

Sweetser REPORT

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Brunswick Learning & Recovery Center Thrives

The Learning & Recovery Center (LRC) is a unique place that creates an inclusive community for people recovering from a mental illness. The LRC is peer staffed and peer managed.



Cabin Fever Art Show display.

The LRC started with a grant from the MidCoast United Way in 2001 to provide peers with an alternative to traditional mental health services. The program has an eclectic assortment of group activities including arts and crafts, fiber arts, book club, gardening, community events outside the center and a variety of peer support and

recovery groups. There is also a warm line run by peers and access to an innovative Peer Respite program.

On any given day there are twenty to thirty peers at the Center who are visiting for support, teaching, learning and sharing the experience of being together and having commonality. “We are a community that is committed to Recovery and focusing on building healthy relationships,” says Program Director Scott Metzger. “Peers feel comfortable coming here and being part of a truly unique support system.” For many of these people, the program has been a life saving experience.

Joan, a program success story from Damariscotta summarizes her experience best, “I had no hope or self esteem, I felt my life was at a standstill and I was going to die feeling that way. Then I came to the Learning & Recovery Center and my whole life changed. I started volunteering and making friends - something I never had before. I came to a place that accepted me for who I was.”



Peer volunteer, Shaun Lewis, posts announcements at the LRC.

For more information, contact Paula Gustafson at 207.373.4275 or the LRC at 207.373.4273 to speak to a peer.

Learn more about
Sweetser at
www.sweetser.org
or
become a fan on
 Facebook.



Sweetser PromiseLine

Call 1.800.434.3000

Sweetser promises to do whatever it takes to connect adults and children to the mental health care and related services they need.

Mission

Sweetser's mission is to provide quality treatment, support and hope to children, adults and families through a network of mental health, behavioral health and educational services.

Vision

Helping people find promising futures.

Board of Directors

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Changing Times

*Carlton Pendleton
President & CEO*

As I write this article, summer is in the air. The change in seasons is something that residents in Maine anticipate and look forward to. With recent resolution of the state budget and difficult reductions, the time for rebirth is upon Sweetser.

A part of our culture has been change. Not change for the sake of change, but change to improve services for our children, adults and families. New ways of doing our business with a focus on prevention and quality is also a part of our culture change.

As you read this newsletter you will see the results of our change process. New efforts with infants and their families, creative systems approach through high fidelity wraparound service and statewide warm line services to folks negotiating living successfully in their communities. Enjoy your reading and keep in mind the huge effort our wonderful staff undertake for Sweetser to be successful.

Lastly, I wish to thank you. Without your support we couldn't be nearly as effective with our services.



Retiring Sweetser board members honored at the Annual Meeting. Pictured from left is William Zafirson, Board chair, Richard Dalbeck, Patricia Small and President and CEO Carl Pendleton.

Consider a Sweetser Gift Annuity Receive Life Income and Support Sweetser - a Unique Gift

What is a Sweetser Gift Annuity? It is a contract between you and Sweetser in which assets are transferred to Sweetser in return for guaranteed regular payments for one life or two. Annuities offer attractive rates and are determined by your age. The older you are, the higher your pay-out rate is.

How does a Charitable Gift Annuity benefit Sweetser? Your annuity gift works for you during your lifetime. Upon your death, these assets will support Sweetser services.

How does a Sweetser Annuity help you? In addition to providing support to Sweetser, you receive a generous income for life (see chart). A significant portion of income is tax free PLUS you receive an immediate tax deduction in the year your gift is made. Gifts funded with appreciated securities can save significantly on capital gains taxes as well.

How can you participate? Contact Development Director, Todd Henry, at 207.294.4484. The minimum annuity contract Sweetser offers is \$5,000. With stock market volatility and savings rates so low, NOW is a great time to consider a gift annuity.

Benefits of a \$10,000 Charitable Gift Annuity

Age	Annuity Rate	Annuity Payment	Tax Free Income	Taxable Income	Charitable Deduction
65	5.3%	530	342	188	3,063
70	5.7%	570	389	180	3,814
75	6.3%	630	450	180	4,416
80	7.1%	710	530	180	5,023
85	8.1%	810	640	170	5,647
90	9.5%	950	777	173	6,194

This illustration assumes an IRS discount rate of 3.2%.

Jan Dubois Receives 2009 Garland Award

Jan Dubois, affiliate relations coordinator at Sweetser, was named the recipient of the prestigious Garland Award. Laurence "Bud" Garland, Jr. served on Sweetser's Board of Directors for more than 33 years. In his honor, a fund was created to establish this award to recognize an employee who "gives above and beyond" at work and in the community.

