



The Newsletter of David Lawrence Center CENTERED

50 Years of Mental Health & Addiction Recovery

COMPASSION & COOPERATION IN COLLIER CO.



From the CEO *Scott Burgess*

In a time when it can be hard to find cooperation and compassion in current culture, I'm proud to report we've got plenty of both in Collier County.

One instance of this was a recent unanimous vote by our County Board of Commissioners to adopt a five-year strategic plan for mental health and addiction services right here in our community.

As a supporter of David Lawrence Center, you already know that we are very much invested in providing these types of services for the long haul. But the Commission's adoption of this plan represents compassion and cooperation across multiple agencies and organizations – something that is, unfortunately, rather unique in these times.



"...the Commission's adoption of this plan represents compassion and cooperation across multiple agencies and organizations..."

— SCOTT BURGESS, DLC CEO

Many local leaders are rallying around this plan, including the Board of County Commissioners, the Sheriff and his office, the school system, local health care systems, our Veteran community, and many more. They are all committed to the same goal: immediate access to care for individuals who are struggling with mental health and/or addiction issues. *We're all in one boat, rowing hard together in the same direction, and we're blessed to have this kind of teamwork and partnership.*

The biggest highlights of the plan include:

- 1) **Building a Central Receiving Facility**, which will allow us to double our emergency evaluation, inpatient, and detox capacity for meeting the ever-growing needs.
- 2) **Adding more supportive housing**. Current DLC-sponsored housing can accommodate only 30 individuals; that's just a small percentage of the overwhelming local need, so I'm thrilled this is a community priority.
- 3) **Improved community awareness, education, and prevention** about mental health and addiction. We must think of mental health and substance use challenges as part of regular healthcare, not as something to be ashamed of when it comes to seeking help.

Finally, I want to let you know about this year's DLC Sound Minds™ Luncheon, which will be held April 3. **The Honorable Patrick J. Kennedy**, a former U.S. Congressman and a champion for mental health and substance use issues, is our guest speaker. The Luncheon will also serve as our major fundraising event for 2020. *(For more details about DLC's Sound Minds Luncheon, see page 3 of this newsletter, or visit DLCSoundMinds.org).*

As always, I'm incredibly thankful for your support!

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MISSION

Restoring and rebuilding lives by providing compassionate, advanced and exceptional mental health, substance use and integrated healthcare solutions, available to all.

VISION

To lead the way in transformational care so each individual assisted can achieve what is possible.

David Lawrence Center is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization and is accredited by The Joint Commission. The Center is funded in part by the State of Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Collier County Department of Housing, Human and Veteran Services, and private donations made through fundraising efforts.

DLC NEWS

New program provides peer counseling for addiction



Oftentimes, people struggling with addiction go back to old habits immediately after being helped by rescue personnel or in emergency rooms, ignoring

the pleas of doctors and nurses to get additional help. However, someone who has gone through similar experiences – someone who has been there, done that, bottomed out – may be more likely to get through.

That’s the idea behind the new Hospital Bridge Program, a collaboration between DLC, Physicians Regional Medical Center (PRMC), and NCH Healthcare System (NCH), and funded by a grant from the Florida Department of Children and Families.

The Bridge program provides peer recovery support and outreach services to individuals experiencing substance use issues in the hospital emergency departments of PRMC and NCH. Peer support services include peer mentoring and education; recovery coaching; referral and linkage to treatment services; and assistance with coordination of services.

As someone who formerly suffered with an addiction to heroin, crack, and alcohol, Jake Ponsky is now five years sober and a Peer Recovery Specialist in the Hospital Bridge Program.

“These individuals are often looking for a peer, not someone in a lab coat,” says Ponsky. “I can tell them that I used to be right where they are, and hopefully I can help. They tend to listen.”

Ponsky’s goal is to get the person into a detox or treatment program, either at one of the local medical facilities or at DLC’s Crossroads residential rehab program.

“These individuals are often looking for a peer, not someone in a lab coat. I can tell them that I used to be right where they are, and hopefully I can help. They tend to listen.”

– JAKE PONSKY
DLC’S PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST

Ponsky remembers one particular client who had just about given up on life after a crushing relapse. “I was able to sit with him, feel his pain, understand, and even talk about my own relapse,” says Ponsky. “I was just trying to sow hope, telling him that I believed in him. I said, ‘We can do this together, you and I.’”

The client listened, continued with his detox and treatment, and regained his sobriety.

The Hospital Bridge Program has been implemented successfully in other parts of Florida, mostly to address the opioid epidemic. Ponsky is one of two peer specialists representing DLC in local emergency rooms.



SUCCESS STORY

"I Could Actually Have Hope"

By Amanda

As a child, I had no idea what was wrong with me. I grew up in a loving family who supported me in every way possible. And yet I felt disconnected.

I had friends, but I always wanted to be alone. And I had an out-of-control competitive streak. I felt like I had to be the best in everything.

When I couldn't be the best, I'd make myself sick and stay home from school. I'd do self-injurious behavior such as punching myself in the face or banging my head against the wall. Once, I even tried to jump out of a moving car.

I became addicted to everything. Sugar. Sports. School. Boys. And alcohol and drugs. In ninth grade, I lost three people who were close to me. One was killed over a drug deal, another died in a car accident, and another died by suicide. It was too much for me to handle, and I went through some pretty dark trauma.

Alcohol and weed became my best friends. I was eventually kicked out of high school because I couldn't make the grades, and I was often blacked-out drunk. I switched to an alternative school, and barely graduated.

