



A NEW LEAF



A Publication of ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.

Spring 2002

Ruoppolo Supportive Housing Program Opens Doors



The Ruoppolo Manor Supportive Housing Program (Ruoppolo), ALSO-Cornerstone's newest program, is administered in collaboration with Continuum of Care, Inc. and the Housing Authority of New Haven.

Ruoppolo is a DMHAS (Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services) funded PILOTS program (Planning and Implementing Housing Options for Long Term Success) that enables community

agencies to collaborate in offering services to at-risk populations.

Program Director Michael Johnson, who joined the ALSO-Cornerstone staff in December 2001, has been building a staff, and in early April admitted the first client into Ruoppolo Manor. When the Ruoppolo program is fully utilized, it will serve 23 individuals who are homeless or at risk of being homeless and who have either a dual diagnosis of mental illness and substance abuse, or a history of substance abuse with at least a year in treatment. Because Ruoppolo Manor is a Housing Authority of New Haven (HANH) facility, clients must be on the Ruoppolo Manor housing list in

order to be accepted into the program. Under the terms of the agreement with DMHAS, 15 of the 23 clients served by Ruoppolo will be ALSO-Cornerstone and eight will be Continuum of Care clients.

In addition to supportive housing, the Ruoppolo program provides case management services, daily living skills training, crisis intervention, medication supervision if necessary, assistance with transportation, and recreational activities.

Client programming includes traditional 12-step groups and substance abuse prevention groups, as well as

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Community Foundation Funds Healthy Start Program



"I gave birth and I gave death. . . ." The speaker is a woman who, at the moment she had a stillbirth, became both mother and bereaved parent. She is one of ten

clients and families who have come to ALSO-Cornerstone through the Healthy Start Program.

Funded in the fall of 2001 by the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, the Healthy Start program's primary purpose is to assess the presence of loss and bereavement as a risk factor for women who are pregnant, or who

have recently been pregnant, or who are parenting a child under two years of age.

. . . infants born to mothers who have unresolved issues surrounding previous losses are at increased risk for abandonment, neglect or death.

The Community Foundation funded the project because it is believed that mothers who go untreated after experiencing such losses are at increased risk in subsequent pregnancies. Similarly, infants born to mothers who have unresolved issues surrounding previous losses are at increased risk for abandonment, neglect or death. The

project was also charged with developing interventions designed to minimize loss or related risk and to develop therapeutic programs to enhance coping skills for such mothers.

The program is directed by Peter Lynch, ALSO-Cornerstone's clinical director who has reached out to the health care community both as a source of referrals and for input and guidance on the issues of pregnancy, loss and bereavement.

Since the grant was awarded, Lynch has been busy. "On December 12, 2001, representatives from 14 agencies in the region gathered together to participate in didactic presentations around models of loss and bereavement care," Lynch says. "What also happened was that many of the participants began to relate their own, previously unspoken experiences with pregnancy related losses and the

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Editor: Claire Bien

Contributors: Lincoln Douglas, EdD,
Jennifer Frey, PhD, Peter Lynch, MSW

Photography: Claire Bien,
Robin Callahan, Corbis Corporation

Layout and Design: Claire Bien

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871 State Street
New Haven, CT 06511
(203) 777-9900/787-2111
FAX: (203) 772-0705/787-5599
www.al-corn.org

Annual Meeting focuses on Board Development



Judy Tabar

Tabar, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, Inc., and recipient of the 2001 Affiliate Excellence Award for Board Development Planned Parenthood Federation of America, spoke about her role in developing the Board of

The 2002 annual meeting of the Board of Directors of ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc., was held on Monday, February 11, 2002, at the Playwright Restaurant in New Haven. Guest speaker Judy

Planned Parenthood of Connecticut and the key role that agency Board members play in the vitality of an organization. Other business included inducting new Directors to the Board and bidding farewell to Directors who have served their terms. Outgoing Board President William Farrell spoke of the work that was conducted during his tenure, most significantly the merger in January 2001.

Officers for 2002 - 2004 are: **Judith Normandin**, President; **Reverend Owen Sanderson**, First Vice President; **Robert Cohn, Esq.**, Second Vice President; **Barbara Lee**, Secretary; **Emil Occhiboi**, Treasurer; and **William Farrell**, Past President Emeritus.

New Programs and Community Collaborations Bring Staff Growth, Change

The past six months have brought dramatic growth and change to ALSO-Cornerstone. The new Ruoppolo Manor Supportive Housing Program (see story on page one) is one of a host of programs that have enabled ALSO-Cornerstone to establish vital partnerships with other agencies in New Haven. These collaborations enable us to provide better and more comprehensive services to our clients (see story on facing page).

