



United Self Help

“People Helping People to Help Themselves”

Quarterly Newsletter

December, 2011

New support groups on the Neighbor Islands

Graduates from Hilo, Kona, Kihei and Wailuku are forming their own support groups on the neighbor islands.

One graduate said, “Our BRIDGES Support Groups are AWESOME! The Hilo support group, formed by BRIDGES graduates,

Susannah Broad and Mary Maka, reported 10 participants, including the co-facilitators, during their last gathering. They even formed a Hilo BRIDGES softball team!

We hope that we can get this type of attitude going on ALL the islands. Maybe we

can get everyone together and start our own league... the possibilities are endless!”

The Kona groups are being run by Maryellen and Debra.

The Kihei Maui Group meets at Kamaole III Park from 2 to 3:30 p.m. For more information call Candace at

281-9700 or email ccklane111@gmail.com.

An Upcountry Maui Group and a Lahaina group are in the works.

People wanted to run groups in Kailua, Nanakuli, Waianae and Makakilo . Call Bud Bowles, United Self Help at 808-947-5558.

Drug Cards provide discounts on prescription medication

Now, more than ever, funds are needed to provide support for 4th Friday activities, our Bridges Classes, Softball games and Support groups. You can help by delivering Drug Cards to people who don't have pharmaceutical insurance and could use a discount to help pay for the cost of their medications.

Every time they use their card, they can save 50 to 80% off the cost of their FDA approved prescription medication. There's also a discount card for pet's needing medication, and the savings can really add up.



A customer walked into a store and showed his prescription. It would have been

\$64, but with the drug card it was only \$15! Another consumer saved \$60 on a drug that wasn't covered on his health plan.

This is one fundraising activity that you can participate in by passing out the drug cards to doctor's offices, health centers or anywhere there are people. These cards enable the holder to get BIG discounts on drugs if they have no insurance and you can make some money passing them out.

To get the card call United Self Help, or you can even print it by going to www.unitedselfhelpfreedrugcard.org or www.freeusadrugplan.com/u74

FOURTH FRIDAYS, Dec 23, January 27

What: Free Dinner, Bingo, Gift Card Awards, Music, Exchange Table, Fun

Where: Waikiki Health Community Center Auditorium, 277 Ohua Ave.

When: The fourth Friday of every month from 7 to 9 p.m.

SOFTBALL SATURDAYS, (Not in Dec.) January 28

What: Softball fun for the whole family; Free Papa John's Pizza following the game

Where: Kamamalu Softball Field across the street from the Pacific Club

When: The fourth Saturday of every month from 2 to 5 p.m. (* No Softball on Saturday Dec. 24, Christmas Eve)

Q. Why do you have to be a member of a support group to work for United Self Help?

A. Every day we get calls from Consumers who want jobs at United Self Help, so we ask them, ‘If it weren't for the money, how committed would you be to helping others?’

We found that members who participated in support groups showed greater commitment to maintaining work at USH which may include distributing Drug Cards, setting up speeches on mental illness for high school students or teaching the BRIDGES program at OCCC.

A list of our many support groups are here in this newsletter. Including a New Recovery Group at Waikiki Health Center, Room 205H. For more information, call United Self Help at 947-5558.

Widening cracks in Clubhouses (or PSRC's)

Clubhouses should benefit more than the poor and underinsured

By Susan King

Having mental health issues can be very trying. The majority of my friends have a mental health diagnosis. Most of my other friends and contacts are just undiagnosed ... no one is safe in my world when it comes to mental illness.

I suppose that I have a very simplistic approach of how our state (and our nation, for that matter), should handle mental illness and its treatment approach. Let's face it, when you have a mental illness, the last thing you want to do is jump through a bunch of bureaucratic hoops. But now, there are twice the hoops and not nearly enough services.