Jan, a 10-year employee, was nominated by her peers for her exceptional service to over 320 affiliates statewide. She volunteers at Sweetser's charitable auction and golf tournament. She is instrumental in organizing events in the Saco administration building and she is always willing to help out any department at any time without missing a beat at her full-time job.

Her generosity also extends to the community. She organized and raised funds for her local school swim team and established a program of positive team building activities for 60 high school students. We are very proud that she is a Sweetser staff member.



Jan with CEO Carlton Pendleton

400 Attend Sold on Kids Auction

Sweetser's 18th *Sold on Kids* Auction and Dinner, presented by KeyBank, was held at the Marriott in South Portland on Friday, April 30th. A record crowd of 400 guests embarked on the fictional USS Sweetser to sail to the Island of Hope at the cruise themed event.

Emcee Lee Goldberg of WCSH6 kept the room up-to-date with sports scores and silent auction bids, while Auctioneer Bill Zafirson conducted an entertaining live auction with items such



Dave and Donna Banks of RE/MAX By The Bay take a break from the auction.



Jennifer and Paul Kent, Michael Burton, Jodi Collins and Jessica Samson enjoy the auction festivities.

as an escape to a villa in Anguilla, a lobster bake for 20, sailing on Casco Bay and a Las Vegas getaway.

The event raised \$86,000 to support Sweetser's statewide services. Next year's auction & dinner is scheduled for Friday, May 20th. To reserve your table or make a donation, please contact Jen Steele Skillings at 207.294.4485 or jsteele@sweetser.org.

FOCUS Through Adventure

Leadership & Team Development for Businesses

FOCUS Through Adventure is a leader in the field of adventure-based and experiential education. It provides leadership, team development and enhances learning by challenging individuals to move beyond perceived barriers within, and an atmosphere of mutual support.

Sweetser facilitators create customized sessions to be held either at a business, school or organization's site, or at the Challenge Course on Sweetser's Saco campus.

Staff can design a Leadership & Team Development program for a business or organization. A satisfied participant states, "It is truly remarkable how much insight can be gained about team members and yourself in such a short time frame. This component of training and team-building has been invaluable and I can't thank you enough."

For more information, contact Donna Murray at dmurray@sweetser.org or 207.294.4929.



Celebrating the Transformation of a Teen

written by Amy Paradysz

Shortly after graduating from the Wraparound Program, 14-year-old Crystal Johnson got bullied at school. Rather than fighting back and violating her parole, this eighth-grader with a record of aggressive and destructive behavior simply reported the incident to her school.

Crystal's mother, Dawn Johnson, credits Sweetser with her daughter's remarkable transformation. "She's not kicking the crap out of me," Dawn said. "All of the behaviors, from going through the Wraparound program, they're gone. She is not aggressive. What I see now is normal 14-year-old behavior."

In fact, the incident at school made Crystal realize how her mother must have felt when she used to hurt her. And the apology Crystal gave her mother was heartfelt. "It was another example of getting her behavior under control and knowing right from wrong," Dawn said.

Dawn was a Sweetser resident herself when she was suicidal and a ward of the state. "Sweetser saved me at 14, and having children of my own with behavioral issues, I knew where to turn," she said.



Proud mom and daughter.

Crystal has been involved in several state programs and many Sweetser programs, including Family Focus, the Crisis Unit and The School at Sweetser - all of which provided needed support and structure. But it was the Wraparound Program that was really transformative.

In 2009, Crystal and her family were selected to take part in the Wraparound Maine initiative, an intense family-based support system. Through this program, Sweetser provides "wraparound" services to children ages 5-18 who are either in residential care or at high risk of placement. "We knew it was going to be intense. We knew it was going to be hard. And we were willing," Dawn said. "We are so grateful."

Crystal's team included her immediate family as well as Wraparound facilitator Jennifer Chon; Wraparound supervisor Amy Ackroyd; probation officer Kelli Rogers; peer support partners Jes Lynch and Amanda Famiglietti; and mobilization specialist Marshall Abbott, who was a liaison with Crystal's public school.

It was also life-changing for family members, including Crystal's dad, who is involved in a group called Strong Fathers, and Crystal's 12-year-old brother Dustin, who is no longer afraid of her. Dawn has become a member of the Wraparound board. "It has helped us to unite as a family instead of everyone going in different directions," Dawn said. "It's a lot easier now to hear everyone's concerns."

As part of the Wraparound Program, Jes Lynch had helped teach Crystal how to knit, sew, and do crafts to help keep her calm. Now Crystal wants to design a clothing line called Crystal Creations.

"She's grateful for everything she's been taught. And she likes the Crystal that she is now," Dawn said. "I'd like to know where this kid has been all these years. I absolutely enjoy her, and I'm so grateful."