Thanks to a grant from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) we are in the midst of expanding our outpatient clinic to implement recommendations made by the Community Mental Health Strategy Board. When the program is fully in place we will have the ability to serve an additional 50 clients.

The clinic expansion has necessitated moving our administrative operation from the 871 State Street offices to a building we own at 525 Whalley Avenue. We will share the building with the staff of the Pendleton and Outreach & Engagement programs. We are also in the process of acquiring funding to renovate our property at 98 - 100 Park Street. When that project is completed we will be able to provide housing and supportive services for an additional 14

clients.

In order to accommodate our growing needs, many staff changes and reassignments have been made in recent months. **Jenifer Blemings** assumed duties as program director of the Park Street residences in order to oversee the expansion of that program. **Foluke Morris**, former Park Street program director has assumed Jenifer's former position as director of the Dwight House Group Home. **Lee Anne Borkowski**, program director of the Norton Court Supportive Independent Residences program assumed responsibility for supervising **Michael Johnson**, the new director of the Ruoppolo Manor program. **Reagin Curran**, formerly assistant program director at Norton and program director of the Family Support Collaborative, was promoted to program director of the Family Support Collaborative and manager of the Beers Street property. Pendleton Program Director **Mark Vanacore** assumed responsibility for oversight of our portion of the Open Door Alliance. **Christina Jackson**, former assistant director at Park Street is now assistant director at Norton Court, and **Roni Szostek** was promoted to assistant director at Park Street.

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Agency Collaborations Assist Individuals and Families in Need



During the past two years, ALSO-Cornerstone has established a number of collaborations with other social service agencies in Greater New Haven in order to provide more comprehensive services for our consumer base. Three of these collaborations fall under the umbrella of the state-funded PILOTS (Planning and Implementing Housing Options for Long Term Success) program; the fourth is the the City of New Haven-Funded Treatment Access Project. Brief descriptions of these collaborations follow. If you would like more information about these programs and about ALSO-Cornerstone, please visit our website, www.al-corn.org, or call us at 203 776-9900.

The New Haven Family Partnership (NHFP). NHFP is a collaboration between New Haven Home Recovery, Inc., the Connection, Inc., the Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis, Inc., and ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.'s Family Support Collaborative. It is designed to provide permanent supportive services to families in which the head of household suffers from mental illness, chronic substance abuse, dual diagnosis, or HIV/AIDS, and who are homeless or at risk for homelessness. Heads of household must also either have children in custody or be in the process of reunification within three months of the admission date. Each family is provided with a Case Manager and a Family Specialist who help determine client needs and assist clients in accomplishing their goals.

Case Managers are responsible for coordinating needed services, including but not limited to establishing safe and affordable housing; obtaining supports to improve the likelihood of recovery

and maintained housing; accessing services for any co-existing problems such as domestic violence; financial, educational, or medical problems; linking clients to services for on-going crisis and relapse prevention; accessing vocational services; obtaining entitlements and budgeting.

Family Specialists coordinate and provide direct home-based services, that meet the educational, health, and therapeutic needs of the children in the household. The degree of severity, duration, and the level of services from the Family Specialist is determined on a case-by-case basis.

Open Door Alliance. The Open Door Alliance, established in 2001 under the auspices of the Connecticut Care Alliance is a collaboration between Leeway, Inc., Liberty Community Services, the Community Consultation Board and ALSO-Cornerstone's Pendleton House Dual Diagnosis Program. It was developed to assist clients with mental illness, chronic substance abuse, dual diagnosis, HIV/AIDS, and physical disabilities, as well as victims of domestic violence who have the ability to live independently but who, because they tend not to stay in treatment and are frequent users of hospital and detox facilities, do not thrive in the community. The program provides a five-year Shelter Plus Care



certificate, and five years of case management services.

An important component of the Open Door Alliance is a database designed by Technology Solutions that enables the collaborating agencies to access and share client information including history and treatment plans as well as to track client participation and progress in the various treatment modalities. The database also facilitates the ability of caseworkers to consult with colleagues in other agencies, enhancing the services provided to our clients. The Open door Alliance serves clients in New Haven, Woodbridge, and Hamden.

The Ruoppolo Manor Supportive Housing Program (Ruoppolo Manor). Ruoppolo Manor, ALSO-Cornerstone's newest program, is administered in collaboration with the Housing Authority of New Haven and Continuum of Care Inc. Please see article on page one for details about this program.

Treatment Access Project (TAP). TAP is a collaboration between Columbus House, Immanuel Baptist Shelter, Women in Crisis, and ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.'s Outreach and Engagement Project that provides intensive outreach to the chronically homeless population in New Haven. It

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Diverse Prevention & Intervention Programs Serve Children, Adults

It is said, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” At no time has this been truer than now. Young people and adults in today’s society are widely exposed to an array of destructive and unhealthy behaviors and practices and have easy access to myriad addictive substances. At ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc. we realize that in order to make long-term impact we must not only focus on intervention but also on prevention.