Want an example of what I'm talking about? The Adult Mental Health Division is in charge of many (most) of the psycho-social rehabilitation programs that operate in the state. These P.S.R.C's (Psycho social rehab centers) are fine programs with dedicated staff. But here's the crack in the foundation. In order to receive their services, you must be getting Medicare or Medicaid. If that's not limiting enough, certain providers have contracted their services to specific insurance companies and you can only get services from a specific P.S.R.C's. There is no real choice, especially on the neighbor islands ... if you want to attend a certain program, you may need to change your Medicaid coverage, but you'll need to do it once a year during their enrollment period. Actually, this does work for most clients, but the crack keeps getting wider.



Honolulu Advertiser photo

Old Location of Hale 'o Honolulu

Let's say that you have private insurance. Where do you go for services? Finding a competent psychologist or psychiatrist should be no problem, however, they probably won't be willing to pay for P.S.R. services that are offered through the state. That means you pay out of pocket in order to receive services, even though you may be on a fixed income and making less than someone who qualifies for SSDI. I know of consumers who worked hard, retired and got a pension that included medical coverage but because their policy isn't recognized by the state, their copay for a day program would cost more than they pay for rent!

Adult psycho-social rehabilitation centers work. Look at the tract record of Clubhouses and other P.S.R.C's. People are able to lead fuller and more productive lives by using those services, and they tend to need less hospitalization, or at least shorter stays when they need to be hospitalized. I think that might be a good thing for consumers AND our economy.

It is my opinion that if the state has control of a good product like Clubhouses, the service should be made available to ALL consumers, not just the poor or underinsured. Should the state be able to bill other private insurance companies for the services they provide their clients? Absolutely! In the long run, it would save everyone money. Insurance companies are running the state. They mandate who gets services and from where they will get their services. The insurance companies don't care about how high or how low your daily functioning level is, they are only interested in knowing who your carrier is, not what services would help you in your recovery. No wonder our mental health system isn't very cost effective. There are court-mandated consumers in voluntary programs that they never volunteered for, and consumers who can't remember how to close the bathroom door behind them, let alone, lock it. Both consumers in the same program, neither really wanting to be there or work toward recovery and staff still having to work with them instead of those who want to get better and back into the community.

Bottom line... maybe we all need to figure out how to build a better mousetrap and work together. As we are all too aware, there are enough consumers with SMI, to go around!

Other Mental Health Support Groups

* NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) Support Groups for Families:

4 Support Groups on O`ahu; 1 each in Kona, Hilo, & Kaua`i. Consumers can attend too. 591-1297

* ACOA (Adult Children of Alcoholics) 599-7755

* Alzheimers Support

591-2771

* Al-Anon (people living with substance abusers)

599-7755

* Alcoholics Anonymous

(lesbian & gay groups available) 946-1438

* Anorexia & Bulimia

Centre of Hawaii 540-1001

• Co-Dependents Anon

(CODA) relationship problems 589-2632

• Dual Diagnosis

Anonymous Tuesdays, 2:30-3:30pm, Queens, Nuuanu and Vineyard.

• Family Insight Group

run by Kahi Mohala, 671-8511

• Gamblers Anonymous

595-8838

• Hawaii Families as Allies

(parents of kids with emotional challenges) 487-8785

• Helping Hands Hawaii

536-7234

• Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders

261-6987

• Sex and Love Addicts

Anonymous 926-0166

Paid jobs for peer mentoring under new prison grant

BRIDGES Graduates can experience the supportive and rewarding experience of helping prisoners with Mental Health Challenges, who are minor offenders and soon to be paroled - and get paid! We teach them BRIDGES (or part of it) in the prisons and the rest when they are released. We will also peer mentor them: become their friend, help them find services.

"These people are amazingly nice but have experienced unfortunate circumstances in their lives. This is our opportunity to turn it around by becoming their friends," said one person teaching BRIDGES.

The peer mentoring when they are released is one of the most important things we can do. Mentors can become their friends, help them get housing, food, bus pass, meetings with parole officer, and social worker or others.

