

Listening Ear is pleased to welcome new personnel and congratulate those who have made advancements —
Congratulations to:
-Autumn Hackett, B.S., Mental Health Technician/2-1-1 Call Specialist in the Crisis Center, who received her Bachelor's Degree in Social Work from Central Michigan University;
-Foster Care & Certifications Worker April Higgins, B.S. who successfully completed the first half of the Child Welfare Training Institute Pre-Service Training – a nine week program;
-Teagen Lefere, Housing Counselor in the Home Ownership Program, for receiving a scholarship to attend a two day NeighborWorks training called Transitioning Consumers: Counseling Clients to Take the Next Step;
-Delores Richardson promoted to Senior Assistant Program Director at the North Birch home for Residential Services North;
-April Alexander promoted to Senior Assistant Program Director at the North Limits home for Residential Services North;
-Program Directors Jo Crossett and Susanne Booth and Director of Residential Services North Karen Elkins who received certification in Mental Health First Aid after completing a training program related to working with individuals who have a Mental Illness;
-Residential Services Central staff that received promotions - Nick Little, SDCW/Shepherd, Jenny Jacobs, APD/Prairie Creek 2, Jamie Dagenais, PD/Mt. Pleasant, Shirley Crenshaw, PD/Shepherd, Amanda Hanley, SDCW for IHH, Brittany Anguiano, SDCW for IHH, Marin Wood and Emily Hayward-, SDCW at Lynnwood;
-Don Schuster, Executive Director, Amy VanOrden, Residential Services Director and Amanda Hart, Director of Child and Family Services for receiving Gentle Teaching "Working With People" certificates and to April Higgins, Foster Care & Certifications Worker, who completed Gentle Teaching Mentor Training.

Welcome to:
-Kristen Carroll, new Mental Health Technician/2-1-1 Call Specialist in the Crisis Center, completing her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology at Central Michigan University.

If you wish to have your name removed from the newsletter mailing list, please write: **Executive Director, Listening Ear**

P.O. Box 800
Mt Pleasant, MI 48804-0800
or, email dschuster@listeningear.com.

If you want more information about us, please visit our website at www.listeningear.com or see www.guidestar.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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The mission of Listening Ear is to provide citizens of Michigan with human services and affordable housing that satisfy, support, and promote the dignity and well-being of those in need.

December 2012
Volume XVI, Issue 1

Listening EAR

Generosity of Spirit

A Message from the Executive Director:

Over and over again during my years as Executive Director at Listening Ear I have been humbled and inspired by your **generosity of spirit**. This fall we were awed by the firefighters, medical providers and ordinary citizens that went the extra mile to help their neighbors during the horrific hurricane. We want our children to learn from those examples of selflessness, tenacity, and, graciousness. Someday our children will be our caregivers and service providers. They will be our bus drivers and mechanics, our nurses and business owners, our landlords and neighbors that help those in our community who are struggling.

I don't have to go far to find generous souls for our youth to model. You are right here in our community. Like those of you that drove a neighbor to a medical appointment, delivered a meal, served on a board, led a youth group and shared your time, your talents and your gifts.



Continued on page 2...

Listening Ear Board Members shown left to right Bonnie Hayward, Ross Rapaport, Kristin Sheridan, Al Kaufmann and Paul Siers.

Thank You!

INCREDIBLE COMMUNITY

Generosity of Spirit

Message continued from page 1.

Each year I am inspired by your acts of kindness. Not long ago Listening Ear received a sizeable gift from a local business owner with instructions to purchase clothes, toys and food to make a young family's holidays brighter. There were gifts by the Faith Weavers that helped young single mothers meet the needs of their children and take steps toward self-sufficiency. Hundreds of you made United Way gifts that allowed us to serve thousands of your neighbors. United Way funding is used to support the Crisis Center and to serve abused children, abandoned and at risk youth and families facing homelessness. There were gifts made by service organizations like the Eagles, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Optimists, fundraising projects by Central Michigan University students and grants by The Alden and Vada Dow Family Foundations, the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation, The Leppien Foundation and others.

And there were your contributions that help build our endowments within the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation to sustain our programs into the future.

With your support, Listening Ear's Crisis Center has been helping those in our community who need a little extra help to succeed. The Crisis Center has been providing crisis intervention, information and referral services for Isabella and neighboring counties for more than four decades - 24 hours a day every day.

On these pages are some examples of how your **generosity of spirit made a lasting difference.**

Together we are building a community that is *"Always There"*.