At ALSO-Cornerstone, we are committed to developing and implementing programs that will delay, reduce and eradicate the risk factors within our communities and support the safety factors that lead to health and wholeness.

Prevention Programs

Beginning Awareness Basic Education Studies (BABES) is a nationally recognized primary prevention program designed to help children and young people develop positive living skills and provide them with accurate, non-judgmental information about the use and abuse of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc. prevention staff received training from the national organization and implemented this school-based prevention program in 1999 at Urban Youth Middle School.

O’Neill After School Improvisational Scriptwriting (OASIS) is a project for middle-school and high-school aged youth. Through interaction, exploration, reflection and adaptation of the life and plays of Eugene O’Neill, young people learn to understand the world they live in, see themselves as makers of culture, choose lifestyles that are healthy, and take responsibility for teaching the subsequent generation of young adults. The program now works with youth coming out of our BABES program.

Families and Schools Together (FAST) is an outreach and multi-family group process designed to help children



NM and J W reciting “Sympathy” by Paul Laurence Dunbar during “Giving Voice: Language-Memory-Culture”, a day of workshops, theater and fun on Wednesday, June 27, 2001 at Long Wharf. The event was an independently produced event sponsored by ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc. and Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven. Mr. Morgan and Mr. Whitley are Youth Presenters in a substance abuse prevention program and playwrights in the OASIS (O’Neill After School Improvisational Scriptwriting) program at ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.

succeed at home, in school, and in society. It will be implemented in the fall of 2002 in one pre-school and two elementary schools. FAST offers participants opportunities to strengthen relationships with their own families and neighbors with evidence based positive impact on the child. Its goals are to strengthen families, reduce stress, enhance child resiliency, and reduce substance abuse in children and families. FAST is grounded in family stress theory, family systems theory, and community development. It applies research-based strategies and has been empirically validated with outcome evaluations.

First Thursdays. The First Thursdays program, held once a month (on the first Thursday of the month) at Gateway Community College, provides education on the latest prevention technology, and offers prevention certification support for practitioners, skill building sessions, and networking. First Thursdays’ mission is to develop the field of prevention and the competencies of prevention practitioners so that they can best implement science-based prevention strategies and programs, which can prevent or reduce substance abuse

problems and unhealthy life styles and deliver stability, recovery, independence and productivity for consumers. The curriculum is developed through the First Thursdays Planning Committee/ Collaborative made up of representatives of various organizations in New Haven and surrounding communities

Intervention Programs

Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) Classes. First-time offenders are required to participate in a 10 or 15-week educational program that addresses the problems of drinking and driving. Classes are held at ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.’s clinical and administrative offices at 871 State Street, as well as at five auxiliary sites throughout the region.

Drug Education is an intervention program to help people arrested for possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia. Participants are recommended to participate in a series of educational classes.

Training for Intervention Procedures (TIPS) is an alcohol intervention program that builds on the skills and expertise of those who serve alcoholic beverages. Staff learn a common-sense approach to serving alcohol responsibly in any setting. The training helps servers to: (a) recognize signs of intoxication, (b) prevent alcohol sales and service to minors, and (c) intervene with patrons who are already intoxicated.

In January 2002, ALSO-Cornerstone received 206 referrals for DWI and drug education classes, the highest number ever. In March ALSO-Cornerstone received 210 referrals. The DWI-Drug Ed program now averages 180 - 200 referrals each month.

*- Lincoln Douglas, Ed.D.
Director of Prevention and
Intervention Services*

Seventh Annual Greater New Haven Pizza Fest

June 17 - 21 and 24 - 28 on the New Haven Green

Pizza, Italian ices, and music will again be on offer during the seventh annual Greater New Haven Pizza Fest scheduled for June 17 - 21 and 24 - 28 on the New Haven Green from noon to 1:30 p.m. For the third straight year, Pizza Fest will be held during the International Festival of Arts & Ideas' free lunchtime concerts on the Green. Last year more than 3,000 people ate pizza from more than 80 participating pizzerias.

Teams of volunteers from New Haven Savings Bank, United Illuminating, Yale-New Haven Hospital, Continuum of Care, Priority Care, Youth Center for Change, Project More, Girl Scouts Connecticut Trails Council, and the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce will be serving pizzas and beverages on the New Haven Green during the two-week Pizza Fest. Plan to come out to enjoy the music and festival as well as to support ALSO-Cornerstone.

Volunteer

You can help support the event (and ALSO-Cornerstone!) even more by volunteering to serve pizzas alongside the business and community volunteers, and our clients.

