

February 11, 2009

Dannel Malloy, Mayor  
City of Stamford  
888 Washington Boulevard  
Stamford, CT. 06901

Dear Mayor Malloy,

Thank you for your annual review of our request for operating support for Liberation Programs from the City of Stamford. *Our mission is to empower people and their families to be free of the disease of addiction by providing targeted solutions that restore lives and strengthen our community.*

We are requesting \$83,000 to support our work during the coming year. Substance abuse is the most prevalent and persistent public health disease in America. Here in Stamford and throughout Connecticut, substance use continues to exceed the national averages. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, compared data from 2004 through 2006, show that Connecticut's 12- to 17-year-olds are among the top in our nation who report they use marijuana, drink alcohol and use cocaine.

For almost four decades Liberation Programs have partnered with the City of Stamford to protect our youth, strengthen families and return adults to lives of self-sufficiency. Our programs address the special needs of our communities' most vulnerable residents whether a mom, pregnant or parenting or older person's increasing dependence on prescribed medications.

As we work to bring more "hopes and dreams to life" for Stamford's families we'll need support of local leaders to help those with substance use disorder move past their dependency, sustain the sobriety and live self-sufficiently.

We respectfully ask for your support and look forward to continuing strengthening individuals, families, and the entire Stamford community; please let me know if I can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

Alan J. Mathis  
President and CEO

**Liberation Programs, Inc.**  
**Request for Fiscal Year 2008-2009**  
**Operating Funds from City of Stamford**

Mission

*Liberation Programs empowers people and their families to be free of the disease of addiction by providing targeted solutions that restore lives and strengthen our community.*

Problem Addressed

Substance use disorder is among the leading healthcare concerns that affect our Country. The un-served demand for those needing, but not receiving treatment in Connecticut, is 59% higher than the rest of the nation. In June 2008, Connecticut Health policy reported that 82,000 Connecticut residents over age 12 reported needing treatment for illicit drug use. In Stamford, there are few options available to individuals with substance use disorder. Liberation Program's primary obligation is to provide targeted solutions for individuals suffering from this disorder through counseling and therapy, medication assistance (addiction and psychotropic medication) and supportive services.

Treating addiction is complex; however, the results are well worth the investment. By providing treatment and support services, we help decrease the spread of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and other infectious diseases (Center for Disease Control). The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) states "Untreated substance abuse add significant costs to communities, including those related to non-violent criminal costs, emergency room visits, healthcare utilization, child abuse and neglect, lost child support, foster care and welfare costs, reduced productivity, and unemployment."

Our treatment program is client-centered and comprised of counselors trained to get and keep clients engaged. Counselors work with clients to develop a plan of recovery which encompasses relapse prevention. Counselors begin by assessing clients and working with them to identify the root cause of their addiction- this is the first step to resolving problems that contributed to their substance abuse. Developing treatment plans that are tailored to best meet our client's needs, at various stages of the recovery process, is an essential component of Care program. (Treatment includes Motivational Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and Contingency Management)

Population Served

Liberation supports some of our community's most vulnerable i.e the Hispanic community, women pregnant or parenting, persons with co-occurring disorder, as well as the our younger clients' lives would be at stake. There is a documented demand for high-quality and effective drug treatment program in our State, statistically; treatment is proven to be the most effect solution for substance use disorders.

A significant number of people we serve, who are employed, do not qualify for healthcare coverage or Medicaid assistance; they are our city's working poor. Without the monies we receive from funders such as United Way, we would not be able to provide quality care, or we

would have to dilute our services and lay off staff- These actions would impact our ability to tend to Stamford's underserved. Additionally, without support, providing high-quality, on-site, integrated services to clients with co-existing disorders (COD) would be virtually impossible.

Substance abuse plagues a persons' physical and emotional being, and cripples their ability to support their families and contribute to society. Addiction treatment is not only beneficial for the individual but is also a factor in keeping families together and keeping Stamford safe. As explained above, individuals who suffer from addiction, and are not treated, impact our community's rising healthcare and criminal costs and a host of other ways. The National Institute on Drugs Abuse estimates that for every dollar spent on addiction treatment programs, there is a \$4 to \$7 reduction in the cost of drug-related crimes and points that with outpatient programs, total savings can exceed costs by a ratio of 12:1.