The Department of Justice, and Hawaii Prisons have given us this opportunity as they realize

"United Self Help is appreciated and needed to help mental health consumers in prison, and when they are released"

"People with mental illness involved in the criminal justice system have similar needs to other individuals with mental illness. Serving this population is simply the right thing to do." (Jackie Massaro, MSW, SAMHSA, working with people with mental illness involved in the criminal justice system.

"Reentry Programs Serve Everyone – 97% of

offenders will be released, – The Bureau of justice statistics, indicates that more than 600,000 offenders are released from prison each year, up to 60% are rearrested within three years.

97% of all offenders will eventually return to their communities without receiving treatment, education or any life-skills preparation while incarcerated.

Upon release, many will return to the lifestyle they left.

USDOJ research shows that assisting released offenders with employment, housing, addiction, treatment, and health can significantly reduce recidivism rates. – ATTC Networker, Vol. 7, November 2.

Right now you can peer mentor someone with a

similar situation, just by being a friend: Taking them out (you get paid and we pay expenses), helping them find services, meeting with them regularly. It's the best peer mentoring job in town and probably the most important.

"It's been a good program," said a prisoner. "we get to learn about our illness through Bridges, then when we get out, there is someone to be our friend, help us with housing, socializing."

And we get work right away at United Self Help when it is available." (through the prison grant funding.

If you would like to help with this meaningful paid position, and are going to take Bridges or are a Bridges Graduate in a support group, Call us.

that a good peer mentoring program can reduce the amount of people re-entering the prison system.

Peer mentoring and BRIDGES classes are now at Oahu Correctional

Facility and will soon be at Halawa and the Women's Correctional Facility in Kaneohe. To Date we have 6 people who can teach BRIDGES, who have passed the prison

clearance, but we need peer mentors when they are released. Help them help themselves.

For more information call United Self Help at 947-5558.

More Support Groups

* **Adoption Circle of Hawaii**
591-3834,

* **American Cancer Society**
(24-Hrs for local support group) 1-800-ACS-2345

* **Brain Injury Association of Hawaii** 941-0372

* **Castle Medical Center Bereavement Support Group** 263-5343 or 263-5344

* **Child and Family Service**
521-2377 or 681-3500

* **Compassionate Friends**
(loss of a child) 792-0204

* **Emphysema Support Group** 10-11am every Thursday, Harris United Methodist Church

* **Family Peace Centre**
(domestic violence) 832-0855

* **Grieving Persons Support Group** 949-0022, or Ann 261-1669

* **Hawaii Down's Syndrome**
949-1999

* **Hawaiian Humane Society**
(grieving a lost pet) 946-2187

New BRIDGES Classes starts Tuesday January 11

*Neighbor Island Bridges
also starting soon*

Graduating from BRIDGES and being in a support group has BENEFITS!! For one, you can get paid for your time. Plus, you get the satisfaction of accomplishing something. Have the enjoyment of time with friends while having some good fun too.

Positions are available to BRIDGES graduates in support groups: Paid positions!

BRIDGES Instructors
Support Group Leaders
Distributing Discount Drug Cards
Persons to start new support groups in areas where needed --Kailua, Waipahu, North Shore, Waianae

Various positions on Maui/Big Island for support groups and drug card distribution

Arrange and speak at High Schools.
Newsletter production, writing
Prison grant peer mentoring.

Peer mentors for other support group leaders.

Office work
Transportation

Fundraising, Grant apps & research
Peer mentoring other support groups members when needed.

Thanks to the following groups for two years of your support

After the State cut ALL of our funds 3 years ago: (only \$31,000 for a warm line that gave 28 consumers part time work, and \$40,000 for support groups reaching more than 300 people), we continued. Most of these grants have expired, but we will find a way.

Private Donations include:

* **Mental Health Transformation State Incentive Grant** for funding 2 BRIDGES Ed classes and 2 new support groups on Maui and the Big Island

* **The Office of Hawaiian Affairs** for giving us an opportunity to reach Hawaiians and others with BRIDGES, Speeches and support groups.

