VOICE OF RECOVERY NEWSLETTER

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HEALTHCARE IS ESSENTIAL TO RECOVERY
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PACT PROGRAM PROTECTS RETURNING CITIZENS
Detroit Recovery Project’s Prevention in Active Community Transitions (PACT) program is in its second year of operation. Funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration, PACT serves black males who are returning from state, local, or federal corrections institutions within the last 24 months and who are at high risk of transmitting or contracting HIV.

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“Superman’s not brave. You can’t be brave if you’re indestructible. It’s every day people, like you and me, that are brave knowing we could easily be defeated but still continue forward.”

~ Unknown
As President Barack Obama and members of Congress crossed the finish line of providing universal healthcare for all Americans and opposing arguments grow deeper and wider, I contemplated what brought us to this point of contentious jockeying.

As individuals and as a nation, we have personal security needs that must be fulfilled in order for us to function in society. We must have health insurance, steady employment, safe neighborhoods, and shelter before we can consider our higher needs of love, self-esteem and self-growth.

Last ditch efforts to undermine healthcare reform and to deny US citizens – our relatives, friends, neighbors and Detroit Recovery Project clients – a platform on which to meet their fundamental needs so they can rise to a higher level of existence were plain wrong.

We, at DRP, diligently work with our clients to identify their habits that lead to the narcissistic behavior of addiction. This proves challenging when they can’t put a roof over their heads or take care of their physical health. Even if they can secure housing and work, their health concerns can cause them to stumble. Without the foundation of basic needs, the ultimate goal of self-actualization is impossible.

We strive to motivate clients to change those bad behaviors that blind their vision, dash their hopes, and defeat their faith. We desire to catapult them above the struggles of life so they’ll know in their hearts things will get better.

To help us meet this end, DRP has partnered with the Wayne County Community College District to offer GED preparatory classes. Education enhances self-esteem, which is critical to recovery. It’s a building block to the creativity, authenticity and meaningfulness that defines mankind’s place in the world.

We staunchly believe that after our clients have progressed to have met their vital needs and are bolstered by gainful employment, good health, and self-esteem there’s no stopping them from fulfilling their universal potential.
The ultimate goal of this six-month-long program is to decrease transmission and reduce exposure of the HIV virus among returning citizens. PACT is supported through partnerships with SHAR House, Travelers Aid Society and Detroit Recovery Project’s Relapse Prevention program.

Its newest partner is Detroit Central City Community Health. Since PACT’s inception, over 80 clients have participated in the program.

“Our population has been recently released from prison into poverty and high unemployment – they have competing needs,” says Roscoe Emanuel Wright, a Prevention Supervisor. “We don’t want them to slip back into high risk behaviors that would be against the greater good of society.”

PACT managers conduct behavioral risk surveys on each participant to assess where they need targeted help and also to alert clients of their level of risk. All clients are tested for HIV.

“Part of the process of dealing with the stigma of HIV is teaching them how to self-advocate,” Roscoe says, “They have to come to grips with what they have done so they won’t repeat those same behaviors.”

Risky behaviors are linked to substance abuse, which fuels hazardous sexual habits, according to Roscoe. Some of his clients have served jail and/or prison time for stealing, writing bad checks and other crimes associated with getting money for more drugs.

Roscoe is familiar with correcting bad behaviors. He was a licensed physical therapist before his descent into drug use. For 20 years, he risked his career and his family to get high on cocaine, alcohol and prescription drugs.

Reaching rock bottom, he lost his license to practice. Now, six years later, he’s in the process of reinstating his therapist’s license.

“I’ve met the legal requirements of ‘good moral character’ to regain my license,” Roscoe beams.

He serves on a subcommittee for the Wayne County Community Mental Health Board and the planning council for Wayne County Community Mental Health. He is also a member of the Substance Abuse steering committee for the Michigan Department of Community Health.

Joining Roscoe in the battle is Dr. Denis Erin Arvilla. There’s much more to Dr. Denis Erin Arvilla than her interesting name.

