention, including interventions that have been published in the scientific literature and/or appear on a federal or state registry.

Community Solutions received an award in the treatment of mental health and recovery support services category for the implementation of MST services in Georgia.

CSI's Youth Services has been awarded three new Multisystemic Therapy (MST) contracts. Two of the contracts are in Maryland - Baltimore County and Baltimore City. An additional MST contract has been awarded in Southern Georgia.

Andy DeAngelo has joined the youth services staff to assist in the development of business expansion in Pennsylvania. Andy is the former Deputy Chief Probation Officer, Juvenile Probation in Lehigh County, Pennsylvania. Welcome to CSI, Andy.

Congratulations to BSFT supervisor Christopher Lyddy for being awarded the first ever Outstanding Young Alumni Award by his undergraduate alma mater, Salve Regina University.

CSSD released their outcomes for the period ending 6/30/07. The Willimantic MST Team received the highest scores in the state.

The overall CT CSSD funded MST state outcomes were:

Completion: 73%

At home at discharge: 84%

In school at discharge: 84%

No arrests during treatment: 77%

Willimantic Team

Completion: 87%

At home at discharge: 97%

In school at discharge: 89%

No arrest during treatment: 78%

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

Adult Program Highlights

Editorial by the Hartford Courant

Halfway House Earns Respect

Based on the results of a six-month review ordered by the Bloomfield planning and zoning commission, the Drapelick Center halfway house for adult prison inmates deserves approval to continue operating.

The evaluation showed that police have been summoned to the facility on Blue Hills Avenue only five times since the center opened under temporary approval in February, and none resulted in an arrest. Police calls to Bloomfield High School are far more numerous.

Obviously, officials at Community Solutions Inc., the agency that runs the halfway house with funding from the state Department of Correction, know their business.

Community Solutions successfully operated a residential program for troubled youths at the same location for several years. No one has produced a concrete reason to suspect that the agency has run the halfway house for adult offenders any less effectively.

Under an agreement with the town, moreover, certain types of inmates, such as predatory sex offenders, arsonists and individuals with serious psychological problems are barred from the Drapelick Center.

Nevertheless, the slayings of three family members in Cheshire by two parolees who met at a halfway house in Hartford and spent a brief period at a treatment facility in the same building as Drapelick has rekindled neighborhood opposition.

Considering the good will that Community Solutions has produced in the area, it would be unfortunate if Drapelick were denied permanent approval after a second six-month review.

Statistics show that the recidivism rate among prisoners who are gradually transitioned into normal life through residential programs is very low. All communities have an interest in keeping it low.

Chase Center hosted two CSSD statewide stakeholders meetings recently (one for Women and Children's Programs and one for Mediation Programs) and the program received the highest possible score on their CSSD audit. This is a wonderful accomplishment!

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

The **Bike Ride Fundraiser** that Paul Mikkelson, President of Dill, Joyce and Thresher Insurance, holds to help raise money for CSI was held on June 23, 2007. Staff members from Central Office and **Your Chance for Change (YCC)** House as well as clients from YCC were on hand to help at the event. Between external and internal donations, over \$1800 was raised for the YCC Boiler Fund.

The Tony and Beth **Drapelick Center** Dedication Ceremony and Open House was held on May 24, 2007. The program was well attended by community representatives, CSI Board Members and staff, clients and Bloomfield town officials. Clients and staff conducted tours of the facility. Tony Drapelick, CSI Board Member and namesake of the program, spoke at the dedication and was presented with a plaque commemorating the event.

Chase Women and Children's Program recently underwent renovations in their children's play-room pictured below:



Torrington AIC Community Garden Wins Big at the Bethlehem Fair

Every year for the past 8 years, clients from Torrington AIC and Torrington Transitional along with area seniors plant and tend to over 25 vegetable gardens located at Torrington Senior Community Center. Clients and seniors alike benefit from the harvest each year. Vegetables also make their way to agency tables, soup kitchens and are also delivered to home bound seniors.

Community Garden is the brainstorm of CSI's own Community Service Coordinator Rick Dalla Valle who this year entered vegetables in the Bethlehem fair. Prizes included 1st prize ribbon for lemon cucumbers, 2nd prize for carnival squash, and 3rd prize for blue potatoes. Mickey Fadoir (a.k.a. "Garlic King") of MF3 Enterprises in Torrington donates all of the vegetable plants and provides gardening instruction.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITIONS

Roger King, Case Manager at the Hartford House, is being recognized with a Management Award for his leadership role in the ACA audit as well as his work at the Drapelick Center, training new staff.

