

Sharing Clients' Inspiring Successes Helps Make the Vital Behavioral Healthcare System More Viable

It was so inspiring to hear youth share how they are benefiting from services provided by members of the New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies (NJAMHAA) during *Back to School: Take a Breath - and Pack a Good Mental Health Tool Kit*, an event that NJAMHAA and Attitudes in Reverse® held on September 10, 2013, which was National Suicide Prevention Day. For example, 17-year-old Nicki said - just five months after she became a resident in Cape Counseling Services' Rainbow of Hope program - "I'm a completely different person. I smile a lot more and I'm a lot more confident than I was at this time last year. Rainbow of Hope gave me hope for my future."

Another young speaker at the event was Nathan, who began working with Youth Advocate Programs (YAP) about 13 months ago and is now working toward earning a graduate equivalency diploma. "I'm grateful to share the opportunities that Youth Advocate Programs has offered me. With my parents' and YAP's support, I can achieve my dreams," Nathan said.

Nearly 100 behavioral healthcare providers, educators and staff from various state departments heard these inspiring success stories. Such first-hand accounts probably make the most powerful, positive evidence of why behavioral healthcare services must always be available and accessible. These stories need to be shared as much as possible to everyone: behavioral healthcare stakeholders, such as those who attended the National Suicide Prevention Day event; policymakers and legislators in the state and federal governments; and members of all communities in all roles and of all ages.

Together, we can share the inspiring good news farther and wider, and potentially secure much stronger support from our state and federal governments.

Case in Point: Carrier Clinic

Carrier Clinic publishes a quarterly newsletter, *Connections*, to educate current and future donors, funders, clients and their families about the value of the services they provide. And here's another coincidence: the current issue features Shauna Moses, NJAMHAA's Associate Executive Director.

"A few months ago, I was at Carrier for an event that my boss Debbie and several of our Board members participated in and afterwards, I mentioned to Heather Steel, Carrier's communications director, that I'd be more than happy to provide a testimonial if she needed one. I was thinking along the lines of a small quote on their website or in a brochure. Two weeks later, Heather called me asking if I would be willing to be featured in their newsletter," Moses said. "I didn't hesitate to agree to do this. Although I'm not one to seek attention, I will take any opportunity to share my story because it's part of my mission to help save lives. After all, Carrier Clinic saved mine. And I'm honored to have opportunities to help others through my work at NJAMHAA, as well as my volunteer work with Attitudes in Reverse® (AIR), which is also featured in this newsletter. Thank you, everyone, on Carrier Clinic's treatment and communications teams!"

NJAMHAA practices what we preach by sharing links to Carrier Clinic's publication [here](#), on Facebook and through other social media outlets.