

## Treatment Works: Rutgers Graduates Prove It

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us." -- Ralph Waldo Emerson

It is very fitting that Regina Diamond shared this quote at the Fourth Annual Rutgers Recovery Graduation because she exemplifies it.

About a decade ago, Diamond was in treatment for alcoholism at Integrity House, a NJAMHAA member agency. On her graduation day, she announced - rightfully with pride - that she has been sober for almost nine years. She graduated with honors with a Bachelor's degree in social work and will soon begin graduate school to earn an MSW degree.

"Once I knew I needed support, I wanted it from everywhere," she said. "Now, I know I need support wherever I go."

"Regina is one of several former clients of Integrity House who were part of the Rutgers Recovery Housing Program," said Bob Budsock, LCADC, President and CEO. "At Integrity House, we understand that the pillars of recovery are safe sober housing and the ability to gain an education that will provide meaningful career opportunities. The Rutgers Recovery Housing Program provides critical support to recovering individuals pursuing their educational goals."

Diamond was one of 15 graduates of the program, compared to four in the first graduating class. The program, originally called the Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance Program, was launched in May 1983 and the first recovery house was opened in 1988. It was the first recovery house in the U.S. and is currently one of eight nationwide.

The program is partially funded by the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, which also offers scholarships. Currently, 32 students are in the Rutgers Recovery House in New Brunswick and four others are in Newark. Forty additional students commute to school or live in off-campus housing.

As of the fall of 2012, the grade point averages among seniors in the recovery house averaged out to 3.34. Also at this time, 97 percent of the students were returning to school each semester or graduating. While focusing on and excelling in their classes, the students also participate in outreach activities at high schools, rehabilitation centers and intensive outpatient treatment programs.

Plans are under way to expand the program to Rutgers' Camden campus, according to Frank L. Greenagel Jr., LCSW, LCADC, ICADC, ACSW, CJC, Recovery Counselor, Adjunct Professor in Rutgers' School of Social Work and Instructor in the School of Communications and Information. Long before coming to Rutgers, Greenagel worked at Integrity House.

"Hats off to Frank Greenagel and to the hard working staff connected to the Rutgers Recovery program! This program and the recovery house have proven to be very successful in providing a solid foundation for its participants in recovery," said Jim Curtin, Executive Director of Daytop Village of New Jersey, another NJAMHAA member, who hopes that treatment graduates will decide to go to Rutgers. "The graduation ceremony really showed the love the staff has for their students."

"Over the years, Daytop has had several youth finish the Rutgers Recovery Program and I am extremely happy to say they all are doing very well today," Curtin added.

For more details, visit [www.njamhaa.org](http://www.njamhaa.org).