



# A NEW LEAF



A Publication of ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.

Fall 2004

## Park Street Inn Accepts First Clients Renovations Under Way at 98 Park Street



*The Park Street Inn (left) and Park Street Residence. To accommodate Park Street Inn clients during renovations, Park Street Residence offices have been relocated to the trailer parked in front of the Park Street Residence (right).*

On June 10, 2004, the Park Street Inn (PSI), ALSO-Cornerstone's newest residential program, accepted its first client. The PSI program, designed for individuals with severe psychiatric disabilities, is an innovative, multi-disciplinary collaboration between

ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc. (ACI), Easter Seals Goodwill Industries, Marrakech, Inc., the Yale Program For Recovery and Community Health, and Hill Health Corporation. Primary funding for the PSI program comes from a \$1.2 million grant from the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services.

The PSI program is designed to meet the needs of individuals who have histories of multiple or prolonged hospitalizations and who face complex challenges that complicate their recovery. Through a high-structure, low-demand community setting, the PSI program provides residents with a period of transition designed to assist them in gaining the skills they need to live more independently in the

community. The program offers a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, person-centered approach to each individual's recovery process and integrates clinical, medical, and recovery services, residential case management, and educational and vocational training with peer and natural supports.

"One of the keys to clients' successful transition to the community is having a strong connection with the program and staff," says Marcie Dimenstein, LCSW, Project Manager of the Park Street Inn program. "Prior to admission, PSI staff meet multiple times with clients, take them out for day trips, and bring them to New Haven for overnight visits. Clients and staff also participate in weekly engagement groups at Connecticut Valley Hospital prior to admission into the program to assist them in addressing some of the concerns and anxieties that arise when people go through major transitions in their lives."

*(continued on page three)*

## Beecher School Fifth Graders Get Sobering Lesson on Alcohol Use

Last April, fifth graders at Beecher Elementary School in New Haven learned about the dangers of underage alcohol use when members of the Prevention/Intervention staff and News Channel 8 team member Tricia Taskey led a Reach Out Now Teach-In. Beecher School was one of hundreds of schools throughout the country participating in the teach-in. The program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Mental Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration is intended to help prevent underage



*News Channel 8 Team Member Tricia Taskey and Director of Prevention/Intervention Frederick Smith speak to students about the dangers of drinking.*

drinking.

"Most fifth graders in our community are not using alcohol, but it is a decision many face," says Frederick Smith, Director of Prevention and Intervention. "More than one-third of fourth graders say that they have already been pressured by their peers to drink alcohol. Far too many children are beginning to drink at a dangerously early age. The Reach Out Now Teach-In is an important step in helping our kinds get a clear and consistent message at home and at school that underage drinking is dangerous, illegal, and unacceptable."



**ALSO-CORNERSTONE, INC.**

**Officers**

Judith Normandin, MA

*President*

Anthony DiSalvo, Ph.D.

*First Vice President*

Robert F. Cohn, Esq.

*Second Vice President*

Barbara Lee, MS

*Secretary*

Emil Occhiboi

*Treasurer*

**Directors**

Laura Osborne Altshul, MA

Walter Bailey

Christine Castles, RN, MPH, CHES

Bess Chosak, MSN

Sharon Chasin Hoxley

David Pearson, Ph.D.

Michael Perlin, EdD, MPH

Jay Pinsince, MPH, CHE

Reverend Owen Sanderson

Thomas Ullmann, Esq.

**Management Team**

Jerald P. Ross, Executive Director

Peter Lynch, Associate Executive Director

Frederick Smith, Director of

Prevention/Intervention

Jenifer Blemings, Residential

Coordinator and Director, Park Street

Lee Anne Borkowski, Director of

Supportive Housing & Norton Court

Matthew Abbott, Dwight House

Michelle Anderson, Human Resources

Belinda Allen, Outreach & Engagement

Pat Barnes, Reception/Communications

Richard Bialecki, Facilities

Claire Bien, Development

Pat Corrado, DWI/Drug Education

Reagin Curran, Family Support

Collaborative

Don deGraffenried, Outpatient Clinic

Marcie Dimenstein, Park Street Inn

Michael Johnson, Ruoppolo Manor

George McGee, Finance

Mark Vanacore, Pendleton House

**Editor:** Claire Bien

**Contributors:** Donald deGraffenried,

Marcie Dimenstein, David Pease

**Photography:** Claire Bien,

Ian Epstein, Janice Karpinski

Published by ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.

