



SEATTLE COUNSELING SERVICE

Proudly serving our LGBTQI communities since 1969!

From the Director . . .



Seattle Counseling Service

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Staff members unpacked hundreds of boxes at the new space!

It has been a very busy few months at Seattle Counseling Service. This quarter's newsletter has pictures and stories describing some of our activities through the summer and into the Autumn. We've moved and settled into our beautiful new space on the corner of Melrose and Pine Streets. We are perched over I-5 and have great windows to look out and see the city, mountains and even the Space Needle! It's been a remarkable journey to get here, with a long search for a new space. The search has been worth it, as we are finding ourselves filling up 9,000 square feet without any problem. I am truly

grateful to all of you who have helped to get us moved and settled. It was wonderful to have Open Houses in September and conduct tours of the space. If you have not stopped in to visit, I hope you will do so soon.

We have also added some new program elements in the last few months, particularly in the chemical dependency program services. Our new youth program is starting up and is described in this edition of the newsletter. We are also delighted to have started up a new HIV CD program, focused on serving people living with HIV/AIDS who are also working on substance abuse issues. And finally, we've grown to add another mental health position to keep up with the demand for services. All of this has been exciting and a positive change for the agency.

Autumn brings with it back-to-school energy and we are

delighted to welcome a new group of graduate interns. This new group of second year students will spend a year with us, gaining great skills and providing excellent services to clients who we would not otherwise be able to serve. Our internship program is one of the best in the area and requires a ton of time and energy by our students and our staff who supervise them. We are proud of their work and their accomplishment and believe it serves our mission to strengthen and support the development of culturally competent therapists who will serve our LGBT community well.

I hope this newsletter finds you well and provides you with some information on how we are doing here at SCS. Don't hesitate to stop in or call if you have a moment. We'd love to see you!

Ann McGettigan
Executive Director



Focusing on HIV by Chuck Ellis

“Living the dream” or “way beyond excited & thrilled!” Both are apt, though inadequate expressions of how I am feeling as I begin my new job at Seattle Counseling Service. Hi, I’m Charles “Chuck” Ellis, the new Chemical Dependency Counselor [trainee] and HIV Specialist in the Chemical Dependency Program here at Seattle Counseling. I consider myself particularly fortunate in that I had just finished a one-year internship as psychotherapist in the Mental Health Program when

I applied for this position. I believe this grounding will serve the agency, its clients and the community well as I move into the chemical dependency aspect of services.

Although chemical dependency and mental health are often treated as separate and distinct entities, this is rarely the reality in people’s everyday lived experience. SCS has been working hard (and succeeding!) at integrating these two parts into something greater than the

sum of the two.

In addition to conducting assessments and providing counseling for clients who have chemical dependency issues and are impacted by HIV/AIDS, I will be making referrals as appropriate. I will be working with some pretty amazing individuals and agencies like Lifelong AIDS Alliance to build and foster inter-agency communication and collaboration. Working together we can improve the quality and continuity of services for those affected by HIV.

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A New Youth Program At SCS

Shauntae Willis is new to the chemical dependency staff and she came to SCS specifically to create a new youth program. Her primary goal is to engage youth at SCS.

Shauntae came from Ryther Child Center where she was a chemical dependency outpatient counselor for adolescents. She will provide a chemical dependency outpatient program for

youth focusing on education around substance use and relapse prevention. The new Youth Support Group is Thursdays from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. The youth program will provide support around gender identity and sexual orientation. There is no other gay youth chemical dependency program in Seattle and this new program will be an innovative

and safe place for youth to work on issues in their life and examine how those matters affect their substance use.

The youth program is important to help identify how the coming out process affects mental health and substance use. Furthermore, it is essential to provide a safe space where

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The SCS Pride parade contingent with matching T-shirts!



The Domestic Violence and Clubhouse Programs Gain New Leadership

Tammy Siu has come to us from NYC where she attended Teachers College at Columbia University. She was involved in an outreach program focusing on sexual harassment policies and worker rights for Citizen Action of New York.

Here at SCS, Tammy has taken over our Domestic Violence program. We at SCS feel that this DV program is essential in that it acknowledges violence occurs in same sex relationships and works to support queer DV survivors by providing a safe space. There are many challenges to offering a DV group for gay men due to societal conceptions of who is affected by domestic violence, the construction of masculinity and the reality that there is not very much support in places

outside of this group for same sex domestic violence in the community. There are many challenges specific to LGBTQI survivors of domestic violence including the isolation of survivors from the queer community, fears of being outed by perpetrators and a lack of sensitivity to LGBTQI folks from shelters.

Tammy's group is a closed group for gay, bi and FTM individuals. SCS client status is not required to participate in this group. The group helps survivors to understand the affects of DV on physical health, emotional health, behavioral health, social health and cognitive health. The group meeting time and place is confidential, and it takes place weekly. Clients do not currently have to be in a DV relationship to be in the group. The group also tries to

help facilitate healing for people who have been through DV.

