

February 21, 2008



*M. Jodi Rell, Governor*

**2007 EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**

*Thomas A. Kirk, Jr., Ph.D.  
Commissioner*

Congratulations to **Michael Cavanaugh** for being selected DMHAS Employee of the Year for 2007! Mike, who is a Mental Health Assistant 1 at Cedarcrest Hospital, is Program Director in the Cottage Program—a program that focuses on assisting individuals who are transitioning from the hospital to community living. He excels at his job and in his work with individuals in recovery. His contributions help to provide a safe and supported environment that illustrates the DMHAS commitment to successful community integration.



DMHAS "Shining Stars," Employees of the Year  
Michael Cavanaugh 2007 (center),  
Lyn Lawrence 2006 (left), Silvia Flynn 2005 (right)

Nominated by a fellow-employee, Mike brings forward innovative ideas for activities that provide practical, effective (and fun) experiences for people in transition. He is a contributor at staff and team meetings where he reflects his high regard for clients. Michael's positive spirit and approach convey hope. He is dedicated to the Cottage Program, coming in early daily to help clients plan and operate the New Hope Café. He regularly works in the Evening Meal Prep program and volunteered to be the first staff to begin an additional evening activity at the Cottage. Always ready, dependable and willing, Mike is a true leader and asset to the Cottage Program, its staff, and most importantly, the people he helps to transition successfully to the community.

I also extend my congratulations to each of the **DMHAS Facility Employees of the Year** who include:

**Elaine Henley, Psychiatric Social Worker Assistant at Connecticut Mental Health Center.** Throughout her 26 years with CMHC, Elaine has developed her skills and assumed many roles where she has had a positive impact on patient treatment and staff life.

**Catherine (Kit) Conway, Clinical Social Worker Associate with Young Adult Services at Capitol Region Mental Health Center.** Kit joined the Young Adult Services team in 2001 where her humor, dry wit and reputation for excellent clinical care and staff supervision make her beloved by her clients and an outstanding asset to professional staff.

**Terry Krasinsky, Rehab Therapist 2 at Connecticut Valley Hospital, General Psyc. Division** is an inspiration to patients with her outgoing personality and smile. She implemented the Pet Therapy Program, serves as a lifeguard at Merritt Pool and drives the handicapped bus. Her energy comes from her caring heart.

**Ronna Keil works in Health Care Systems at the Office of the Commissioner** where her varied and valuable contributions enrich the lives of clients and staff. Her Art of Recovery Project features original artworks of people in recovery that are displayed at monthly art shows at the Office of the Commissioner.

**Brian Reignier, Human Services Advocate at River Valley Services,** ensures that clients at RVS are treated with dignity and respect. He fights for rights and works on eliminating barriers by fostering relationships, facilitating groups and providing advocacy, training and recovery education. He co-chairs the Consumer, Family and Youth Committee of the Transformation Grant Oversight Committee.

**David Pascua is a Mental Health Associate at Southeastern Mental Health Authority** where he designed a system to allocate housing resources to clients with maximum efficiency. With over 28 years of experience, he helps to sustain a person-centered work atmosphere to help clients achieve their goals.

**Maria Diaz, Secretary 2 at the Southwest CT Mental Health System,** is a pillar that keeps the Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit and the Hospital Services division running. She brings a person-centered spirit to her work, trains all support staff, and ensures clients, families and visitors receive the highest level of service.

**Sedell Hairston-Hatton, Secretary 1 at the Western CT Mental Health Network, Greater Waterbury Mental Health Authority,** is an exemplary secretary and asset to the intake team. She facilitates the flow of information keeping the team up-to-date and "on their toes."