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*Client letters included*

**Honorable Senator Harp and Representative Geragosian and other members of the Appropriations Committee, thank you for allowing me to give testimony in support of DMHAS's budget.**

I also want to thank you for what you did for me 22 years ago on Valentines Day. You made it possible for the state to pay for my 11 days in Dtox and 28 day treatment program at the Beneski Center on the Old Norwich State Hospital property by allowing money to be in the budget to help people like me. At that time I had nothing, I was homeless, unemployable, estranged from my family and oh yes, I forgot to mention a drunk. With the investment that was given on me I have been able to become a productive member of my community. Instead of being a drain, I have learned to be positive influence on society.

The ultimate goal I would suspect is not to have to need treatment for people but that is not reality at all. The belief that 'if we don't fund it, it will go away' is so wrong with it creating more problems down the road. Today, I feel that DMHAS has spent their monies wisely with the General Assistance Intensive Care Management program and Recovery Community Centers because when a person enters the recover zone it is not always smooth. Sometimes in that zone the bumps you may endure is relapse, employment and safe housing issues, a place to learn how to live a better life, hence, our 4 Recovery CommunityCenters and having a specialist or recovery coach monitoring progress along the way could mean so much to an individual trying to get their life back.

I want to thank you again for investing in the DMHAS as they support the Telephone Recovery Support program and sober housing. The stats are staggering and I would like to share one with you. For those that are at the end of first 3 months in recovery and if they are living in a sober environment and

receiving TRS calls there is a 91% that they still are in recovery. Therefore, I want to thank you for saving lives because you do so when you invest in these services and more that are available at all of our Recovery Community Centers and other Recovery Oriented Services agencies.

What I am asking is that you continue to invest in recovery support services because it is not only an investment for them it is an investment for our State. The treatment you paid for me 22 years ago for maybe \$10,000, enabled me to be able to give back well over a hundred thousand dollars in taxes and support to those in need.

Thank you,

Diane Potvin

CCAR volunteer for 3 years, employed for nine

Without a doubt, CCAR is a positive force in the community! Just imagine the first time that I called Carolyn, she sounded delighted to talk with me at 11:00 on that Monday morning. She had just come back from her counselor's office. Our conversation started out like any regular Telephone Recovery Support (TRS) phone call. She told me that she was doing well by staying away from drugs and alcohol. Without warning, a man in the background on Carolyn's end of the phone began yelling obscenities at her. She suffered a vicious verbal attack from her alcoholic husband because she was talking on the phone. I remained calm, perhaps because I, too, have endured the wrath of someone close to me addicted to alcohol. I asked her if she felt safe. She said that she did, but had to retreat to the bedroom to continue with our conversation. She explained to me that her husband worked third shift. And, when he came home in the early morning hours, he usually drank until he went to bed. Carolyn and I talked at great length that day because she needed someone empathetic, not judgmental or appalled with her situation. She and I made a connection that morning, and Carolyn told me that she was grateful that at that moment I had called her. It was not surprising to me that my Higher Power designated that particular time to make contact with Carolyn. Even though she is in recovery, she still is in a precarious position because of her husband's habits and demeanor. People, like Carolyn, look forward to their phone call once or more a week from CCAR's compassionate volunteers.

I have volunteered at CCAR since August 2008 as a Telephone Recovery Support person. I have talked to hundreds of people and have heard as many stories. All the recoveries have been unanimous on two counts about their addiction and CCAR. First, they are in recovery now because they absolutely could NOT live their lives as addicts anymore. They all express the strongest desires to have a quality of life that allows them to care for their children and families, to feel emotions, and to lead healthy, productive lives. Second, they look forward to receiving the TRS phone call once a week. Some recoveries have developed special bonds with certain TRS volunteers and others, simply, like to know that someone out there cares about them. It seems that there is a whole population of people like Carolyn who have taken steps to make their lives better, but still need support from others to let them know that their lives will get better.

How many of you have been out of work for an extended period of time? How many of you have had to worry that you do not have health insurance for your children? How many of you have had to worry about paying the mortgage on your home? It is obvious that many of our social services today are services in theory. Husky cannot handle the numbers of people without health insurance in CT. They have lost my application twice since November 21, 2008. It is almost impossible to get someone from Unemployment to answer the phone. I know this, too, because my husband has been out of work since September 11, 2008. How many more people are going to lose their livelihoods in the next few months? How many families are in danger of being thrust into the street? CCAR does what it says that it is going to do.

