

Special Interest Articles

"Physics at Work in Neuroscience..."

Mayor's Mental Health Task Force – Final Report.

Membership Meeting.

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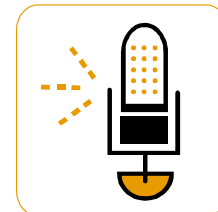
President's message

On January 24, 2005, Mayor Will Wynn was presented with the final report of his Mental Health Task Force. The Mayor had stated his goal, "to make Austin the fittest city in the United States," and "for a community to be healthy, mental as well as physical health has to be included."

Under the leadership of the Hogg Foundation and ATCMHMR a task force, consisting of leaders in the field of mental health, met weekly from August 2004 to January 2005.

The 80-page report was generated by four subcommittees responsible for Justice Systems, Short- and Long-term treatment, Housing, Education and Community, respectively. On page 40, under the heading of present strengths (in the short- and long-term treatment section), PLAN of Central Texas is listed as a provider of long-term support, along with 20 other strengths in the communities.

For more information on the report, see Volunteer



Jessica Donalson's contribution to this newsletter. Recognition in high circles is gratifying but community awareness of services offered by PLAN is more important.

From the desk of Cecile DeWitt "Physics at Work in Neuroscience, Neuroscience at work in Mental Health"

It all began in the Summer of 2003. In the October 2003 issue of According to PLAN I mentioned in "The Next Step" the works of Denis le Bihan, MD, PhD, and David Servan-Schrieber, MD, PhD. Their work gave me, for the first time, the certainty that major progress in Mental Health is in sight—including recovery from mental illnesses. In the January 2004 issue of According to PLAN, (p. 15) I reported the steps I had taken to create a program of lectures

"From Physics to Functional MRI to Mental Health."

The program is now funded under the title "Physics at Work in Neuroscience, Neuroscience at Work in Mental Health." It is sponsored by the University of Texas through the Departments of Physics and Psychology, the Institute of Neuroscience, the France-UT Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies, and the School of Social Work.

The inaugural lecture was given by Denis LeBihan on December 2nd, 2004 – with a contribution from the Mission pour la Science et la Technologie of the French Embassy.



"To catch the reader's attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here."

From the Desks of Cecile DeWitt and Marcia Toprac: A Visit with Curtis Meadows, Past President of the Meadows Foundation & Founder of RGK Foundation for Philanthropy

What makes a good board member, says Curtis Meadows, are the three Ws: work, wisdom, wealth. Two out of three of these are necessary.

The key factor is a good working relationship between the President of the Board and the Executive Officer. A non-profit needs a

good case statement or statement of need with key talking points on how our services help people help themselves). Board members and volunteers use it for fundraising and educating about the organization.

A paid volunteer coordinator can help a non-profit make the

best possible use of available volunteers by training them and organizing and supporting their work.

The key for volunteer support is alignment of the volunteers' interests with the goals of the organization.

(cont'd on page 4)

Mayor's Mental Health Task Force: Final Report Jessica Donalson

On January 24, 2005, the findings from the Mayor's Mental Health Task Force Final Report – The Fittest City in America Initiative, were released to the public during a press conference. Notable participants spoke at the conference, including Mayor Will Wynn, who introduced Task Force Co-Chairs, former State Representative Wilhelmina Delco and former Mayor Gus Garcia. Dr. King Davis of the Hogg Foundation discussed societal challenges facing mental illness, and David Evans, Executive Director Austin/Travis County MHMR,

presented the topic of Historic Community Challenges. All referred, sometimes obliquely, to the tragedy of Sophia King's death; a tangible impetus for the creation of the Task Force. The 90-page report, generated by more than 80 individuals assigned to subcommittees, and filtered through two consulting firms, is the result of years of community concern regarding the challenges and gaps in treatment often

encountered by Travis County residents with severe mental illnesses. The goals of the Task Force were to identify the criteria that comprise a mentally **(continued on page 3)**

Membership Meeting: All are invited! April 30th

PLAN invites members, consumers, special friends & supporters to the Membership Meeting on Saturday, April 30, 2005, from 1-3pm at the First Presbyterian Church, Rm 223, 8100 Mesa Drive. Marcia Toprac, PhD, PLAN board member & Laura

Fine, LCSW, will describe the Seawell-Elam project.

