

The Providence Center Kicks Off Recovery Month

PROVIDENCE, RI (September 2, 2009)-The Providence Center kicked off National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month yesterday with guest speakers and a presentation of the Recovery Quilt during a ceremony at its 530 North Main Street location. Special guests included Craig Stenning, director of Rhode Island Department of MHRH; Ivette Torres, director for consumer affairs of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; and Tom Coderre, chief of staff of the Rhode Island Senate.



Left to right- Dale K. Klatzker, Ph.D., president/CEO of The Providence Center; Craig Stenning, director of Rhode Island Department of MHRH; Ivette Torres, director for consumer affairs of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; former clients David and Sandra; and Tom Coderre, chief of staff of the Rhode Island Senate.

Dale K. Klatzker, Ph.D., president/CEO of The Providence Center, welcomed guests and spoke of the importance of Recovery Month, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. "Recovery Month is a celebration of hope and resilience," said Klatzker. "We are here today to embrace and celebrate recovery and to reinforce that recovery is possible."

Stenning joined Klatzker in noting the significance of Recovery Month. "Recovery Month supports the vision that recovery is possible and that individuals are not defined by their illnesses, but can have a new life," said Stenning.

Torres made The Providence Center her first stop as she travels to speak at Recovery Month events nationwide. She encouraged the audience, which included staff and clients of The Providence Center, to become "ambassadors of recovery" by spreading the message that recovery is possible. "The real gift of Recovery Month is sharing your success stories with the 23 million people who need substance use treatment," said Torres. "In sobriety, you are an ambassador of recovery."

In his personal recovery story, Coderre described how support and treatment allowed him to regain stability and become an active member of the community. "When you find recovery, you find hope," said Coderre.

Former Providence Center clients David and Sandra shared their stories of recovery and noted the role The Providence Center played in their success. "I struggled with substance abuse for almost 30 years," said David. "The Providence Center was the light at the end of my tunnel." As a client in Women's Day Treatment program, Sandra learned to open herself up to recovery. "The Providence Center gave me hope and strength," said Sandra. "I learned that there was a better life for me and that I am a woman with dignity and grace."

The Recovery Quilt features squares designed by Providence Center clients. Each square illustrates a very personal recovery journey. Klatzker thanked staff members Cathy A'Vant-Fowler, lead substance use therapist; Filomena Penco, clinical therapist; and Mary- Ellen Benoit, a member of The Providence Center's Board of Trustees, for their roles in organizing the project and putting the quilt together.

"This quilt holds so many stories of the joy finding recovery, redemption, sobriety and the joy of giving back," said Torres.



The 2009 Recovery Quilt, designed and assembled by clients and staff of The Providence Center.

The Providence Center annually serves over 10,000 adults, children and adolescents experiencing mental illness, substance use and emotional problems. Since its establishment in 1969, The Providence Center has been part of Rhode Island's exemplary behavioral health care system, offering a comprehensive array of treatment and rehabilitation services. For more information call 276-4020 or visit www.providencecenter.org.