This psychiatrist-turned case manager is on the front lines helping returning citizens on the road to recovery find the right resources. She is the face and voice that refers clients in the direction of food, clothing, shelter, HIV testing, and medical treatment.

Her circuitous route to Detroit Recovery Project started in the small town of Charlevoix, Michigan, where her grandfather was the town doctor.

“He would help people whether they could pay or not,” Dr. Arvilla says. “My twin sister and I both became doctors because we wanted to help people in the same way.”

Approaching her sixth month anniversary, Dr. Arvilla relishes her role at DRP: “This is an absolute first. I’ve never done anything like this before! I like working with people who are aware and reaching out.”

Helping others is exactly what the doctor ordered. The PACT program also provides clients with transportation – including bus passes – to get them wherever they need to go to access their resources.

“The more you help people, the less they need your help,” Dr. Arvilla says. “We want our clients to become independent so they can be on their own as soon as possible.”
Kim Harwell is a self-described serial entrepreneur but to Detroit Recovery Project, he’s a job czar. Kim runs Recovery Industries, which trains and provides job placement for those in recovery, returning citizens, displaced auto workers, and the medically transitioned.

Recovery Industries has operated for nearly one year and is settling into its role of creating a network through which those in recovery can support themselves financially as they heal emotionally, physically and spiritually from their addictions.

“We’ve taken the small “r” of addiction recovery and changed it to the big “R” of economic recovery” Kim says. “We’re working on how to create more jobs and an expanded economic base for Detroit.”

Proof of his hard work can be found in the 50 job placements he’s made with the US Census Bureau, the City of Detroit, and Detroit Public Schools. Kim is the first to admit, “We’re more effective in creating jobs through wholly owned subsidiaries.”

These types of operations are more willing to give Recovery Industry clients a second chance, however; Kim is not dissuaded from working day and night to place the right man with the right job. “I understand the process of recovery and how challenging it is to find work,” Kim explains. “I’ve been clean for 12 years and know first hand that you can’t make it alone.”

He also knows that Recovery Industries can’t wait on the sidelines for businesses to hire its people. “We’re positioned to go after contracts being let by public and private sectors,” he says. “Our business contacts, sales ability and e-procurement process puts us in the position to get the bids – our goal is to become $100 million enterprise within the next five years.”

Kim is a graduate of Detroit Public Schools and is a proud father of a prospective law school student.
MIKE RAGLAND: FROM SEPIA TO COLOR
“...and I want to snap...you!!!!” These partial lyrics to an old R&B song frame the picture of professional photographer Mike Ragland that hangs in the recovery hall of fame. Mike’s been clean for nine years and uses his recovery experience and his talent of taking pictures to reach out to youth and to those who are getting their lives back on track.

Two days a week, he travels to Inkster, Michigan, to teach high school students the art of photography. In his spare time he participates in after-school enrichment programs where he instructs students to resolve their issues with film.

“My life is in full, living color,” Mike says. “My involvement with helping others keeps me grounded. I’m in an era in my life where it’s important to give back and enlighten others as to how their lives can change if they put forth the effort.”

This is not lip service. Mike has struggled with recovery.

“I relapsed after six years clean. I had forgotten how important maintenance is in recovery. I forgot the key ingredients to keeping clean. I didn’t take the disease of addiction as seriously as I should have and went back to heroine.”

He then learned that the shade of recovery could sometimes be mixed. The lack of color — spirituality, hope, and dedication — can make recovery sepia toned. But the addition of those elements can produce beautiful hues.

“Three days after my birthday, on August 24, 2001, I vowed to eliminate any addictive substances in my life,” Mike recalls.

Now, he’s engaged to be married and has a successful photography business. A cancer survivor, Mike believes he has a new lease on life.

“Today I know who I am and in what direction I’m going. God delivered me and that’s why I work to serve others,” he says.
DRP CALENDAR

SPRING/SUMMER 2010
“THERE’S SOMETHING HAPPENING ON EAST MCNICHOLS!”