Cecile DeWitt, PhD, PLAN Board member, will report on the outcomes of the Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and on the promising future of neuroscience in mental health.

For more information, call Yvonne Hansen at 693-0293.

Mayor's Mental Health Task Force: Final Report (continued from page x)

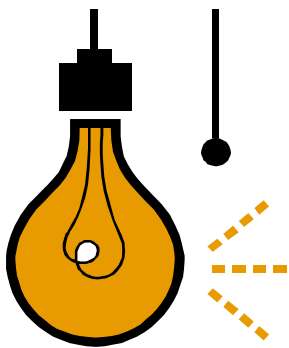
healthy community: including infrastructure, resources, policies, programs, training and attitudes. Then, measure the status of each criterion in Austin/Travis County, to develop an action plan to institute a mentally healthy community by building on Austin/Travis County's strengths and addressing any weaknesses. Four critical areas were addressed by the following subcommittees: education and community awareness, justice systems, housing and short and long-term treatment. To implement accountability, a Task Force Monitoring Committee will track and analyze both the short and long-term goals delineated in the report. To view the full report, go to www.ci.austin.tx.us. To receive a copy of the full report, call 512-974-6001.

On page 40, under the subheading "Strengths" in the Short and Long-Term Treatment subcommittee category, there is a list of assets to the community. PLAN of Central Texas is included in this list of

organizations and entities. Cecile DeWitt had been appointed to the Mental Health Task Force and served on the Short and Long-Term Treatment subcommittee. In this capacity, she worked with several persons

representing publicly funded agencies with goals similar to PLAN. One of the concerns she addressed was improving the collaboration between publicly funded organizations and private resources. This concern is of major importance, since government resources are decreasing and publicly funded agencies have to cut down their already limited services.

Jessica Donalson, piscesprowler@hotmail.com, Austin writer, massage therapist, & PLAN volunteer, advocates tirelessly on behalf of her father, a U.S. Vietnam Veteran, to obtain medical benefits for him. Due to the lack of mental health services available in Texas, he remains in Idaho, unable to return home.



A reminder of the value of advance planning

The tragic case of Terri Schiavo has bestowed one blessing upon us all--a reminder of the value of advance planning. If Terri had made her wishes known clearly, then regardless of what they might have been, her family probably could have carried them out in harmony. Family members could have put aside their own wishes and preferences and pulled together for her. The same is true whether the life event is loss of a parent,

one's own disability, or death itself. "If you don't know where you want to go, you probably aren't going to get there."

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From the Desk of Bob Englert

On March 31, 2005 Terri Schiavo died, there was no plan we all know the story. Legal jousting between her parents and family members on one side and her surviving spouse Michael on the other side. The issue whether or not this life should continue using heroic techniques. The combatants fought it out in the court system at the state and federal level five appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court. Laws passed by the state of Florida (Terris Law) as well as by the congress of the United States, our president cut short his respite in Crawford in order to sign the legislation that would have extended Terri's life. The real tragedy, THERE WAS NO PLAN.. Clyde Farrell an attorney who specializes in advanced planning to contribute his thoughts.

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Visit with Curtis Meadows (cont'd from p. 1)

Financial Support

The IRS mandates a specific ratio of private to public support for 501(c)3's. Publicly supported organizations, also called pooled giving funds (such as United Way, LCRA Employees' United Charities, Jr League, Austin Community Foundation, governmental agencies, etc.) provide public support. Private foundations, like the

Meadows Foundation, provide private support. A 501(c)3 cannot receive more than 1/3 of its funds from a single private source. Private Foundations may not give unrestricted funds as they must show a public benefit to quality for IRS tax advantages. Corporations can give unrestricted funds. A good fundraising strategy is

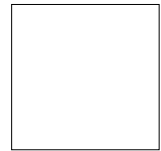
to partner with entities that can provide volunteers and assistance like planning and organizing an event.

Physics at work in neuroscience (cont'd)

A lecture by Richard J. Davidson is planned for January 25, 2006, as part of the activities to inaugurate the Imaging Research Center at the University of Texas, now under construction for housing a

functional MRI scanner. Davidson is the Vilas Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His work has recently been reported in the national news.

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