Lyndsey Olier, Human Resources/Payroll Assistant, is being recognized with a Great Job Award, for her ability to successfully run payroll solo for the first time, during the Senior Payroll Coordinator's absence.

James Clancy, Intervention Specialist at Torrington AIC, is being recognized with a Management Award for his excellent work and dedication to the role of Intervention Specialist.

Christopher Lyddy, Clinical Director for Home Based Services, is being recognized with a Management Award for his outstanding work with researching and developing an interactive Home Based Services website.

Rebecca Purdy, Case Manager for Danbury & Torrington BSFT, is being recognized with a Great Job Award for her dedicated work with quality assurance for the home based teams.

Jody Cohen, Therapist for the Torrington BSFT program, is being recognized with a Great Job Award for her dedicated work with quality assurance for the home based teams.

***Congratulations to the
above employees
for work well done!!***



MANAGEMENT ANNUAL OUTING



Barbara and Kyeisha



Monte, Penny and Alesia



Doug and ED



Jill & John



Ed and Jennifer



John and Raymond

ADULT SERVICES

Updates to Adult Services

New Jersey DRC has been added to the provider list for the NJ WorkFirst Substance Abuse Initiative (SAI). Staff members are being added as the referrals increase. Currently 7 intensive outpatient and outpatient clients are in the program from SAI. The program has also recently been approved as a Drug Court provider. Meetings with Hudson County Drug Court and Division of Addiction Services staff are being held to coordinate the addition of these clients.

The staff members of the Alternative to Incarceration Centers consistently uphold the highest of standards as evidenced by their extremely high ratings in both internal and external audits. For example:

Bridgeport AIC received a 100% on their CSSD audit and a 99% on their recent internal audit. These scores were achieved during the program's first year of operation, which makes the accomplishments that much more impressive.

Danbury AIC received the highest possible score on a recent CSSD Audit. Danbury AIC also held a Greater Danbury Community Luncheon to thank the supporters of their toy drives, referral sources, community service providers and community resources in late April.

New London AIC received 100% on both their CSSD Audit and on their internal audit.
Great job - congratulations to the New London staff.

Torrington AIC and Torrington Transitional Program earned a CSSD Audit score of 97% and a CSI Internal audit compliance rating of 98.5%. The staff in Torrington have done a fantastic job, especially given the number of vacancies and staff shortages.

Silliman House earned a perfect 100% score on its internal audit held in September, 2007. Quite an achievement - kudos to the entire staff!

Johnson House earned a 97% on a recent internal audit score with 100% score on core standards. Congratulations on a job well done!

DAY OF CARING

United Way “Day of Caring”

The Drapelick Center in Bloomfield and Safe House located in South Windsor were the beneficiaries of the United Way “Day of Caring” held September 7th. Volunteers from Mass Mutual volunteered their time transforming the landscaping at Drapelick Center while trimming trees, pulling weeds, planting flowers and assembling picnic tables. Amy Sheffield led the team with help from veteran Aileen O’Brien and some of our own clients. John Russell from Food Services catered the affair and volunteers left well fed and happy knowing they contributed to their community.

Mike Warburton directed the projects through his maintenance staff who were located at both sites to deliver tools and materials and to help out on the projects. Employees from Otis elevator spent the day at Safe Home painting bedrooms and other rooms as well as fixing fences. Alice Formeister led the charge at the site pitching in with the painting herself.



Day of Caring at Safe Home

Day of Caring at Drapelick Center



GOLF TOURNAMENT

The weather could not have been better at CSI's 3rd Annual Charity Golf Tournament at Blackledge Country Club in Hebron, CT. Temperatures were in the 80's and a good time was had by a record crowd of CSI Sponsors and employees. The day began with coffee, bagels, and muffins while golfers registered and received their CSI give-a-ways. We received many compliments on the organization of the event and participants seemed genuinely pleased with the day and their gifts.

CSI employee volunteers kept things going while golfers competed for a 2008 Volvo and various other prizes at specified holes. The day concluded with appetizers and drinks, with over 31 raffle prizes and a steak and chicken barbeque. Thanks to all who participated and volunteered. We look forward to next year.



Holiday Party

The annual Holiday Party has a new venue this year. The event will be held on December 14, 2007 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Cromwell, CT. Room reservations can be made on the CSI Website. Invitations to the event will be in the first paycheck in November.