Life Skills Workshops
Every Monday
3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Women’s Support Group
Every Tuesday
2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

Dual Recovery Anonymous
Wednesdays from 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
Fridays from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

GED Workshops
Every Tuesday & Wednesday
12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

Fellowship Anonymous
Every Thursday from 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.
Every Saturday from 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

Health Education/Hepatitis Vaccinations
Every Thursday
10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Men’s Support Groups
Every Thursday
3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Relapse Prevention Workshops
Mondays & Wednesdays p.m.
6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

12 Step Support Groups
Mondays & Fridays
12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

In Times of Illness Support Group
Every Wednesday
6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

For more information on how to participate or become a member, please call 313.365.3101.
Detroit Recovery Project, Inc., has many feathers in its cap thanks to the hard work of staff, volunteers and administrators who pour out their souls every day. There are many behind-the-scenes contributors who deserve to be recognized. This month, DRP uncovers Board member Alisha Bell Young.

Alisha R. Bell Young is the youngest person ever to be elected to the Wayne County Commission. At 41, Commissioner Bell is entering her eighth year of service and is considered an “elder stateswoman” by younger political hopefuls entering the world of politics. The silver streaks in her hair speak of the wisdom she’s gained on a job that she has retained through four elections.

Her near decade of service has come with a price: public scrutiny. Commissioner Bell was first appointed to office by her mother, former Wayne County Commissioner Edna Bell, who chose to leave that honorable body for a higher office and following the rules, named a successor to complete her term.

Community activists don’t take so kindly to such appointments and didn’t return Commissioner Bell to office. They supported her opponent who would defeat her for the first and last time.

She came back with a vengeance and has continued to hold her post with overwhelming support from her district. Her only loss took her back to when politics first put a sparkle in her eyes.

“I fell in love with public service right after college although I did pledge Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., a public service organization, while at Florida A&M University,” she recalls. “I started a young adult chapter of the Optimist Club where we served young people in metro Detroit.

“From there it parlayed into a myriad of public service activities... by the time I got into my 30s, I really had a sense of public service and how I could contribute to the community.”

Commissioner Bell has passed several county ordinances, laws if you will, that allow free lead poisoning screening for Wayne County children ages six months to six years.

Federal grants pay for the program making it budget neutral. At no cost to taxpayers or parents hundreds of thousands of children whose formative years could be devastated by lead poisoning can now be tested and treated for free.

What’s more, as a member of the Ways and Means committee, Commissioner Bell has allocated half a million dollars to Wayne County’s Senior Chore program that offers free household services to seniors who cannot do it themselves.

Serving Wayne County residents of all ages, Commissioner Bell oversees the Health Choice program that offers prescription drug discounts to anyone without prescription coverage. The discounts vary based on agreements between drug companies and pharmacies.

Teenagers are not exempt from her dedication. Since 2008, Commissioner Bell has provided free prom dresses through her “Belle of the Ball” initiative that gives away gently used formal gowns to young ladies in need.

“She’s the Mary J. Blige of politics,” said George L. Davis, II, a community resident and business owner. “She’s got longevity that comes only after making it over a few hurdles. She’s outlasted a lot of folk who came in with her and who were bright stars but crashed and burned.”

Commissioner Bell is married to Kranston Young. The Cass Tech graduates live in Detroit with their two children, Kranston, Jr., 2, and Morgan Elise, 1.
Detroit Recovery Project has moved! Our new facility, the Recovery Resource Center is the hub for recovery services in metropolitan Detroit. We’re the same DRP, just a new location, with much more to offer! Come Join Us In Our Mission!

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Come See Our New Digs!

Our New Facility, the Detroit Recovery Project Recovery Resource Center is located at 1121 East McNichols Rd. Detroit, Michigan 48203.

Other DRP Locations:
Comprehensive Outpatient Recovery Services
18954 James Couzens
Detroit, Michigan 48235
313.864.5306 (phone)
313.864.5326 (fax)

Bray Recovery Home for Men
400 Cortland
Highland Park, Michigan 48203
313.833.BRAY (2729) (phone)

Trent Recovery Home for Men
335 East Grand Blvd.
Detroit, Michigan 48207
313.579.5462 (phone)
313.579/9614 (fax)

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