### Description of Programs & Services

Liberation Programs is the largest and most comprehensive provider of substance abuse services in Stamford and in Fairfield County. Liberation Programs uses a full continuum of treatment services to ensure that no person in need of care is left unserved. Liberation has six core programs that address the needs of those with substance use disorder and their families:

1. **Families in Recovery-** Liberation Programs' ten family live-in facility is the first of its kind to welcome pregnant and parenting women as they care for their children and receive treatment and supportive services.
2. **Family & Youth Options-** Offers peer-to-peer counseling, family therapy, and on-site intervention administered through schools and various community forums.
3. **Liberation House-** Men learn in a residential setting how to live independently and sober while receiving job training skills, adult education, and working towards mending relationships with family.
4. **Older Adult Services-** In a private and reassuring setting, counselors older adults constructively address an ongoing substance use or increasing dependency on prescribed substances.
5. **Outpatient Care-** Utilizing a variety of treatment and case management options, clients benefit from their care program which includes vocational skill development, co-occurring disorder assessment and medication assistance.
6. **HIV/AIDS Support Services-** Counselors foster healing in individuals living with HIV/AIDS and their families, helping them achieve and maintain good health, them reconnect with their families and reintegrate back into society.

Clinical Trials - Liberation Programs has been a leading member of the Clinical Trials Network in Connecticut participating in numerous National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) research protocols. This collaboration brings treatment "best practices" to our programs through specialized staff training and expanded programming.

### Outcomes Evaluation

Liberation Programs measures success by the changes in the quality of the lives we touch and the improvement in the communities we serve. Our outcomes focus on three principal areas (1) Sustained reduction or elimination of alcohol and drug use, (2) Sustained increases in personal, vocational, health and social functioning and (3) Sustained reductions in public health and public safety threats.

Liberation Programs follows federal outcome guidelines, outlined by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), National Outcome Measures (NOM) to track and record the effectiveness of clinical treatment services. Liberation Programs' **prevention services** adhere to the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) Principles of Prevention. Outputs are tracked through the use of evaluative tools, including: surveys that reflect how/if service impacted knowledge-based information, projected parent-child interactions, behaviors and communication; the tracking of repeat and new attendees to programming.

### **Program Effectiveness**

Liberation Programs strives to provide the best clinical and prevention services. Our comprehensive internal quality improvement program reviews program goals and objectives, identifying appropriate indicators of client success at various stages of recovery.

Program completing is one of several outcomes used to determine program effectiveness. 7 out of 10, or 71 percent, of clients complete their care program; up by 4 percentage points compared by the previous fiscal year. This was achieved by increased outreach to families and referral sources that provide support to clients and the accurate training on discharge forms which assures that completions are correctly recorded.

Our goal for clients surpasses program completion; we give each person an opportunity to play an active role in his/her treatment plan in hopes that they will be able to sustain recovery. During the first fiscal quarter, 92% of clients contacted post discharge stated they had maintained sobriety more than 30 days since leaving the program, exceeding our goal by over 20%.

Other indicators of program effectiveness are acquisition of sobriety skills, reconnecting with the community with networks of social support, and, when possible, reunifying with family.

### *Challenges for 2009-2010*

Substance abuse is a complex problem, affecting people of all ages, racial and ethnic groups and levels of education and wealth. There are more deaths, illnesses, and disabilities each year from drug and alcohol problems than from any other preventable health condition. Three challenges that our organization faces during 2009-2010 are:

1. Clients utilizing services at a younger age is a trend we are experiencing across several programs, agency-wide. The younger the client, the increased chance that they have not developed coping skills, suffer from low tolerance for stress and have poor impulse control as result of the age they began "using."

2. Scarcity of sober housing and employment opportunities for clients after completing their care program. This creates additional challenges for clients as they transition to self-sufficiency.
3. About half of all clients who receive outpatient services have co-occurring disorders (COD). Treatment for these clients requires specialized services to address both substance abuse and mental health issues.

### Addressing challenges

Liberation Programs has formed a collaborative partnership with Optimums to provide some primary healthcare to our clients and the F.S. Dubois Center for mental health services. These collaborations are particularly vital to clients with co-occurring disorders. Through our collaboration with Stamford Adult Basic Education and Literacy Volunteers clients develop and strengthen reading, writing and basic computer literacy, key skills needed for their transition to self-sufficiency.

### 08-09 Organizational Highlights

1. Continued collaboration w/the Stamford Hospital to identify clients presenting with co-occurring disorders(substance abuse and mental health issues) designed to improve client outcomes by treating not only the substance abuse issues but also by coordinating and managing their mental health needs.
2. Partnering (as the provider of the substance abuse treatment component) w/Optimus and the Lower Fairfield Regional Action Council and the Church of the Nazarene in a grant awarded to engage, educate and treat those Hispanic/Latino clients who are addicted or at risk of substance abuse.
3. CARF (Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitative Facilities) three year accreditation.
4. Hosted Spirit of Hope, the agency's first major event. All proceeds raised benefit the Families in Recovery program housed in Stamford.
5. Total of 2,394 individuals were treated through residential and outpatient programs- 383 Stamford residents were included in that number.
6. Total of 504 Prevention sessions held in schools and communities reached a total of 9,546 individuals –Including 179 sessions delivered to 3,118 Stamford residents.