



NEWSLETTER

Options chosen as participant in national evidence-based mental health treatment study

Winter 2006, Number 15

Options for Southern Oregon, in partnership with Josephine and Jackson County Mental Health departments, has been chosen as a study participant for the Mental Health Treatment Study (MHTS), sponsored by the Social Security Administration. The purpose of the study is to examine the value of delivering appropriate mental health and employment supports for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries with a primary impairment of schizophrenia or affective disorder.

The MHTS is a nationwide controlled trial that creates access to evidence-based medical and behavioral health treatment and supported employment services. The intended outcomes for participants in the treatment group include improved social functioning and successful competitive employment.

Options will implement this study in both Josephine and Jackson counties. The two Southern Oregon counties are one of 20 demonstration sites nationwide to implement this study. Options was selected based on our innovative supported employment and case management models. Eligible study participants will be recruited from social security rolls in the surrounding areas of the selected sites.

All mental health and supported employment services will be billed through insurance backed by the project. In addition, the study will fund a nurse care coordinator and research assistant for each site. 150 total participants will be enrolled in the study, 75 in each Josephine and Jackson counties.

A Special Thank You



A very special thank you to Pat Wedman, who recently stepped down from Options Board of Directors after twenty years of dedicated service. Pat's generosity of spirit, willingness to give and great sense of humor distinguished her time with Options. Pat was a member of the steering committee for the *Options Festival of Trees* and was a key supporter of Options community events. She regularly had home-baked goods and meals ready for the entire Board of Directors at Options board meetings. Her experience with low-income clients and mental illness as a Department of Human Services caseworker instilled a sense of vision and compassion for Options work in the community. Pat will be sorely missed and her years of service will always be appreciated.

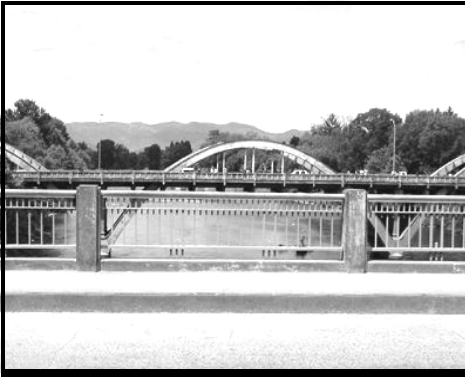
2005 Options Festival of Trees A Holiday Success!

After many months of planning, the third annual *Options Festival of Trees* opened its doors this past Thanksgiving Weekend at the Josephine County Fairground Pavilion in Grants Pass. This year, profits from the event were dedicated to Options supported employment program, Employment Works.

On Saturday night over 200 people arrived for the Gala Dinner and Live Auction. A fantastic dinner was served by the staff of the Hungry Woodsman Restaurant and a special thank you to the owner, John Sawyer, for everything he did for this year's Festival. Many wonderful items, donated by local businesses and artisans, were available at the silent auction that continued throughout the festival. Liska Associates led the live auction of the 31 themed trees, artwork, and various special and vacation packages. On Sunday, children, young and

See *Options Festival of Trees*, page 3

"BRIDGES TO SUCCESS" PROGRAM REACHES OUT TO HOMELESS IN JOSEPHINE COUNTY



Bridges to Success
An Interagency Project for People Who are Homeless

The "Bridges to Success" program, a partnership of Options for Southern Oregon, SAMHSA, Josephine County Mental Health, Adapt, Choices, and The Union has recently begun offering their services in Josephine County.

The purpose of this 5-year federal grant is to provide strengths-based case management to homeless persons with substance use disorders, serious mental illness, or co-occurring disorders. Three new case managers, two peer support specialists and a research assistant began implementing the program this past Fall, and are providing outreach, engagement,

strengths assessment, goal setting, and resource acquisition with people experiencing homelessness and/or facing homeless situations.

An initial focus of the *Bridges* team has been to establish connections throughout rural areas in Josephine County. They work with local agencies in Cave Junction and Sunny Valley to ensure that services are available throughout the County.

Currently, the *Bridges* program is receiving a large number of referrals to the program from our partner agencies. Primary sources of these referrals are Josephine County Mental Health, local drug and alcohol recovery organizations, the Gospel Rescue Mission, Community Justice, and the Women's Crisis Support Team.

The *Bridges* case managers consider themselves "life coaches" to the people they serve and are seeing very tangible benefits from the program. Services provided include getting people into housing and providing practical supports through consultation, advocacy and coordination of services.