In addition to facilitating the DV group, Tammy will be collaborating with The Northwest Network as they provide a group for female survivors of same-sex DV.

Tammy has also taken over stewardship of our Clubhouse Program. Clubhouse has several main objectives, which are: improvement of self care, social skills, developing a balanced self-esteem and coping. She works with Clubhouse two days a week, from 12-4 on Wednesday and Friday. This program is for therapist-referred SCS clients. The Clubhouse helps people break down some of the isolation they are experiencing in their lives.

Open House

SCS hosted two Open Houses, the Sneak Preview was held September 19th and the formal Open House on Thursday September 23. Both were successful in introducing community members to our new facility.

Over 150 Guests were invited to take a tour through our new spacious offices, chat with fellow SCS fans, and enjoy a lovely buffet. Thanks to the SCS Board, staff and volunteers who made both events memorable. If you missed the Open House; just call and set up a time to take a tour! We'd love for you to visit!



(above) Arleen and Arnold during the move
(below) Donnie And Ann at PRIDE!



(HIV Focus Continued from page 2)

My interests in mental health, chemical dependency and HIV/AIDS, specifically in LGBTQI communities, started out rather personally. The Universe decided to have its way with me and the personal became political, which in turn became academic and, ultimately, professional. My work at SCS and other service agencies in the LGBTQI communities is one way that I honor those who have gone before me, as well as those who continue to struggle with psychosocial, chemical dependency and/or HIV-related issues. Thanks for allowing me to be part of this incredible journey.

Namaste*
Chuck

Our recent expansion has left us dreaming for a few items, like:

- small tables
- loveseats
- floor lamps
- table lamps

Any donations toward these items would be greatly appreciated.



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*(A New Youth Program
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LGBTQI youth can embrace diversity and be comfortable with their identity.

Shauntae is doing outreach to all queer youth, chemical dependency and general youth providers; training them in the creation of safe spaces and how to deliver referrals and resources to youth. Her target population is youth ages 10 to 21. She is doing outreach to King County's public schools,

Lambert House, Orion Center, and the University District Youth Center. Shauntae is also connecting with King County Juvenile Justice Drug Court and the Safe Schools Coalition.

Another of Shauntae's objectives is to make sure youth are being heard and that all providers can get on the same page on how to provide services for LGBTQI youth. She would like to be at the forefront of coordination in terms of providing resources for youth. To bolster this goal she is working on a youth forum in conjunction with

the Seattle Commission for Sexual Minorities to take place this coming Spring. It will be a forum where youth and providers can come together to determine the needs of Seattle's youth population around a wide range of issues including mental health, drug abuse and homelessness. Enrolling in the youth program is the same as with SCS' other CD/MH programs. Interested parties should contact Colin or Shauntae. SCS is looking forward to the future of this new program.

Staff Changes

During this exciting period of change we have welcomed some new staff members and bid others farewell.

New CD Staff:

Chuck Ellis
Shauntae Willis

New MH Staff:

Tammy Siu
Jennifer Mullane

Jennifer comes to SCS from The Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center where she did health behavior change

counseling for adolescent tobacco users. She has also acted as the supervisor for the Victim Unit at the US Attorneys Office. In addition, Jennifer was a clinician in a research study housed at Evergreen Treatment Services to help people on a Methadone waiting list to reduce risk by safe needle and sex practices.

New Administrative Staff:

Office Manager Sara Michelle Fetters is a movie critic and contributing writer to the SGN when she's away from SCS' offices.

Interns that have graduated:

Chuck Ellis
Jordana Joseph
J.J. Kiser
Sarah Wright
New Interns
Angie Canelli
Cassie Salewske
Jennifer Spencer
Lynn Elwood

We will miss Helene Alexandra as she enters retirement and her next adventures. She assures us that she will visit occasionally.

SCS Receives Exemplary Services Award

The King County Exemplary Service Awards for extraordinary service and advocacy on behalf of people with mental illness and/or chemical dependency were held Tuesday, September 28 at the Center for Urban Horticulture. The 6th annual event recognizes community service providers and advocates who work toward system improvement and quality client care. Seattle Counseling Service received a 2004 KCMHCD Exemplary Service Award for Systems Integration, specifically the Chemical Dependency Program and Project NEON. We are proud that the CD team has been recognized for its outstanding work.



King County Executive Ron Sims and recipients of the 2004 Awards. From left: **Ann McGettigan**, **Darcel Slovek**, Transitional Resources, **Beth Hammonds** and **David Johnson**, Highline-Mental Health Center, Expanding Community Services - *Advocacy*; **Jessica Benet**, Criminal Justice Initiatives Project, Seattle Mental Health- *Service Innovation*; **Executive Sims**; and **Victor Vander Beng Hui Loo**, Washington Asian Pacific Islander Families Against Substance Abuse - *Direct Service*.