

Feb. 18, 2010

DMHAS
BUDGET HEARING 6:00pm

My name is Seth Richardson. I live on Grove St. in West Hartford. I am an active registered voter. Having a Community Support Specialist from Chrysalis Center to provide case management services for me has dramatically changed my life. Having their support and assistance has allowed me to grow and become more independent and be the person I am today.

I used to live with drugs and violence surrounding me and in fear of my life constantly. I felt everyday was a crisis for me. Prior to being involved with Chrysalis Center, I could not keep a job, and I did not understand or know where to get any assistance with my finances, doctors, insurance, and I did not know how or where to find the medical help that I needed to help me manage my mental illness symptoms.

I needed proper resources to assist me to improve the quality of my life, because I could not do it alone and I was completely overwhelmed and felt life was too hard to handle. I would isolate and become more anxious and depressed. Now, if I have a problem with my housing or mental health care or paperwork I don't understand, I ask my case manager for assistance. I am able to live alone in my own apartment and I volunteer at a local business to learn job and people skills. I know with the support of my case manager, I will be connected to education and employment services, so I will be able to get a job and give back to my community someday.

Today with the assistance that Chrysalis Center has given to me, I am able to stay living in my own apartment and not spend time in the hospital or alone depressed in my house. My case manager set up weekly home care services that help me learn how to do my laundry and do my own weekly chore to keep my apartment clean and safe. I am able to take the bus now to shop on my own for groceries and other personal needs. Chrysalis Center has helped me find different doctors for my specific needs and as well connecting me to a visiting nurse who comes to assist me. I am extremely grateful for what Chrysalis Center has provided for me and I cannot imagine what my life would be like without the education, guidance and support my case manager has provided. Chrysalis Center also has different programs that will help me learn new skills, including their culinary class where I could learn how to cook and then help with catering. They also have computer classes and support groups that I could attend to learn more. I am forever grateful for their assistance. Please don't cut the community based mental health provider's budget or underfund the services they provide for people like me.

Thank for letting me testify this evening.

Seth Richardson, West Hartford Resident 860-212-5184