* **The support of the Justice Department and the prison system** for allowing us to teach BRIDGES to incarcerated persons with mental illness, then peer mentor them when they get out.

* **The Honolulu Rotary Club** for grant to speak to High School students around the state.

* **The Weinberg Foundation** for their Achievement in Management award to USH for successfully responding to state budget cuts.

* **The Federal Justice and Local prison authorities** for chance to teach prisoners BRIDGES and peer mentor them when they are released.

* **SAMHSA** for their continuing support for Infrastructure

* **Optum Health** for funds to continue partial warmline services, by one person, and pay for phone equipment. We currently have a phone in the office for calls, internet for communication

* **The Honolulu Chamber of Commerce** for partially funding support groups.

* **The Hawaii People's Fund** for financing travel to give speeches to clubs after the state said no -- then started their own at 10 times the cost.

* **The National Institute of Mental Health** for choosing us to be their Hawaii Outreach partner.

* **State Hospital Consumers:** we are so delighted that they had a fundraiser and donated their funds to us. We promise to keep Fourth Friday and Softball going to you.

If you are a mental health provider, family member, consumer, or just interested in helping keep USH's valuable programs available, please contact our office with any donation. We are also looking for individuals or agencies to sponsor our newsletter, Fourth Friday event (our biggest expense). Call Bud at 947-5558

It has been proven that Support Groups help:

* People helping others in their support group helps them get better – and we want those people.

* Socialization is good for everyone.

* The group is better if there are more people.

* If you want to improve the group/ organization, you can do so by participation.

* AA, NA, Al-Anon, UH, don't hire people who aren't active in their groups for the same reason.

* It's a simple qualification

BRIDGES schedule

What: United Self Help BRIDGES (Building Recovery of Individual Goals and Dreams through Education and Support) United Self Help BRIDGES (Building Recovery of Individual Goals and Dreams through Education and Support)

Where: Queen's Day Treatment, Kaheihimalie Bldg., 1374 Nuuanu Avenue

When: 3:30-5:30 p.m. Tuesdays

- **Class 1** – Introduction
- **Class 2** – Mood Disorders
- **Class 3** – Thought Disorders
- **Class 4** – Anxiety Disorders
- **Class 5** – Personality Disorders
- **Class 6** – Dual Diagnosis
- **Class 7** – Medications and the Brain
- **Class 8** – Communication
- **Class 9** – Spirituality
- **Class 10** – Social Security Work Incentives
- **Class 11** – WRAP
- **Class 12** – WRAP/Graduation lunch or dinner/ gift certificates.

Please call Linda at 753-6400 if you would like to sign up in Honolulu. Attendance at 7 classes required for graduation. Please bring a 3 ring binder to class.

Also on Neighbor Islands: call Susan K at 276-7523

* It's a cheap way of becoming a USH member – involvement in helping others.

* It allows us to check in with each other twice a week.

* Every job has requirements, this is one of ours.

* We get 10 calls a day asking for work, the way to select is to have them take our BRIDGES class and attend a support group to see if they are "givers as well as takers."

SAMHSA'S EIGHT DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

- 1) **Social** - developing a sense of connection and a well-developed support system.
- 2) **Physical** - recognizing the need for physical activity, diet, sleep, and nutrition while discouraging the use of tobacco, drugs, and excessive alcohol consumption.
- 3) **Emotional** - developing skills and strategies to cope effectively with stress, challenges, and conflict.
- 4) **Spiritual** - searching for meaning and purpose in human existence.
- 5) **Occupational** - deriving personal satisfaction and enrichment from one's work.
- 6) **Intellectual** - recognizing creative abilities and finding

ways to expand knowledge and skills.

7) **Environmental** - fostering good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being.

