

Services Empower Clients to Achieve Recovery

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“Every day, I am truly amazed and tremendously inspired by stories of individuals’ successes that were made possible through addiction treatment, mental healthcare and support services,” said Debra L. Wentz, Ph.D., CEO of the New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc., (NJAMHAA), which represents 170 providers in its advocacy to state legislators and policymakers, and U.S. Congressmen. “The individuals’ stories – their lives – are compelling illustrations of why the state and federal governments must consistently ensure adequate funding for these vital services.”

“To be successful, they have to accept that they have this disease, be willing to work hard for recovery and learn a new way to approach life,” said Linda Leyhane, CDA, Executive Director, Crawford House, a halfway house for women in Skillman. Anyone who speaks with women who have been or are currently at Crawford House would gain a clear sense of how invaluable the services are to the quality of their lives, now and in the future. For example:

“Before coming to Crawford House, I wanted to end my life. Now, I feel like my life is just starting.” – Kim, client for three months

“I was broken and thought I couldn’t be fixed. They showed me that I’m not a bad person, just a sick person.” – Sue, June 2006 graduate

“I will continue to grow in all areas of my life.” – Rosemarie, client for 19 days

Rosemarie’s comment was expressed in many ways by everyone at the agency. Some of the women spoke of being reunited with their children and other family members; others talked about their goals of finishing college and pursuing careers, with one having the specific goal of counseling adolescents. Upon graduating from Crawford House, Sue has given back by working with newer clients, and now, she serves on the agency’s Board of Trustees so she can make more of a difference through fundraising.

“Crawford House and others like it need the support of the community. It’s hard for nonprofits to keep running the way they need to be. We need to do all we can,” Sue said.

“Everyone has the right to treatment for all illnesses, whether they are physical ailments, mental

illnesses or addictions,” Dr. Wentz stressed. “In fact, many individuals have co-occurring illnesses and they all must have unrestricted access to the care they need in order to achieve the highest possible quality of life.”