Flatbread Fundraiser. Sweetser staff are all smiles at Flatbread Charity Night. Thanks to Flatbread and everyone who attended, for helping to raise \$1,000 for Sweetser!



Saco & Biddeford Savings Bank presents a check for \$2,500 in support of Sweetser's Learning Arts Fair. Pictured are Lynn Belanger, branch manager; Jan Wertheim, Sweetser librarian; Tjanne S., Sweetser student; Stacey Scott, director of educational services and Melissa Boilard, bank assistant manager.

Corporate Support

Sweetser students pose in front of their limo ride to a Boston Celtics game sponsored by the TD Bank Wow! Kids Clubhouse Event. They enjoyed VIP treatment along with TD Bank representative, Bill Zafirson (far right), who also serves as Chairman of Sweetser's Board of Directors. Thank you Bill and TD Bank!



Todd Henry, development director at Sweetser, is presented a check by Melissa Richter, Coldwell Banker agent and Sweetser Board member. Coldwell Banker has been a longtime supporter of the annual Sold on Kids Auction and Dinner.



Full Moon Margarita Madness provided Sweetser with 5% of sales at Margarita's on St. John Street in Portland. During a full moon evening in January, February and March, the event raised \$424. Thanks Margarita's and friends!

New Balance Sneakers Spark Pride in Sweetser's Schools

New Balance Athletic Shoe, in Skowhegan, donated 119 pairs of sneakers to Sweetser schools in Belfast and Saco. The value of this donation was \$4,165. A heartfelt thanks to New Balance for this generous gift.



Program Updates

Home Community-based Treatment (HCT) - HCT, a service that started in March, engages directly with youth and their parents in their own home. Staff assist parents to develop strategies to manage their child's emotional disturbance and/or disruptive behavior within the context of their family life. Services are designed to be time-limited, intensive therapeutic work and require parent/guardian commitment to participate.

Infant Family Focus - Sweetser recently opened two Infant Family Focus residential programs; one in Belfast and one in Saco. This program is designed to provide early intervention to families with very young children to improve their coping and parenting skills and reduce behavioral crisis in the future. The program works in partnership with families who have a child at high risk and with the State Child Protective Services. Individual, family and group therapy is provided with a focus on the family unit. The projected length of stay in residence is four to six months.



School-based Services received a \$3,000 grant from the Davenport Trust Fund to support unfunded and underfunded children and their families in Bath schools. In addition to serving 79 Bath students, Sweetser social workers are collaborating with more than 70 other schools throughout the state.

Wabanaki Health & Wellness Social - Each year, Sweetser's Wabanaki program conducts a social which provides tribal members a chance to educate the community about Native health and wellness issues. Wabanaki supports traditional Native values in healing and prevention and helps younger, more difficult to engage youth, who do not typically use the medical system. This annual event recently celebrated its 13th gathering and included speakers, prayer, traditional activities, singing, drumming, meals, dancing, crafts and informational displays.

Warm Line Grant Awarded to Sweetser - Sweetser recently received a \$436,000 grant to provide intentional peer support on the statewide warm line, which will be coordinated out of Portland and Brunswick, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The warm line is expected to receive approximately 25,000 calls each year and will begin operating in July.

Camp Endeavor at Sweetser's Saco campus runs from July 6 to August 13. Camp is open for grades 1-8, during the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. This camp experience is a unique opportunity for children who may need a little extra attention and support. Some activities include hiking, cooking, ropes course, arts and crafts, and a BMX bike course. Special remedial literacy instruction is also available. For more information, please contact Kate Winant at 207.294.4758 or email kwinant@sweetser.org.



Sweetser Volunteers Honored

Sweetser volunteers were recently treated to a wonderful buffet dinner catered by the Culinary Arts class from The School at Sweetser in Saco. Volunteers were honored for their generous donation of 38,481 hours of service in the past year.

Nine volunteers received the Governor's Service Role Call of Honor Award for volunteering 500 or more hours. Those honored included

Nancy Campbell,
Christy Dalton,
Pamela Davis, Olin
Hiscock and Kristina
Hill for their work
at The Learning and
Recovery Center in
Brunswick, mentors
Linda Blanton and
Susan Bickford,
maintenance
volunteer, Ron
Trautvetter, and
Sue Clapp, a



Kristina Hill and Olin Hiscock proudly display their recognition plaques.

clerical volunteer. Milestone pins were also awarded to volunteers who have donated their time to Sweetser from one year up to 26 years.

Sweetser Family Fun Day

Saturday, September 18, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Cook's Corner Mall, Brunswick

We are seeking classic cars as part of this event. If you are interested in participating, please contact Jennifer Steele Skillings, development officer, at 207.294.4485 or jsteele@sweetser.org.



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