8) **Financial** - feeling satisfied with current and foreseeable future financial situation

NICOTINE EFFECTS ON LAB MICE

A landmark study in mice identifies a biological mechanism that could help explain how tobacco products could act as gateway drugs, increasing a person's future likelihood of abusing cocaine and perhaps other drugs as well, according to NIDA. The study is the first to show that

nicotine might prime the brain to enhance the behavioral effects of cocaine.
Press Release: <http://www.nih.gov/news/health/nov2011/nida-02.htm>

INSIGHT INTO TEEN DEPRESSION

Depressed teens with anhedonia, or the inability to experience pleasure, have lower levels of the neurotransmitter GABA in a key mood-regulating region of the brain, according to an NIMH-funded study published online October 3 in the Archives of General Psychiatry. The researchers note that focusing on specific symptoms and using different types of measures may offer new clues to the pathways and processes underlying

depression and other mental disorders.

Science Update: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/science-news/2011/brain-chemical-linked-to-joylessness-provides-insight-into-teen-depression.shtml>

NIMH Director Dr. Thomas Insel along with Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse appeared recently on the Charlie Rose show, discussing neurological, psychiatric, and addictive disorders. The show ran on November 3 and was the kickoff for part II of Charlie Rose's Brain Series with Eric Kandel. The show can be viewed here: http://www.charlierose.com/view/interview/11978?sponsor_Id=1

MORE BRIEFS

Get involved through Advocacy

Want to make treatment better? Get involved, advocate, attend Chief's Roundtable, Service Area Boards and other policy committees. Help with change.

Want to change things. Unite and get involved. now consumers do not have a choice as to what psychosocial rehab center they can go to. Many have been kicked out of the clubhouses, and told to go somewhere else because they have private insurance, or checked the wrong box.

There are several ways of executing change:

State council on Mental Health; meets once a month, usually the second ? Tuesday. actually one of the Governors advisory boards.

Service Area Boards: Monthly on every island.

Chief's Roundtable -- for consumers. usually the last Monday of every month at the Dept of Health board room on Punchbowl. Call Randy Hack 586-4685.

Fun Fact:

49% of Presidents had a mental illness, 11 while in office.

Yes, that's what a Duke University Study revealed (1/4 of them had depression while in office) – don't feel alone.

United Self Help Advocacy Committee--call Grayson Wideman at United Self Help, 354-9488

For information on who to contact call Randy Hack at 586-4685.

Jobs – The best therapy there is

Why are we sometimes depressed? Is it because we don't have money, friends, socialization, a meaningful life? It might be that a job might solve all of these problems. You'll have more money, meet new people,

find your potential, Research has shown that jobs are one of the best keys on the Road to recovery.

Here are some tips:

- 1) Start in little steps to see if you are ready.
- 2) Know that you always come out ahead if you work.
- 3) Call a Benefits counselor. They will tell you what you can make without losing your business.
- 4) Consider Starting your own business. Get an excise tax (or GE) license from the state. Also when you get a form 172 from your doctor, because you have a mental health challenge, you pay no GE tax, until you reach \$2000/year if you are an independent contractor, and then the rate is only .5% of everything you learn (or 50 cents for every \$100 you learn.)
- 5) Do A few tasks at United Self help. Newsletter writing or production, support groups, take the Bridges Class, find and give speeches, help with fourth Friday, or new support groups being formed after you join them .

6) Take courses from the State. They are now hiring peer specialists, ask us how to get involved with this. Call Randy or Bill at the Consumer affairs division of Adult mental health 586-4685 to get a start. If they don't know call us.

7) Try to get into a clubhouse--clubhouses are great for many people and their transitional employment people will try to find jobs for you and they will take their place for you at work when you get sick. When well, you get the job back,

8) See how much you can work without losing your benefits! we have benefits counselors who can help.

9) Ready to get back to work?

10) Tell your social worker. Steadfast also finds jobs for people.

11) All Benefits Educators at Hawai'i Center for Independent Living keep your benefits while you work or fully transition to work.

12) Call Naomi Crozier toll free (808) 280-8160 or Linda Takai (808) 753-6400