527 Whalley Avenue

New Haven, CT 06511

(203) 776-9900; 787-2111

FAX: (203) 787-5599

[www.al-corn.org](http://www.al-corn.org)

## Residential Clients Receive Grants, Awards

### South Central Behavioral Health Network Awards Grants to 15 Clients

The South Central Behavioral Health Network (SCBHN) recently made grant awards to 15 ALSO-Cornerstone residential clients. The awards ranged from \$100 to \$800 and have enabled clients to undertake a variety of initiatives, many of which were undertaken to benefit fellow consumers. Titles of award-winning projects include: Photography (Amateur Art), Project Self Esteem, Healthy Cooking, Organized Confusion, Community Meal, Helping the Elderly & Disabled, and Client-Centered Consumer Training.

### Two Clients Receive Consumer Advocacy Award at Fourth Annual Awards Dinner



Jessica F. with her parents.

George R. and Jessica F., co-winners of SCBHN's Client-Centered Consumer Training Grant,



George R. with his mother and her nurse.

received ALSO-Cornerstone's fourth annual Consumer Advocacy Award at ALSO-Cornerstone's

Consumer Awards Dinner celebration in May. Previous winners include Sara Mag, Fellowship Place; Charles Starrs, Founder of the New Haven Gaelic Players; and Sue Wood and Dr. Karen Grimmell, members of the CMHC Residential Team.

The Client Awards Dinner, held each May during National Mental Health Awareness Month, recognizes the achievements of the clients in our residential services programs. The Awards Dinner is an important milestone for our clients and a night when everyone affiliated with the agency feels proud. Case managers nominate every one of their clients for an award, thereby ensuring that every client feels a sense of pride and accomplishment.

This year's Client Awards Dinner was held once again at the Irish American Community Center in East Haven. Many thanks to John O'Hanlon for hosting this very special event.

## Clinic Offers Innovative Trauma Therapy

ALSO-Cornerstone's Outpatient Clinic is now offering an innovative trauma treatment called Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). This form of counseling links many successful elements of several therapeutic approaches in combination with therapeutic eye movements.

EMDR is a fast-moving method which can bring about the relief of affective distress, reduce or end physical manifestations of the trauma, restructure cognitions and in general provide significant desensitization of the traumatic events.

"The eye movements help to effectively stimulate the brain's adaptive information processing system, which can generate significant symptom improvement in a

short period of time," says Donald F. deGraffenried, LCSW, the Clinic's Director of Outpatient Services. "EMDR can help with both the healing of psychological pain and physical discomfort related to post traumatic stress, depression, anxiety and self-esteem issues. It is also used to accelerate the treatment of both upsetting past events and present life conditions," he stated.

The therapy was developed in 1987 by Francine Shapiro, Ph.D. It is used extensively in the United States and throughout the world.

— Donald deGraffenried, LCSW

**Please visit our website, [www.al-corn.org](http://www.al-corn.org) to read the full article.**

## Volunteers, Patrons, and Friends Support ALSO-Cornerstone Events

This year ALSO-Cornerstone held four special events netting more than \$40,000 to support client programs and services. The year started on a spirited note with a January dinner dance presented by Mario and Maria Ciccone, owners of P&M Fine Foods and Pizzeria in Branford and held at Anthony's Oceanside. In April we held our second annual gala dinner dance and auction, at the Woodwinds in Branford, in partnership with Continuum of Care, Inc., a sister agency with whom we partner in providing the Ruoppolo Manor Supportive Housing



Program. May brought the fourth annual Golf Classic, presented by WTNH/WCTX TV, and held at the Tradition Golf Club in Wallingford. And with June came the Ninth Annual Greater New Haven Pizza Fest on the New Haven Green, in partnership with the International Festival of Arts & Ideas.



Pictured above are a few scenes from our special events:



**Left column, from top:** Donald deGraffenried, ACI's Outpatient Clinic Director, brings hot pizza out of the ovens while Matt Abbott, Director of the Dwight House Group Home, and two volunteers look on. A host of volunteers serve pizzas, beverages, and Italian ice to pizza and music lovers during Pizza Fest. Members of the Educational Center for the Arts' Jazz Ensemble, with Jeff Fuller, Coach, performed on Wednesday, June 16, when the International Festival was taking a break.

contests. News Channel 8 anchor Jocelyn Maminta teed off at the beginning of the tournament.

