



# Crossings

A Community Support System

www.bridgesmilford.org

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## MISSION STATEMENT

Bridges provides a comprehensive range of outpatient mental health, addiction, community support and home-based services for children, families and adults residing in Milford, Orange, West Haven and their surrounding communities.

## Support Bridges Through Planned Giving

Bequests provide an easy and direct way to give to Bridges' Endowment Fund. Interest from this fund will help ensure the finest in mental health and addiction services for years to come. For information on bequests and other planned giving vehicles, please contact Robert H. Morgan, Chief Development Officer at Bridges at (203) 878-6365 ext. 419.

## SPRING 2008

Letter from the President/CEO



## A Crisis Looms Before Us

*A Call to Action*

Dear Friends,

Lately it seems every time we pick up the morning newspaper, every time we watch the evening news, there is another story about the weakening economy. A slowing economy inevitably results in a decrease in tax revenue collected by the state and the projections for the upcoming year are not optimistic.

The state legislature released its fiscal year '09 budget (July '08 through June '09) recently. Despite earlier indications of a significant cost-of-living adjustment - it appears that Connecticut's community providers - including Bridges - will see their funding from the state increase by a meager 1%, possibly less.

With prices of nearly everything rising at an alarming pace, a 1% increase will likely require significant cutbacks

in services we make available and the programs we offer. The most unfortunate reality is that in uncertain economic times the need for the types of help we provide typically grows.

I can assure you that Bridges and the Connecticut Community Providers Association - an organization of state-wide private health care providers - will do everything within our ability to fight for a budget that allows us to continue to care for those who need us most.

Still, as passionate and persuasive as we can be, there is nothing more powerful than the will of the people. Please contact your state representatives as soon as possible to let them know how you feel about this issue. Mention that you understand that every dollar spent on services and programs like those Bridges offers, results in seven fewer dollars spent on law enforcement, emergency services and other similar expenses. We need your voice!

### Important Contacts:

Governor Jodi Rell	1-800-406-1527
Speaker of the House James Amann	1-800-842-1902
Senate President Don Williams	1-800-842-1420

## Date Set for Bridges' 2008 Gala

*Event Features Tri-State Debut of Faces of the Mind Photo Exhibit*

This year, Bridges annual gala also marks the opening of a very special photo exhibit entitled "Faces of the Mind," by Portland Maine based artist, Jerry Robinov.

A tour de force of photojournalism, this collection of 50 portraits captures the extraordinary courage of people determined to overcome mental illness and addiction. Starkly but eloquently, each portrait in "Faces of the Mind" contributes a unique story and a searing image to create an unforgettable anthology of hope.

The gala is scheduled for Saturday, June 14, 2008 at the Seton Gallery in Dodds Hall at the University of New Haven. The evening's events will include a hors d'oeuvres, carving stations and silent auction with a multitude of exciting items including sports memorabilia, gift certificates and a wide variety of other articles.

For more information, please call Ann Loesch, Events Coordinator, at 203-878-6365 ext.359 or e-mail her at aloesch@bridgesmilford.org.

## New Program Helps Build Employment Readiness

Bridges to Business, a new program designed to build job skills, is a collaborative effort between Street Smart Ventures, The State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and Bridges' Young Adult Services (YAS) program.

The program focuses on business development in the areas of desktop publishing, sewing, jewelry making and arts development, with an emphasis on increasing team building, communication, vocational and social development proficiency.

The goal of the program is to help participants become better prepared for employment success by focusing on various objectives including:

- Training in creation of customized projects
- Working well in community employment environments
- Building educational and financial incentives
- Readiness assessment
- Placement and post-placement support
- Creating and selling marketable products
- Working within budgets and profitability

To date, Bridges to Business has resulted in four new enterprises, Sew to Success (sewn products), Bedazzled Designers (handmade fashion jewelry), Xpressions Printing (desktop publishing, printing and graphic design) and Low Key Café (expressive art forum).



Low Key Cafe

For more information about Bridges to Business, please contact Bridges YAS Recovery Manager, Shirley Leto at 203.937.7777, Ext. 618.

## Local Teen Spreads Holiday Joy at Bridges

In mid-March, Kaylee Georgie, a young girl from West Haven created and then donated 24 beautiful Easter baskets for the clients at Bridges. This was the 3rd year in a row she performed this good deed on our behalf.

Kaylee enlists assistance gathering the contents of the baskets at her church and several people step-up and donate candy and baskets. As in past years, the baskets included hand-crocheted bunnies, donated by an area woman. This year, Kaylee also sent out a letter to Stop & Shop and a few other local chains, an effort that resulted in a number of additional donations.

We thank Kaylee for her hard work and warmly applaud her generosity of spirit.

## News in Brief

### May is Mental Health Awareness Month

### Bridges 2008 Photo Contest

*Theme for 2008 Photo Contest: Faces*

Bridges annual photo contest is underway. There is no entrance fee and gift certificate in the amounts of \$80, \$50 and \$35 will be awarded for first, second and third place, respectively. For entrance forms or more information, call Bridges at (203) 878-6365. Forms can also be picked up at NewAlliance Bank – Milford Green branch, 68 Broad Street, or Milford Photo – 22 River Street.

### Save the Date

*September 14, 2008*

#### Folks on Spokes/Folks on Foot

17th annual edition of Bridges' signature fundraising event at Fowler Field in Milford.



Kaylee Georgie (right) and Wendy Gibbons-Shepro, Prevention Program Supervisor



949 Bridgeport Avenue  
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### SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF MILFORD, ORANGE AND WEST HAVEN

Bridges is supported by: CT Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services, CT Dept. of Children & Families, CT Dept. of Developmental Services, CT Dept. of Social Services, CT Health Fdn., United Way of Milford, City of Milford, Milford Board of Education, Town of Orange, U.S. Department of Education.

Bridges is accredited by Commission on Accreditation for Rehabilitative Facilities (CARF), for its clinical programs, community support services and residential programs. Bridges is licensed by the State of CT Dept. of Children & Families, and CT Dept. of Public Health.

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