Support the Raffle

ALSO-Cornerstone will also hold a raffle drawing on Friday, June 28, at 1:00 p.m. on the Green. Local and regional businesses have donated some wonderful prizes, including custom-made gold earrings from Derek Simpson Goldsmith; a silver and gold bracelet from Peter Indorf Jewelers; a two-day, one night vacation at Caesar's Pocono Resorts; \$250 in free advertising on WQUN Radio; an opportunity to sit in the studio during a broadcast of the Faith Middleton Show; a gas grill, a \$100 gift certificate to the Circuit City Foundation; a \$50 gift certificate to the



Mario Ciccone (far left), owner of Mario's P&M Fine Food & Pizzeria and co-chair of the Pizza Fest Committee recently invited Pizza Fest honorary co-chairs Tony Rescigno, Mary Ellen Cody, and Paul McCraven to his Branford restaurant for a lesson in making pizzas. Please visit our website, www.al-corn.org for more pictures of the committee at work!

Endleman Gallery; an accessory from Seychelles; and brunch for two at Saybrook Point Resort and the Mohegan Sun. Tickets are \$1.00 each. Buy one -- or 10!

Special Thanks

Many thanks to the International Festival of Arts & Ideas for again graciously permitting us to provide food and beverages during the lunchtime concerts. Thanks also pizza fest committee members Mario Ciccone and Bruno Ceniccola, and to honorary co-chairs Paul McCraven, Vice President for Community Relations and Development at New Haven Savings Bank, Tony Rescigno, President of the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce, Mary Ellen Cody, Senior Director of External Relations and Development, United Illuminating, and to our media sponsor, the *New Haven Advocate*.

If you'd like to volunteer, please call Claire Bien at 203 776-9900. To purchase raffle tickets or advance tickets, please call Jenifer Blemings at 203 776-9900.



Second Annual Golf Classic A Success! On Friday, May 10, 88 golfers joined News Team 8 reporter Tom Lewis and News Channel 8 Anchorpeople Keith Kountz and Jocelyn Amenta under brilliant blue skies for ALSO-Cornerstone's second annual Golf Classic. The day's events included putting and chipping contests and two hole-in-one contests with new cars as prizes. More than \$5,000 was raised to support ALSO-Cornerstone's programs. The Golf Classic was sponsored by WTNH-TV and WCTX-TV. Thanks to our many sponsors and to the golfers for helping to make the day a success. A special note of thanks to the Golf Classic Committee: Emil Occhiboi, Frank Glowski, Tom Maercklein, Chuck Hoxley, Ron Fiorella, Peter Mezzetti, and Don Ondusky. Please visit our website, www.al-corn.org to see more pictures and a sponsors' list.

Piece by Piece: An Artist's Road to Recovery



In January, artist and Norton Court client Nancy B. held her first art exhibition at Koffee? in New Haven's Audubon Arts District. More than 50 people attended her opening exhibition on January 6.

Artist Nancy B. has been an intermittent client of Cornerstone, and now ALSO-Cornerstone, for nearly two decades, coming back to us in periods of great stress. She suffered a traumatic brain injury (T.B.I.) when she was in her early 20s and her struggle to regain her life and her sense of self has been painful and difficult. In spite of the devastating effects of the T.B.I., Nancy has been independent for most of the past two decades, maintaining her own apartment and working part-time.

Her most recent return, to the Norton Court Supportive Independent Residences Program, is helping to launch her career as an artist. Her work was recently exhibited at Koffee? on Audubon Street in New Haven's arts district. The exhibition was facilitated by the gentle support of Norton Court Caseworker Ken Pollans (please see article on page 12). Nancy sold \$550 worth of work on opening day, and her work so impressed Madison resident Sonali Roychoudhury, that Nancy has been invited to participate in the Town of Madison's Arts & Crafts show this summer.

We are pleased that the relationships Nancy has developed with ALSO-

Cornerstone staff have engendered such trust that she chooses to come back to us in times of need. Her life following her accident has been inordinately difficult. But Nancy is a woman of considerable strength and resources as well as a talented artist. Through art, her faith, and human connections, Nancy has found a path toward recovery. She wrote the following statement for the Koffee? exhibition as introduction to her work.

I am a 44 1/2 year old woman, daughter, sister, aunt, friend, and patient. I grew up in West Hartford. Senior year of high school, I won the Art Achievement Scholastic Award for my unique subject pages in the Hall High Yearbook. I studied child studies and psychology in college and graduate school at Colgate, Tufts, and Boston College.

In 1979 I sustained a closed-head injury, a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), giving me a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity. In 1985, I suffered the loss of my father when he died of non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. He had been in and out of remission since I was 9 years old.