CCAR works because the people at CCAR CARE! It is the one social service that I have personally found to have committed individuals, both staff and volunteer alike, who are willing to take a moment to answer questions, take a phone call, or in other ways support someone in need. Like I previously said, I could go on and on telling you stories about how CCAR's Telephone Recovery Support Volunteers have positively touched the lives of so many people in the State of Connecticut who are in transition. Those people are climbing out of the Abyss and need to know that they are not alone, especially in this deplorable economic climate. In my experience, TRS is tantamount to the All Recovery Meetings and the Recovery Community Centers because it delivers support to the recovery on an intimate, nonjudgmental level from people who have walked that same path.

To whome it may concerne,

Hello My name is Daniel M. Januszewski. I am twenty-six years old. I have struggled greatly from drug and alcahol problems over the last 7 years. I am doing real well currently. This letter is to thank you for the support you've provided for me, and to ask that you continue to provide support for us.

without the help of Diane, CCAR and other programs like it, I know I would not be alive today. They have provided me with a new way to live. us addicts are not a lost cause - we can change. without programs we will either be in Jail, or worse dead. It's a fact.

In closing I would just like to say that I am just one of many. There will be people in the future who need help I hope we still have that help Thank you  
Daniel M. Januszewski

To whom it may concern 2/19/09

CCAR has first given me the chance to see who I am and what was need to start in my early recovery. I participate all of their meetings of which I always get a message out of.

CCAR also helps me in search of employment. They have been able to build a strong network of which I am participating in. I have accumulated some substantial clean time thanks to myself the treatment facility I am in and CCAR I can always count on Diane when I need questions answered and she helps in anyway she can

Thank You,  
Steve Noble

To whom it may concern.

2/19/09

Hi, my name is Joyce and I am a recovering addict. and I also suffer from mental health problems.

I have recently been released from jail and have been accepted in a nice sober house. I couldn't ask for a better place. I have been set up for medical, social services, and many other programs and services. If it was for the mental department of mental health services. I don't know where I would be now. Here I am months later. In recovery from my substance abuse programs. With great expectations of reuniting with my children in the near future. I have a great therapist and awesome support for my recovery. I intend to continue with my recovery for as long as it takes. So from me and my children I thank you for a second chance.

Joyce Richard.

TO Whom It May Concern:

My name is CHERYL K. NEPVEI, I reside in a residential treatment facility in Willimantic. I suffer w a co-occurring diagnosis

I receive behavior modification at my residential facility. I receive recovery, health care, & social services in the community from all sorts of programs funded by the State of Conn.

My health is in excellent condition due to medical care provided to me in my recovery.

I ~~to~~ am in recovery from all drugs & alcohol, I am back in my families life.

I am ready to join society & I am looking for full-time employment. Thanks in-part to all programs available to me in my time of need. It time for me to give back.

Cheryl K. Nepvei

DEAR WHOM IT MAY CONCERN ,

My name is Cheryl Machado and I have had a program called A.T.R help me when I first moved here to Willimantic last year . I moved here from Middletown because where I was told me I had to leave . When I first moved here I believed that I had to pay for it all. My parole officer gave me a choice to make and then I Believed he was joking but , he was not . I had only five minutes to make a decision of going back to prison for the reminder of my time which was four years .

I came to a sober house in Willimantic and hated every minute of it . The reason I hated it was because I grew up in this town and it was nothing but bad memories . I cried the whole way here .I learned that I had to do 30 and 30 which meant 30 group meetings. I was unhappy because I have been clean for twenty-two years already .I also was upset because I knew just one person there . The program director tried to be nice to me but I just wanted to go back to Middletown where my boyfriend lived .

I started going to meeting's and meeting new people . I found out that a lot of people struggle every day with their addiction . I also realized that through dmhas has helped me in a lot of ways . They also have helped pay my rent when I thought it was coming out of my social security check . They will help people with mental health issues like they have done with me . When I moved here they helped me with my rent for three months and I'am mentally ill. I have to terms with my illness and see a therapist on a biweekly appointments . Dmhas has come a long way for me and I believe that if it weren't for them I would not be where I'am today .