The *Bridges* program has received diverse community support from local agencies, businesses, and

"The Bridges program is not about maintaining people, but is about moving them forward."

Amara Thelen

Case Manager, Bridges to Success, Options for Southern Oregon

individuals. Partner agencies such as Community Action, RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program), the Illinois Valley Coalition, Oregon Parent Center of Wolf Creek, Oregon Employment Department, St. Vincent De Paul, and Veteran Services all have provided key support to the program.

Long-term, *Bridges* case managers hope to have a lasting impact on community awareness of the homeless issue. As we reach out to the homeless population we strengthen the ties between people and our community.

Coming up next for the *Bridges* team is a training for community members who want to help people successfully receive funds from Social Security Administration. In addition, Case managers are also working on establishing dental care for individuals in the program.

Plots Available for second year at the *Options Community Garden*

The *Options Community Garden* is entering its second year providing a valuable public gardening space at our main office location in Grants Pass. In 2006 we have several gardening plots opening and available to the general public. Community gardening is a wonderful way to meet neighbors, grow healthy food, and help beautify Grants Pass and its neighborhoods.

If you are interested in maintaining a garden plot or volunteering please contact Joe Serres with Options at 476-2373 or at jserres@optionsonline.org.

You can also visit the *Options Community Garden* online at www.optionsonline.org/CommunityGarden.htm

Donations Needed for the *Options Community Garden!*

As we are entering our second season in the garden we have several needs that the community can help meet:

- Volunteer Labor
- Donations to pay for scholarship plots
- Gardening Tools, Equipment & Plants

Festival of Trees *(continued from page 1)*

old, gathered for the picnic for the second straight year, which included lunch, crafts, songs, storytelling, and a teddy bear parade.

The *Festival* brought in over \$22,000 in net profit for Options and provided many people in the community with an opportunity to get to know more about Options and the services we provide.

Options would like to express our deepest gratitude to all of the people, organizations and businesses that sponsored trees or events, made donations, volunteered their time, or attended the *Festival*. We would especially like to recognize the contributions of Portfolio Consultants, our event coordinators, whose efforts helped create a memorable and successful *Options Festival of Trees*.

**2005 Options Festival of Trees
Tree Design Winners:**

Best of Show: "A Mardi Gras Christmas"
Sponsor: Three Rivers Community Hospital
Designer: Donna Rose

Most Elegant: "Holiday on the Orient Express"
Sponsor: Lithia GP Auto Center
Designer: Jannie Carlson

Most Original: "A Red Hat Christmas"
Sponsor: Ron & Margy Goss
Designers: It's All About Me & Cranberry Krinkles

Best Theme: "Christmas Spice & Everything Nice"
Sponsor: Mid Rogue IPA
Designers: AAUW Volunteers

Most Imaginative: "Cowboy-Up for the Holidays"
Sponsor: Secret Garden
Designer: Ellen Johnson

People's Choice: "Christmas Porcelain Village"
Sponsor: Cabinet Crafters
Designer: Donna Rose



Thank you to everyone who made the 2006 Options Festival of Trees such a wonderful community event!

Options Receives Funding

Options recently received a \$10,000 grant from the Carpenter Foundation to help fund a strategic planning process for program development.

Thank you to Wheeler Toyota for their generous donation of \$5,000 in support of Options service programs. This was the largest single unsolicited donation in the history of the agency.

**Options for Southern Oregon
Board of Directors**

- Ralph Trigg, President
- John Sawyer, Vice-President
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- Felicity Elworthy
- Lana Faszler
- Francine Gentile
- Denise Olson
- Marjorie Underwood
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OUR MISSION: OPTIONS FOR SOUTHERN OREGON offers consultations, training and innovative programs to serve low income individuals and people with psychiatric disabilities to inspire hope while supporting their participation in the life of the community.

Options for Southern Oregon, 1215 SW G Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526

Thank You for your generous donation!
All contributions are tax deductible as allowed under IRS guidelines.
To assure proper credit, please return this form with your gift.
Mail with your tax deductible check to:

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____

OR: Please send me an invoice once per month for \$ _____ each month for a period of one year as my response to the reduction in state funds for the disabled.

Yes, here is my contribution: \$25 \$50 \$100 or even more \$ _____
Your partnership is needed
**** Inspiring Hope While Supporting Participation in the Community ****

Options' spacious meeting room is available
to rent for community events, retreats or other gatherings.
For details, call 476-2373

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Return Service Requested