My artwork takes on several distinct periods in my early life. (My T.B.I.

treatment was not diagnosed or prescribed for 10 years.) Pen and ink in black and white drawings were my choice medium. I moved into collage and painting in oil and acrylic through some course work at Colgate, Creative Arts Workshop, Lyme Art Academy and the museum school in New London. I learned a lot about Alber's Color Theory and loved to work in color. Drawing and creating form were my strengths. I enjoy working in pastels, and oil sticks. I returned to school at Paier College of Art to study graphic design/production. I got a computer years later. This training was formal, structured and not very abstract, but trompe l'oeil, more true-to-life work. I got a grant from the state to study at Paier and graduated in 1992.

I have rediscovered my ability to create in artistic media, poetry and writing. My sense of spirituality started early on in the Jewish religion. I redefined my higher power and lately, have been studying Reluctant Prophets. In my rehab, I learned a great deal about self-control, emotion regulation, as I got dysregulated easily and could not create. I have a strong sense of myself now, and I am not filled with anger, grief and the emptiness by which I was once consumed. Chaos in my life has changed to a sense of self-fulfillment and understanding of my strengths, self-expression and renewal. This show, Piece by Piece, is how my recovery has unfolded, step by step moving beyond myself into the community and camaraderie of others, together on life's path.

Nancy's recent activity includes winning "Best in Show" for her painting

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Nancy's portrait of a friend's feet was a favorite at the opening and sold within the first half hour.

Special Client Activities Include New York City Trip, Black History Month Activities, Theatre Performances, and Awards Dinner



The New York City trip last December included a ride on the Staten Island Ferry. During the ride, to honor those who were lost, and those who willingly gave their lives on September 11, each member of the group threw a carnation into the water when we were in full view of Ground Zero.

Client-staff outings and gatherings are a wonderful way for participants and staff in our programs to stay in touch with one another and to enjoy the many offerings of the Greater New Haven area and the Northeast region. During the past several months, ALSO-Cornerstone clients have been engaged in a number of special events.

Last December, thanks to a generous donation by the Probud Club of Hamden, more than 50 clients and staff took a holiday outing to New York City. Activities included a ride on the Staten Island Ferry, lunch in a restaurant, and a choice between visiting St. Patrick's Cathedral, skating at Rockefeller Center, and window shopping on Fifth Avenue. The decision to undertake the trip to New



More than 30 clients and staff gathered at Norton Court on January 21 to honor Dr. Martin Luther King.

York was carefully considered -- many clients (and staff) were uncertain whether they could bear being so close to the former World Trade Center site so soon after the September 11 tragedy. When the decision to move forward with the trip was made, participants agreed that when we were on the Staten Island Ferry, in full view of Ground Zero, every member of the group would throw a flower into

the water to honor those who had died.

On Martin Luther King Day Holiday, more than 30 clients and staff gathered at Norton Court to celebrate Dr. King's life and the many contributions he and other African Americans have made to American life and culture.

The month of February was filled with Black History Month activities that culminated in an art show entitled "The Struggle for Freedom." A panel of four judges that included three members of ArtSpace's Board of Directors and a postdoctoral candidate in sociology at Yale chose the four works that best depicted the theme. Many thanks to painter Tony Falcone, sculptor Doug Morrill, photographer Mark Depman, and poet Derrick Gilbert for donating their time to the event. After much debate, Best in show went to artist Nancy B's "Rapprochement." First prize went to JF's "I have a dream" mobile and poem; second prize was given to MD for his collage about his mother, Augustina, and third prize was awarded to SF for her collage about Martin Luther King's Struggle for Freedom.

In March, a week before St. Patrick's Day, clients and staff went to a special benefit performance of *The Clearing*, an award-winning play by English playwright Helen Edmundson. Our clients



Artist Nancy B.'s "Rapprochement" won Best in Show in the art show. See article on facing page.

were able to attend the performance thanks to the generous donations of many members of the community. (See short article on page 10.)

On Tuesday, May 21, in observance of National Mental Health Awareness Month, ALSO-Cornerstone held its third annual Awards Dinner for clients of the residential services programs. The Awards Dinner is an important milestone for our clients and a night when everyone affiliated with the agency will feel proud -- case managers have nominated every one of their clients for an award, thereby ensuring that every client would feel a sense of pride and accomplishment. Examples of the achievements for which our clients were honored include staying drug free, being a trusted friend, finding and maintaining an apartment in the community, and being honored as an exemplary employee.



Agency Collaborations

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is administered by the South Central Behavioral Health Network, Inc.