Today I volunteer two day's a week at CCAR. On Thursday I answer calls and make coffee , do other things that a front desk would do .On Friday I make phone call's to see how people are doing in their recovery and direct them in the right path if they need the help. It is a great thing that I do because it makes me see and feel needed that there are people can reach out and ask for help and not get picked on for it . We have meeting's hereon a daily basis's for all kinds .

Dmhas is one of the best programs out here that I have seen help people in recovery or in any thing that they can . They are always trying to set up more funding to get us or the mentally challenged more jobs. I believe that we are equal and maybe one day everyone will see this for themselves.

Sincerely yours ,

Cheryl machado

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in an attempt to express how important CCAR is to me as I tread on in this journey called recovery. I arrived in Willamantic December 12<sup>th</sup>, 08, I came from my first rehab experience, afraid, nervous and out of place. Two hours away from all I've ever known, I never thought I'd last in ~~this~~ this strange town. I thank God for CCAR, a community in itself that has accepted me and brought to me security and hope. It is a beautiful thing coming here every day seeing people like myself working hard on their recovery. The access ~~provided~~ to the internet is an extreme value, helping me research various programs and also helping me to seek out a job. In fact a job I applied for while using the CCAR internet as recently accepted me for employment. I thank CCAR for this, not just because of the computer that helped me find this job, but also because of the groups that I've attended here, that have help'd me prepared for this job. I love CCAR, and owe a lot to it. I look forward to continue coming here for years to come.

Thank you so much,

The Masina Barlow

Feb. 19, 2008

I arrived in Wmct. Sept 25, 2008. I spent the year before at Niantic Correctional Institution. When released I had no where to go. The 1st day out I went to Social Security to have my SSD reinstated, also my medicar... That is a process and takes time.

Next, I was referred to DDS for Food Stamps and Title 19. I had no where to go to live at that point. I immediately thought of CCAR. I found people who cared about me. People at CCAR helped me find a Sober House to live at that helped me apply for ATR until my social security was reinstated. CCAR also helped me with transportation and job training to put my life back in order.

I now do volunteering at CCAR in the -RS area. This is a place a recovering Alcoholic and addict like myself can "give back". CCAR also supplies an education and support. CCAR keeps it "green" for me, they are recovery friendly. If I can make a difference in someone else's life as CCAR did mine I have done something, I have a safe place to develop skills and self confidence.

Clean and Sober  
Fresh and Free  
Recovery and Freedom  
Feel great to me!

Sincerely

Constance H. Griffin

To Whom It May Concern

I'm writing to express my thanks for all the help I have received since entering Recovery. I have been in York Correctional Institute, where I received help for both Mental Health & Addiction. I have been to Stonington Institute on two occasions, Help Inc. once, and I am now in Sober living. I volunteer @ C-Car and for me, it helps me more than anything. Between volunteering and being in the groups I get so much out of it. My recovery is progressing so much. I pray that the funding is continuous because without places like this there would be a lot more deaths out there and a lot more sick & suffering. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Sincerely

Georganna ~~Stark~~

02-18-09

To whom it may concern:

I am very grateful to all services that have helped me in my recovery. I have gone to the intensive outpatient program at Natchaug Hospital. I attended

Mon-Fri 8<sup>00</sup> am - 12<sup>30</sup> pm. June 23<sup>rd</sup> - Aug 8<sup>th</sup> 2008 at the Sackheim House Program (Hospital) (Mansfield Ct.)

I did follow up after care at United Services. I see my therapist once every 2 wks., attend group "Relapse & Prevention" weekly, medicine maintenance every 3 wks.

I've also done "Post Tramadol Disorder" group, "Anger Management" classes at United Services. I've managed to stay sober since June 2, 2008.

I also attend C.A.R. meetings weekly. I have also completed 150 community service hrs. at C.A.R. that I also played a huge part in my recovery. I also get weekly calls (T.R.S.) from C.A.R. that help to keep my recovery in check.