Sincerely,

Donald Schuster, LMSW
Executive Director

BUILDING A COMMUNITY THAT'S *Always There*
MEET SOME OF THOSE YOU HELPED TO SUCCEED...

Meet Nick. He is one of the 38,000 callers last year.

When Nick, an 18 year old with a history of homelessness and abuse called the Crisis Center he said he had dropped out of high school, had no job and no place to live. He was referred to the Transitional Living Program that serves homeless and abandoned youth ages 16-21. The Program's case managers help youth establish safe and stable housing, find education and employment, develop life skills and gain access to medical care and counseling. The case manager worked with Nick to develop a plan with steps to address his housing, employment and education. He enrolled in adult education, was assisted in finding a job and is now living in stable housing. Nick has received assistance for financial aid and will be attending Mid Michigan Community College in January.

Meet James & Martha. They are among the 38,000 callers last year.

James and Martha called Listening Ear's Crisis Center after they became at risk for losing their home. To make their house payments, both incomes were needed. But while James worked, Martha lost her job due to some serious medical issues. She applied for Social Security disability but approval took nearly a year. By that time, their mortgage payments were several months delinquent. Martha attempted to have their loan modified but was unsuccessful. The Crisis Center staff referred them to Listening Ear's Homeownership Program where they began working with the certified housing counselor. Together they reviewed their financial and legal information and the counselor contacted their lender. After some key problems with their paperwork were resolved, they were able to modify their payments. The counselor also helped them apply for a new housing program that helped them address their delinquency. After working with the housing counselor for a year, James and Martha are now able to afford their mortgage payments and stay in their own home.



The above youth taking part in Listening Ear's Transitional Living Program met her goal of graduating high school!

Making A Lasting Difference

Meet Leon. Leon is one of the 38,000 callers helped this last year.

One holiday morning, an older aged man called the Crisis Center. He had called before and talked about feeling hopeless, but had not given his name. But this time he said he had a gun and wanted to shoot himself because his wife didn't want him around anymore. The Crisis Center staff persuaded him to provide his name and some other information but then heard a gunshot just before the caller hung up. With limited information, the staff spent six hours contacting Central Dispatch, Community Mental Health's support and on-call workers to find an address for this man and send emergency responders to his home. He had not yet harmed himself when they arrived. He was transported to the hospital to receive medical and mental health care. Now he is doing well.

Meet Henry. Henry is one of the 38,000 callers helped this last year.

A few months ago, Henry, a middle-aged man, contacted Listening Ear's Crisis Center saying that he had fallen on hard times. Henry said that he was homeless, had no money and no place to go. He said that he wanted to stay in the area and find a job but had no place to sleep, take a shower or clean his clothes. Using a database detailing eligibility requirements, hours and locations of community resources, Crisis Center staff referred Henry to receive shelter in a motel using an emergency voucher. They also helped to arrange transportation using the Crisis Center's "spend down" account funded by Listening Ear staff recycling pop cans. Henry was also given resources for food. The next day the Crisis Center staff helped him to get his dirty clothes washed and dried. He was also given resources to help find a job. Last month we received a "Thank You" card from Henry, "I have never before in my life been in a position where I have needed so much help. I have always been the one helping others. Thank you Listening Ear for everything you have been doing for me and continue to do!" He now has a safe place to live and is on his way to being self-sufficient.

We are thankful for these supporters!
(Gifts made since the last newsletter). . .

LISTENING EAR CRISIS CENTER FUND

- Betsy Banta
- Pamela Burke
- Isabella Bank
- Michele & Martin Punke
- Kathy Tarrant
- James & Carol Wojcik

CONSUMER NEEDS & DREAMS FUND

- Pamela Burke
- Laurie Booth
- Jane Kipp

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM FUND

- Michele & Martin Punke
- David Bair

PHIL A. LANGLOIS ENDOWMENT FUND

- Anonymous
- Anonymous

SCHUSTER FAMILY FUND

- Donald Schuster

Thank you to these GENEROUS DONORS

- Kohl's, who provided a team of volunteers for the August picnic at Deerfield Park for youth, and, then contributed \$500 toward 2012/2013 recreation activities.

Did You Know that Last Year Listening Ear

Helped over 38,000
Crisis Line Callers

Helped 120 Families
Deal with Home
Foreclosures

Provided
Affordable
Housing
for 200
People

Provided a
Loving Home
to 35 Foster
Care Children

Helped 79
Homeless
Youth

Helped 3,000 Callers with Housing Assistance