Through TAP a team drawn from staff of the collaborating agencies visits New Haven's emergency shelters, local soup kitchens and a variety of locations throughout the community every day, Monday through Friday, to connect with chronically homeless individuals. TAP clients have personal histories of trauma and neglect, many treatment failures, and live on the margins of society. The focus of this work is effective and intensive case management of people who are chronically homeless, abuse substances, and live in city-funded shelters. Weekly inter-agency rounds provide a forum for case managers to share information on resources and offer practical solutions and insights on difficult cases and enable outreach workers to coordinate ongoing engagement and treatment planning over time. Case managers are encouraged to view their work with the client as a journey that begins with fostering trust and includes empathy



and direction and strive to be consistent and reliable and always emphasize client choice and responsibility

Through their efforts, TAP clients have gained access to a wide range of treatment and housing resources, and case managers' access to information about the clients and their use of services has improved, thus strengthening the TAP team's efforts to

work toward a more integrated service network within the community. Their work has touched the lives of dozens of homeless individuals in New Haven, many of whom, as a result of the connections they made with TAP team members, have begun the journey back toward reintegration into the community.

New Programs/Collaborations

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Many new staff have joined the agency in recent months. In December, **Lincoln Douglas, Ed.D.**, assumed the position of Director of Prevention & Intervention vacated by Esther Armmand, who joined the staff of the City of New Haven, and **Michael Johnson** was appointed director of the new Ruoppolo Manor Supportive Housing Program.

In May, **Robert Chang, M.D.**, **Danielle Morgan, MSN, APRN-BC**, and **Joanne Wright** joined the expanding clinical program as Psychiatrist, Director of Outpatient Services, and per-diem Social Worker respectively.

Other new staff include: **Michael Abbott**, Per-Diem in the Pendleton program; **Lorena Barham-Moore**, Case Manager at Park Street; **Claire Bien, M.Ed.**, development manager; **Ethel Bethea**, per-diem in the Pendleton program; **April Birdsong**, Case Manager at Ruoppolo Manor; **Renay Ghant-Eaton**, DWI and Drug Education Counselor; **Jiliana Giamette**, case manager in the Pendleton program; **Wanda Gomez**, Case Manager at Norton Court; **Camille Hilton**, per diem in the Family Support Collaborative; **Stephanie Kuhns**, administrative assistant, and **Wilbert Palma**, IT support staff.

ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.'s mission focuses on helping individuals and families affected by mental illness and/or addictions attain stability, recovery and independence and lead productive lives in the community. Its goals are directed at full integration of its clients into the life of the community, and its dedicated staff works to prevent the need for hospitalization and loss of independence during acute episodes of illness.

ALSO-Cornerstone's Consumer Advisory Council, composed of clients in our supportive housing programs, provides important feedback and guidance to staff and administration. Council members and staff recently gathered at our 871 State Street office for a meeting and lunch.

Healthy Start

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ongoing impact that this unexpressed and disenfranchised grief has had on them. Many of the attendees made connections with other providers and committed to continuing the dialogue around gender differences in perinatal loss.”

In order to develop the program, Lynch is working toward strengthening existing partnerships and establishing new ones in order to develop a program that will meet the individual needs of every client. Players in these partnerships will include the Visiting Nurses Association of South Central Connecticut (VNA), the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis (CCCC), Casey Family Services, the Hospital of St. Raphael, the Yale Child Study Center, the Yale Depression Program, Life Haven, New Haven Public Schools, and Christian Tabernacle Baptist Church.

The information gathered thus far at meetings and inservices in the area of infant loss and bereavement creates a strong argument about the need for additional services in this area. The stories of clients seen by Peter Lynch under the auspices of the program strengthen the case. Following are short histories of several of the 10 bereaved families seen in ALSO-Cornerstone’s Healthy Start clinic. Some information has been altered to protect client confidentiality. In each case, the mother is the identified client. The voice is Peter Lynch’s.

A couple came because they had delivered twin babies who died at birth. Their families, both loving and supportive, told them to “get over it.” They became enraged and felt a double loss. Through therapy, Lynch and the



couple established some rituals for the couple to perform, including a memorial service to honor the memory of the twins. Members of both families and their parish participated in the service. After a few months the wife became pregnant, The couple is now awaiting a new life while honoring those lives that existed briefly.

A family was referred for crisis bereavement work because they had experienced a motor vehicle accident with multiple deaths. The mother was overwhelmed, and paralyzed by her grief. As we explored her grief, we discovered that it was added to another loss that had not been addressed: approximately six months before her husband died, she had had a stillbirth. She was now grieving for her baby, her husband, and the fact that she and her husband could never have more children together. Grief upon grief - and that work continues in this clinic.

