

# BRIDGES crossings

Bridges...A Community Support System, Inc.

[www.bridgesmilford.org](http://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.

The Kids Crisis Response Service has changed as of March 1st.

This service for children is now called

**EMERGENCY MOBILE PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES (EMPS)**

To access EMPS call,  
**211**

Bridges will continue to provide EMPS to the same 9 towns as before.

EMPS is funded by the State Department of Children and Families.

Spring 2009

## Letter from the President/CEO



**REGIONAL COLLABORATION WORKS!**

*Help us get the message out!*

Dear Friends,

Recent proposals from our governor and state legislature calling for cuts in our funding will negatively impact the vulnerable populations that we serve now, and consequently cost more in the long run. Bridges' continues to strive to address such actions by promoting efficiencies in the delivery of healthcare services, but we need more thoughtful consideration of the true effect of these cuts.

Demonstrating these efficiencies is Bridges' collaboration with CommuniCare Inc. (CCI). Here, advocacy and resources are shared between Bridges, Birmingham Group Health Services, and Harbor Health Services. Together, we address the long term challenges and opportunities that a continually changing healthcare environment present. As a result of this collaboration, we are able to better service an area with a population of over 320,000 people.

CCI offers a cost effective and responsive system of services that assures local community access with a broad and comprehensive continuum of care. CCI's South Central Crisis Services is a prime example of a cost effective regional model that has received statewide recognition. It reduces ER overcrowding by providing triage

and mobile services for individuals in crisis situations, thereby drastically reducing costs to the state.

Our non-profit behavioral healthcare system has proven to be an essential safety network. In addition to easing the burden on costly ER and hospital use, CCI provides a broad range of community services. These include for example, housing and supported employment for those with severe mental illness, and services that prevent many with behavioral problems from incarceration and its associated costs. The average annual cost for a bed in a state facility is \$500,000. One year of outpatient service provided by Bridges averages under \$10,000. That means 60 to 100 adults or children could be helped by Bridges for the cost of one bed!

Now is not the time for a reduction in state funding to agencies that provide these critical services. In recent years, as we have seen the need for our vital services increase, we have seen a watering down of our state funding through the lack of adequate cost of living adjustments (COLA). This lack of funding support ultimately costs us more in both financial and human terms, hurting real people in our communities.

Please take this opportunity to make a difference and get this point across to your State Legislators. If you truly want to reduce healthcare costs and help our citizens, then insist that efficient agencies like Bridges and our CommuniCare partners are adequately funded. We have provided you with contact information on the reverse side of this page.

Thank you,

  
Barry Kasdan

## Date Set for Bridges' 2009 Gala

**"I'm OK But YOU Need Professional Help:  
The Lighter Side of Mental Health!"**



David Granirer combines his experiences as a consumer, counselor and comedian to give an inspiring and hilarious perspective on people with mental illness and their fight against public stigma. David also gives humor in the workplace presentations, helping organizations across North America use humor to decrease stress, increase wellness and cope with change. He has taught stand-up comedy to recovering drug addicts and cancer patients, and is the founder of Stand Up For Mental Health.

Join us for this fun evening with dinner and a silent auction on Saturday, May 16. For more information, please call Ann Loesch, Events Coordinator, at 203-878-6365 ext.359 or register online at [www.bridgesmilford.org](http://www.bridgesmilford.org).

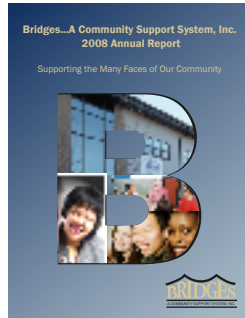
**CommuniCare**  
**A Model For Regional**  
**Collaboration**

Established in 1996, CommuniCare was organized to address both the long term challenges and opportunities that a continually changing healthcare environment presented. To help meet the emerging needs of citizens living and working in their regions, Birmingham Group Health Services, Inc., Bridges...A Community Support System, Inc., and Harbor Health Services, Inc. came together to form a unique and dynamic partnership. In 1996 the onset of commercial managed care was a major threat. Today state rebidding of contracts, coupled with the rapidly deteriorating economy has placed many non-profits and their clients at risk.

Historically, the behavioral health field has been confronted by many threats, and at times this has been complicated by the uncertainty of both public and private funding as well as third party reimbursement. In Connecticut the non-profit behavioral healthcare system has been the bedrock of a comprehensive, community-based safety network. This system of mental health and addiction services has assured that our most vulnerable adults and children have affordable, efficient and quality services that are accessible at the local level.

All three CommuniCare member agencies are licensed, nationally accredited and are designated by the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services as Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs). With additional funding from Department of Social Services, Department of Developmental Services, Department of Children and Families along with local and private sources, these agencies provide a

comprehensive range of recovery based psychiatric and substance abuse services for adults and children.



*Our 2008 Annual Report  
and information about our programs  
can be viewed online at:  
[www.bridgesmilford.org](http://www.bridgesmilford.org)*

In celebration of May as  
Mental Health Awareness Month,  
Bridges invites you to  
participate in a  
**photography contest**

The subject of all entries must be  
**"Humor in Life"**

Winners will be announced at the  
reception on May 6, 2009 at  
NewAlliance Bank Milford Green Branch

First Prize: \$80 gift certificate to  
Milford Photo

Second Prize: \$50 gift certificate to  
Milford Photo

Third Prize: \$35 gift certificate to  
Milford Photo

All registered entrants will receive a gift  
certificate for one 11" x 14" print from  
Milford Photo. \$10 Value

Entry forms are available at Milford  
Photo, NewAlliance Bank and  
Bridges Reception Desk

Entries will be accepted at Milford Photo  
April 23rd - 25th

**Please contact your elected officials on behalf of Bridges**

**State Senators**

Deputy President Pro Tempore  
Toni N. Harp  
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800-842-1420

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**State Representatives**

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949 Bridgeport Avenue  
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**Serving the communities of  
Milford, Orange, West Haven, and vicinity**

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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