**Right column:** Director of Development Donald Ondusky (In Memoriam) sells raffle tickets at the Gala. ACI Board member Dave Pearson and his wife, Joann, dancing. ACI case manager Kim Telford places a lei around the neck of winning bidder Nelly Odenwaelder, Manager of H Pearce's New Haven office, during the gala's live auction.

## Park Street Inn

*continued from page one*

Once they are admitted to the program, clients work closely with case management staff from ACI, Easter Seals/Goodwill Industries and Marrakech Day Services to acquire life and employment skills that will support their individual goals. Clinical and psychiatric services will be provided on-site by the ACI clinicians and physician. Volunteer and job placements with on-the-job supports are available to all clients of the PSI. Medical needs are addressed by on-site nursing from the Hill Health Corporation. Most residents will

remain in the program for approximately one year. The Yale Program for Recovery and Community Health (PRCH) is providing staff training and consultation as the philosophical commitment to supporting an individualized process of recovery is put into day-to-day practice. PRCH will also be developing a comprehensive evaluation system of this new program.

Referrals will come from all five state-run hospitals, including the Connecticut Mental Health Center in New Haven, the Greater Bridgeport Mental Health Center, Connecticut Valley Hospital, Cedarcrest Hospital in Newington, and the Hartford Community Mental Health Center. PSI graduates will

work to return to their community of origin in a more independent setting.

The program will be located in a newly designed, fully architecturally accessible building at 98 Park Street, adjacent to the Park Street Residence. We anticipate that renovations, which began during Summer 2004, will be complete by the end of the year. While renovations are in progress, the PSI program will house three women at the adjacent Park Street Residence, 104 – 106 Park Street. An additional five men will be housed at 850 Grand Avenue in New Haven. When renovations are completed and the program is fully functional, it will have a capacity of 15 clients.

# Client/Staff Scholarship Fund Honors Memory of Donald Ondusky



Donald Ondusky, Director of Development and Administration for ALSO-Cornerstone passed away

unexpectedly on May 6, 2004, at ALSO-Cornerstone's Fourth Annual Golf Tournament. It was a beautiful day, and Don had just ushered more than 80 happy golfers off to their respective tees and greens when he fell, victim of a massive heart attack. Don joined the agency in 1990 doing, in the words of Executive Director Jerry Ross, "Everything that needed to be done."

A scholarship fund has been established in Don's name to honor him for his years of service to the agency and his dedication to ALSO-Cornerstone clients and staff. Clients and staff enrolled in programs at degree-granting institutions leading to a high school diploma or GED, or an Associates, Bachelor's or Master's

degree, will be eligible for partial tuition reimbursement. This program will be formally launched in September 2004. Revenues for the fund will be derived from donations made in his memory and proceeds from the Golf Tournament, which will, in future years, bear his name. Don dedicated the last 14 years of his life, to improving the lives of our clients and assisting staff in achieving their career and life goals. The Donald J. Ondusky Scholarship Fund will enable the agency to help people achieve their full potential – a goal to which Don dedicated his life.

If you wish to make a donation to the Donald Ondusky Memorial Scholarship Fund, please send a check to: ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc., 527 Whalley Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut 06511. (203) 776-9900.



## Clients Launch *Inside the Cornerstone* Newsletter

In April, the first issue of *Inside the Cornerstone*, a publication of ALSO-Cornerstone's Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) rolled off the presses. The newsletter existed in the minds of the CAC long before the first copies rolled off the presses last spring, according to Pendleton client David P., who writes, edits and produces *Inside the Cornerstone*.

"The CAC is a small group of individuals who meet on the first Thursday of every month to discuss issues that are of concern to ALSO-Cornerstone clients," David says. "We wanted to be able to notify clients about client-based events including In-Services, picnics, and the annual Pizza Fest. The newsletter also provides information about schooling, work, and treatment options that clients might otherwise not know about. Clients can also submit poetry, stories and other information of interest to clients," David says.

Inside the Cornerstone has the full support of clients, staff and administration and has been very well received. "It has given clients a much-needed voice for communicating with each other and the ALSO-Cornerstone organization," David says.



**ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.**  
527 Whalley Avenue  
New Haven, Connecticut 06511

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
New Haven, CT  
Permit No. 213

### Help Us Save Trees!

and postage

by electing to receive this newsletter  
electronically.

Please e-mail Claire Bien in the  
Development Office, [cbien@al-corn.org](mailto:cbien@al-corn.org) or  
call Claire at (203) 776-9900, ext. 1003

**Thank you!**