One woman was referred by DCF because she had relapsed into using crack cocaine after a lengthy period of clean time. She had a teenager and a toddler at home. After initial intake it was discovered that one of the major stressors was a pregnancy that had been aborted. The father was the woman’s drug dealer. Issues of recovery and child safety all surfaced as she looked at the impact of her recent abortion and all the issues it raised for her.

One woman came whose infant daughter died unexpectedly in her arms. She experienced intense PTSD and could no longer work. She was also suicidal, and began to experience intense rage at her surviving child. Family treatment is ongoing in this case.

Although this program is considered one of ALSO-Cornerstone’s “new” services, in fact it addresses a need that is as old as life itself. We look forward to working with the Community Foundation and Healthy Start to continue to be responsive to the needs of parents who experience grievous loss.

For more information, or to make a referral, please call Peter Lynch at 203 776-9900. For more information about other ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc. programs, please visit our website,

www.al-corn.org

An Artist’s Journey

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Like many artists who suffer from mental illness, Nancy is drawn to the work of Vincent van Gogh. Here she demonstrates her talents as a copyist.

“Rapprochement” in ALSO-Cornerstone’s recent Black History Month Art Show, “The Struggle for Freedom,” and a show at Charrette/ Utrecht in New Haven. She is currently preparing for the Madison Show and has made an agreement with a Guilford Gallery to exhibit her work on consignment.

Ruoppolo

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motivational and life skills groups. Discussions may range from spirituality to anger management. Weekly discussions of current events are an integral part of the programming, as are life skills groups where guests from a variety of disciplines speak. A high point of the programming is the “Community Involvement” program, where every resident of Ruoppolo Manor, irrespective of their affiliation with the Ruoppolo Manor Supportive Housing Program is invited for an afternoon of games, movies and other recreational activities. As we go to press, 11 clients have been accepted into the Ruoppolo program.

ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc. Wish Lists

Dear Friends,

During the winter we gathered from our residential directors and clients “wish lists” of items that would improve the quality of our residents’ lives. Some of the items are large and expensive (beds, dressers, televisions); others are small and, for most people, easily acquired. Some are necessities (beds, sheets, dishes, socks); others are luxuries (movie tickets, televisions). We would be most grateful if you would review the following lists and consider what you might be willing and able to give. Gift certificates to specific stores and outright donations are welcome. We also welcome contact information to local businesses that you believe would be receptive to the prospect of making a significant donation of furniture to our residential programs. Thank you!

Norton Family Support Collaborative

- Baby and infant car seats – both for office use and to give away to parents who have access to cars and no car seats
- Booster seats
- Welcome baskets for clients moving into new apartments (containing household items such as dishes, sheets, silverware, pots & pans, etc.
- Toys to give away for kids birthdays, holidays, etc.
- Kids clothes for all ages and sizes (coats, boots, school clothes, socks, etc.)



Dwight House Group Home

- Television
- Room air conditioners
- Funds to create model male/female rooms fitted with:
 - Fresh paint
 - New beds & dressers
 - Lamps, nightstands, area rugs
 - Hampers
 - Bedding
 - Blinds/curtains
 - Framed prints
- Long-distance phone cards for clients
- Movie tickets



Park Street Residence

- 5 new beds
- 5 regular sitting chairs
- Sheets, pillows, comforter, sleep sofa
- Hallway runners
- 2 area rugs, approximately 9' x 12'



Pendleton House

- 12 dressers
- 12 beds
- 4 microwaves
- 4 televisions
- 4 love seats
- 4 kitchen tables and chairs
- 4 coffee tables
- 4 end tables
- 4 shower/tub inserts (1, 3, or 5-piece replacement covers)



Client Wish List

- Dress shirts, pants, and jackets
- Winter coats
- Sweaters
- Socks and underwear
- Shoes, sneakers
- Painters’ work clothes
- Jeans
- Timberland boots!
- Blankets
- Electric heater
- Alarm clock, watch
- Movie tickets

SPECIAL ALL-AGENCY WISH:

- New Van for taking clients to appointments and recreational activities.

SCSU Players Hold Benefit for ALSO-Cornerstone



Southern Connecticut State University’s Crescent Players, under the direction of Professor Sheila Hickey Garvey, held a special performance of Helen Edmundson’s award winning play, *The Clearing*, on Sunday, March 10. The play addresses the forced relocation of thousands of Irish under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell. The play addressed the issues of hatred, prejudice and ethnic cleansing. As part of the benefit, theatregoers were invited to participate in pre- and post-play discussions of what we as an enlightened people can do to try to resolve those issues in order to create a more just society. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, several ALSO-Cornerstone clients were able to attend the play and participate in the pre- and post-play discussions. In all, more than \$1,800 was raised to support client and family social activities in the coming months.

WE'RE ONLINE!