On Tuesdays 2pm - 4pm I attend the B.O.S.E. program. That program is educational for helping

people with jobs still  
 These programs have helped  
 many other recovery in  
 without these programs  
 me, and other recovering  
 wouldn't ~~be~~ want to  
 of where I would be, or  
 I would be doing  
 for sure, I wouldn't have  
 interest in writing you this  
 letter.

at men and  
 lived people  
 available to  
 addicts, I  
 even think  
 what I  
 one thing  
 e any  
 you this

including giving my life <sup>back</sup>  
 and giving my son  
 his mother back

Thank you for <sup>everything</sup>

Sincerely,  
 Lynn M. DeMarchi  
 Lynn M. DeMarchi  
 any questions please call  
 (860) 465-9230

**RECOVERY** Reclaiming what  
 was lost is a noble task--  
 Rebirth is a  
 natural process of life--  
 Harvesting the  
 seed of empowerment: Being clean and  
 sober--

RECOVERY FOR YOU, FOR YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS, FOR THE COMMUNITY, FOR SOCIETY.

## Legislator Appointees:

Hello my name is Porsia Brown. Being a citizen and voter in the Willimantic area has been and still is an eye opener as my first arrival to reside in a sober house for my recovery status to grow stronger. September the 11<sup>th</sup> of 2008 was my new beginning of a life free from misleading mood altering substances. A positive direction of self-seeking to branch out to make a reputation of myself in the productive field, so with my common knowledge and a few bucks in my pocket knowing that my stay in a sober house was not rent free, my energy level was boosted toward visiting businesses owners, making a profound appearance in the right direction. Opening every door, introducing myself, asking for applications for employment and their name, telephone number and their business card for follow-up, these independent businesses seek unfamiliar faces along with an outward appearance of me to create an unforgettable mark to such business owners. Tired as my body was, my heart said to keep treading until an invitation was presented: "Yes you can be of services to our company and be here Monday at 9a.m." (Chamber of Commerce) Attending Windham Recovery Community Center helps me gain a more understanding of my past and recovering social skills, family support, education and giving back. As CCAR (Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery) is going to become global, one state at a time event, so the need for your support to continue funding for our services will create progress for you, for your family and friends, for the community. DMHAS helps me with Perceptions for

**COME VISIT**

Counseling and medication.

2/19, 2009

(7)

To The Legislators:

My name is Marta Enriquez and I am happy to say that I live a clean & sober life and lifestyle.

I believe I have been successful only because of the seeds that have been planted in my mind, body & soul. The nourishment of healing me from my addiction of alcohol & drugs was given to me by clinician, therapists in inpatient facilities as well as outpatient groups that I still attend. Those individuals that run such institutions are well equipped with the knowledge that helped me get better.

CCAR has played a big part in my recovery. I say this because CCAR is a safe place for me to continue my research of all kinds, whether it be resume writing, cover letters and job searches which I do on their computer and in a more relaxed atmosphere. I also do TRS calls for the center which involves in peer to peer support. These call help the caller as well as the receiver of calls. I am soon to graduate DIP program, which stands for Drug Intervention Program. I feel this

DIP program has helped me reconstruct the way I should live and deal with life on life terms.

Going back to CCAR, I am involved in helping with a show aired on CH14 @ 730-830 every other Wednesday. I get 1st hand information how other individuals work their recovery and I look for all positive information that will help me continue this wonderful journey I am experiencing.

I have been homeless since 1996 due to my addiction. ~~Now~~ I have known soup kitchens in a few towns that I took advantage of and also to the point of abuse. I've lived in shelters in the winters & ~~in a tent~~ in a tent during the warmer months. I degraded myself until I couldn't stand myself because of the things I did to get my addiction taken care of.

Today, I live well because of places like also Generations to keep my health on the right track. DSS for food stamps and medical coverage, the pharmacy that accept <sup>state</sup> medical coverage.

(3)

Dentist who also are covered by saga.  
Shelter Plus Care helps pay 70% of my rent.  
I work today to be a responsible productive  
member of society.

I've just learned about a program called  
IDA which stands for Individual Development  
Account @connected with access program.  
This will help me with goals and some of my  
dreams.

WAIM another outlet of help here in  
Willimantic has helped with finances when I  
need to utilize them.

These are just to mention a few reasons  
and places and people that have helped me  
get my life back on track when I need  
to be.

Your investment in my welfare is most  
gratefully appreciated.

Sincerely  
Marta L. Enriquez