



Donor Advance

A periodic update for donors on the work of Natchaug Hospital

February 2011

The lengthening days and melting snow are welcome reassurances that Spring really is on its way.

Here at Natchaug Hospital we have been busy this winter with many enhancements to our programs and services. The following brief highlights are just the beginning of conversations that I would love to have with you, perhaps at the March 24th luncheon that the Eastern Connecticut State University Foundation is hosting for us for the fourth year, or at our June 9th Annual Board Reception.

Strategic Planning: Natchaug Hospital's participation in Hartford HealthCare's system-wide strategic planning initiatives is generating significant benefits for our clients and our staff. One change that you will notice, as early as March 4 if you are watching the Big East Women's Basketball Tournament, is a new logo for the Hartford HealthCare system and all of its member organizations. Just as the UConn women's basketball program is known nationally for its excellence, Hartford HealthCare will be known, nationally, for its excellence in patient care. Natchaug's Board of Directors and Executive Team continue to play an active role in this process.

Partnership with Lawrence & Memorial Hospital: Natchaug and Lawrence & Memorial Hospitals moved to a new phase in their longstanding close relationship: through a formal partnership agreement, Natchaug will now manage both the inpatient and outpatient psychiatric services of Lawrence & Memorial Hospital. This will improve communication and coordination of services for clients served by both hospitals. L&M will maintain its current level of inpatient and outpatient psychiatric services. We are jointly recruiting a psychiatrist to head the department of psychiatry and an operations director for the department, who will report to administrators at both hospitals. This innovative and creative approach was endorsed in an editorial that appeared in the *New London Day* which I have enclosed.

Access to Care: In response to requests from providers in the region, and after a comprehensive needs assessment, Natchaug Hospital opened a new Joshua Center in Old Saybrook to better serve youth in grades 7 – 12 living in the 12-town region of Greater Essex/Old Saybrook. Until now, children with emotional, thought and behavior disorders in this region were referred to New Haven, Hartford and Middletown for treatment, making it difficult for families to access the care their children need and disconnecting the family from vital resources in their local community. Joshua Center – Shoreline replicates the model with which we have had success for over 20 years and includes both the special education and partial hospitalization and intensive outpatient services. A big thanks to the AT&T Foundation for their support in the planning and start-up for this needed program!

School Activities: The State Department of Education recently completed visits of all of the schools directly run by Natchaug, a standard part of the process for private special education schools to be considered for up to a five year approval status by the Department. Even though we have not received our formal report from the Commissioner of Education, we are confident that, given our performance, we will continue to be able to serve students with the full endorsement of the state.

Our Enfield school program made the news one day when, alerted by a new crack in a wall, staff and students evacuated the building as a precaution while the Fire Department assessed the roof for potential structural problems related to the weight of snow on the roof. Our RiverEast program in Vernon welcomed the after-school program, allowing it to continue without interruption. Fortunately, within a few days, after removal of the snow and structural review of the facility, we were back to normal.

Spotlight on Leadership: Chief Medical Officer Deborah Weidner continues to build a first-class medical staff, including the recent arrivals of Dr. Kathleen McKnight, Dr. Paul Weigle, and Nancy Olson, APRN. Also, Dr. Pamela Shuman completed her certification in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Community Support: We are profoundly grateful for the increasingly important contributions from individuals whose gifts, large and small, support the programs and operations of Natchaug Hospital. Grants received since our last newsletter include:

Altrusa International of Northeastern Connecticut, \$1,500, to bring the *My Life – My Choice* program to the residents of Journey House.

Middlesex County Community Foundation, a pledge of \$5,000 toward the second phase of opening the new Joshua Center – Shoreline that is serving teens who live in the region of Greater Essex/Old Saybrook.

We also received an on-line donation of **\$500 in memory** of a person we cared for 20 years ago.

The **Eastern Connecticut State University Foundation** is hosting their 4th luncheon to benefit Natchaug's education and school programs on March 24th. This year's shorter program will feature Dr. William Howe addressing the complex issue of bullying.

In Their Own Words...The following are among the many comments clients shared on recent Customer Satisfaction Surveys:

"I'm happy with my treatment and my father is finally proud of me. It meant a lot to me to earn my fathers respect back." *Adult, Inpatient Program*

"Although the staff was with my daughter for only a short time, they were able to understand and meet her needs exceptionally well. Both my daughter and I felt that she was in good hands and very safe. Thank you for all that you do." *Family, Adolescent Inpatient Program*

"This place really helped me get through a hard time." *Adolescent, Inpatient Program*

"Everyone was very special and helpful at a particularly stressful time in my life. The level of understanding and compassion was superlative. I hope I never see any of them again, but I would not hesitate to recommend this facility to anyone. Thank you." *Adult, Inpatient Program*

"Sharing in a group environment is extremely difficult for me, but the therapists and the group made it possible for me to share what I was feeling, and as a result I feel that I've made good progress in my healing. I have a long road ahead of me, but I feel much better equipped to take the next step." *Adult Partial Hospitalization Program*

"What I like about the program is it gives me more confidence, and help coping with things." *Adolescent, Joshua Program*

"This place saved my life and I will be forever grateful." *Adult, Inpatient Program*

Just a snapshot of the many ways your generosity enables Natchaug do our job of helping people find their way. I encourage you to contact me or any of the leadership team at the hospital if you would like more information. Thank you for supporting Natchaug Hospital.



Stephen W. Larcen, Ph.D.
President & CEO

Natchaug Hospital • www.natchaug.org • 860-456-1311
189 Storrs Road – Mansfield, CT 06250

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