VISIT US AT
WWW.AL~CORN.ORG

Thanks to our donors

We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals and organizations who in recent months have supported ALSO-Cornerstone's Programs and Services with donations of \$1,000 or more from July 1, 2001 - March 30, 2002.

William & Jean Graustein
 Ruth Lord
 Marian Milbank
 Judith Normandin
 Jane Marcher Charitable Foundation
 New Haven Savings Bank
 News Channel 8
 Probus Club of Hamden
 Jerald P. Ross
 St. Raphael Healthcare System

Many thanks to the following individuals and organizations for their generous support from July 1, 2001 - March 30, 2002.

Annual Appeal

Lane & May Ameen
 Margery & Norman Andrews
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 Donald & Sandra Bialos
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 Charlotte White
 Jessica Wilson

In Memory of

Rita E. Bree
 Marian B. Milbank
Anna Scaccafero
 Jean A. Graney
 Judith Normandin
Louise B. Thomas
 Mary Dunn
 Joan Beauchamp

In Honor of

Gail Korrick's Special Birthday
 Gloria & Bob Dulin
Bess Chosak
 Cris & Ed Blanchard
Charles Leonard
 Sharon Bruno

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 Linda Richetelli-Pepe
 Jerald P. Ross
 Kristin Sigurdardottir
 Sikorsky Aircraft
 St. Raphael Healthcare System
 United Way of the Capital Area
 Mark Vanacore

The Clearing Benefit

Elena Anastas
 Joan Beauchamp
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 Jenifer Blemings
 Lee Anne Borkowski
 Edward & Michelle Caputo

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 The Rodriguez Family
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Jill Valko
 Mark Vanacore
 Yale Child Study Center

In-Kind Donations

Matt Abbott
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 Jenifer Blemings
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 Pat Corraro
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 Dunkin Donuts - State Street
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 Educated Burger
 Tony Falcone, Artspace
 Sheila Hickey Garvey, SCSU
 Derrick Gilbert
 Debbie Holloway
 Katie Lynch
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 Monica's - Guilford
 Dave Moorman
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 News Channel 8
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 SCSU Crescent Players
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Gifted Case Manager Touches Clients, Inspires Co-workers



Ken Pollans is a soft-spoken man. The kind of man a person instinctively trusts. A former schoolteacher (more than 23 years teaching Greenwich

second graders!), Ken exudes warmth, patience, and genuine kindness, all wonderful traits for an ALSO-Cornerstone caseworker. Ken is gifted at his job. During the five years of his employment in ALSO-Cornerstone's Norton Court Supportive Independent Housing program, he has been able to turn around the lives of several clients who were so withdrawn that they were thought unreachable. He accomplished this task by gaining their trust and respect, patiently working with them to help them stay focused and motivated, and ensuring that they follow through with the goals and contracts they set for themselves.

Norton Court Program Director Lee Anne Borkowski observes, "It has been a pleasure to work with Ken for the past five years. Ken is one of the most dependable and responsible case

managers I have had the opportunity to supervise. He has earned the reputation within the network of being able to "work miracles" with some of the harder-to-reach clients in the system, helping them acquire the ability to live independently. He is also an outstanding 'Team player.' Ken sets the example for the rest of our team at Norton Court. He has a positive approach to everything he takes on and is always willing to go out of his way to help fellow caseworkers."

Ken's co-workers are equally filled with praise, and describe him as a considerate co-worker and skillful and caring case manager.

Perhaps the best testament to Ken's abilities as a case manager is that when several of his clients were asked if they would provide a quotation for this newsletter, were delighted to do so, dashing off statements and signing their full names with a flourish. We have chosen to use only their initials in order to protect their privacy.

Ken is a great case manager. He always has an encouraging word for me," - JF

My case manager Ken is a very understanding person. He helps me learn all about music and how to save money." - WF

Our case manager Ken is very understanding. He always keep sus going and very happy. Every time something comes up, Ken is happy to help. I like having Ken's help . . . Thanks! - EA

Some time after Ken began working with WF, then Dwight House Program Director Jenifer Blemings wrote Ken a note about the changes she had seen in WF. "It wasn't that long ago that I would see W out on Dwight Street shadow boxing with himself. He was generally unkempt, often didn't respond when greeted, and never smiled. . . . He is such a changed man! he looks so much better, he smiles, he seems happy to be seen, says 'hello' and is seen regularly around our neighborhood, out and about. . . . [Y]ou are doing outstanding work with a client once perceived as difficult and unengageable."

Reagin Curran, Director of the Family Support Collaborative states, "Ken and I have worked together for the past five years. He is an excellent case manager, is kind and patient and gives 100 % to his job. Ken is a great person and we are fortunate to work with him."



ALSO-Cornerstone, Inc.
871 State Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06511

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