I kept up like this for a few years. At 21, I went on a 17-day bender, ingesting as many drugs and alcohol as possible. When the drugs stopped working, I stopped cold turkey, and flushed all the drugs and booze down the toilet and went into a self-imposed detox.

It was horrible. I felt like I was having a mental breakdown, like my brain broke in half. I was banging my head on the wall, wanting to pass out. I think I wanted to die.

When I missed a few days of work, people got worried. My boss called to check up on me, and my parents came to my place. When they found me in that condition, they took me

straight to DLC to get help. The main thing I remember about my time at DLC was that everyone there was so kind. I never knew that people could care about someone they didn't know. They gave me hope.

I wish I could say my life completely turned around at that point, but over the next couple of years, it was two steps forward, one step back.

But my time at DLC really made a difference. They gave me the confidence that I could beat my addictions. They made me understand the importance of 12-step meetings. And, after diagnosing me with bipolar disorder, they convinced me of the need to take the right prescription medications, so I could be of sound mind.



"My time at DLC really made a difference. They gave me the confidence that I could beat my addictions."

— AMANDA, DLC CLIENT

I've been sober for several years now. I'm teaching yoga classes, and I love my new life in recovery. I'm active in the recovery community, sharing my story. I want to help people avoid the mistakes I've made, to keep them from going down the hard roads that I've been down.

My life is wonderful now, and that all started because of the kindness, support, and help I received at DLC. Supporters like you make success stories like Amanda's possible. Thank you for your support!



DLC SOUND MINDS™ LUNCHEON

APRIL 3, 2020, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
RITZ-CARLTON GOLF RESORT
2600 TIBURON DRIVE, NAPLES
TICKETS: \$275 INDIVIDUAL; \$500 VIP
DLCsoundminds.org



We are pleased to announce that DLC's 2020 Sound Minds™ Luncheon will feature The Honorable Patrick J. Kennedy, a former Congressman (D-RI) and Founder of The Kennedy Forum, who will detail his personal and political journey with mental illness and substance use disorders. Immediately following the luncheon will be a VIP reception. Sponsorship opportunities are available. For more details, visit DLCsoundminds.org or e-mail donorcare@dlcmhc.com.



CO-CHAIRS ROB AND KATE EDWARDS AND EARLE K. BORMAN, JR.



Naples Daily News

GULFSHORE LIFE.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Buckner Earns Special Designation

Children's Clinical Director garners "distinguished credential."



Karen Buckner

Karen Buckner, Children's Community Services Clinical Director at DLC, recently earned designation as a **Master's Level Certified Addiction Professional (MCAP)** by the Florida Certification Board.

The MCAP is an advanced practice credential for people who provide services to individuals with substance use conditions. The MCAP designates competency in the domains of clinical evaluation; treatment planning; counseling; case management and referral; client, family and community education; documentation; clinical supervision; and professional responsibility.

"Having one of our senior clinical leaders obtain this additional certification as an addiction professional demonstrates her commitment to helping DLC provide expert, holistic care to address the co-occurring mental health and addiction challenges many of our clients face," said DLC Chief Operating Officer Nancy Dauphinais. "We are very proud to have the leader of our Children's Community Services obtain this distinguished credential."

Buckner joined DLC in 1997 as a Children's Case Manager for a school-based treatment and education program done in partnership with Collier County Public Schools, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and DLC. She was then promoted to Clinical Supervisor of DLC's Children's Statewide Inpatient Psychiatric Program and then Clinical Supervisor of Children's Outpatient Services before assuming her current leadership role in 2011.

"We are very proud to have the leader of our Children's Community Services obtain this distinguished credential."

- NANCY DAUPHINAIS
DLC CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Buckner, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, earned her Bachelor of Science degree in psychology and social work from Illinois State University, and her Master of Social Work from Florida Gulf Coast University.

In 2002 and 2009 Buckner was honored with the Leadership Award. In 2006 she was named Employee of the Year and earned a Program Service Excellence Award.

IN PICTURES

A Brightly Shining Tree of Hope

"Lights of Hope" illuminate DLC's great banyan tree

Anyone who has visited DLC's main campus has marveled at the great banyan tree at the center of the property.

Over the holidays, it was illuminated, representing hope and healing for those DLC serves – brightly shining metaphors for every person who has come out of darkness and into the light of wholeness.

The tree was officially lit at a "Tree of Hope" ceremony, to which the community was invited the week before Thanksgiving. Donors who contributed year-end gifts of \$100 or more were designated "Lights of Hope," helping to light up the tree and the lives of DLC clients.



SHAUN AND JANET KELLY



JON BELYEA, JULIE BECKER, BLAKE BECKER, SCOTT BURGESS

LOCATION & CONTACT INFO



MAIN CAMPUS 6075 Bathey Lane, Naples, FL 34116 | Access Center / 24-Hour Emergency Services | 239.455.8500

IMMOKALEE SATELLITE SERVICES 425 North First Street, Immokalee, FL 34142 | 239.657.4434

HORSESHOE DRIVE SATELLITE SERVICES 2806 South Horseshoe Drive, Naples, FL 34104 | 239.263.4013

DLC FACT TEAM 5266 Golden Gate Parkway, Naples, FL 34116 | 239.276.7290

DLC OFFICE AT THE MARCO YMCA 101 Sand Hill Street, Marco Island, FL 34145 | 239.394.9622



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