

### Up to the Minute

OACBHA UPDATE

January 27, 2010

#### OHIO'S RECOVERY

On January 26<sup>th</sup> Governor Strickland gave his State of the State address, throughout which he stated that he "believes in Ohio," and his number one priority was job creation. While jobs are important to Ohio's economic health, so is Ohio's emotional health.

On January 22, 2010, the Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies released *The State of Poverty in Ohio: Building a Foundation for Prosperity*, prepared by Community Research Partners. According to 2008 data, 13.7% of Ohioans lived below the poverty level. Furthermore, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services released their unemployment statistics for December, showing a jump from 10.6% in November to 10.9%. We know that in addition to the economic instability faced by Ohio, more and more Ohioans are struggling with addiction and/or mental illness and are in need of alcohol, drug addiction and mental health treatment and recovery support services. In her remarks at the Ohio Statehouse on January 26<sup>th</sup>, Pamela S. Hyde, Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, said that *economic downturns and financial distress increase mental and substance abuse disorders*.

*The State of Poverty* report focuses on five main themes - two of those were job creation and opportunities for lifelong learning - as highlighted by the Governor in his State of the State address. However, the report also emphasized the need to: expand and improve affordable housing; provide reasonable transportation options; and stabilize social safety nets and encourage families to create household safety nets. It is extremely interesting that as one looks at these recommendations, 3 of the 5 (housing, transportation, and safety net services) directly impact the ability of individuals to successfully recover from an addiction and /or mental illness. They also directly impact whether or not Ohioans can successfully recover from the economic downturn.

So what does all this mean? At a time when Ohio and Ohioans need job growth and stability, Ohio's leaders need to recognize that the need for behavioral health services impacts the overall emotional health of the state, **and its ability to RECOVER economically**. Ohio needs to invest wisely - as Administrator Hyde said, *substance abuse treatment costs average \$1,583, with a return of \$11,487 back to society*. So it stands to reason that if we want jobs and economic stability to come to Ohio, Ohio's leaders need to invest in the emotional health of its citizens by appropriately funding alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services.

#### OACBHA HOLDS ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

Yesterday, the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities held an awards ceremony in the Statehouse Atrium honoring four individuals for their distinguished service to Ohioans who need mental illness and addiction healthcare services and to the alcohol, drug addiction and mental health field.

Guest speaker Pamela S. Hyde, Administrator of the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), was recognized with an Outstanding Achievement Award for ongoing commitment to excellence in mental health and addiction services. State Representative Linda Bolon (D-Columbiana) was named Legislator of the Year by the Association for her leadership and compassion on behalf of Ohioans with mental illness and addictive disorders. Recipient of the President's Partnering for Success Award was Hamid Mehrizi, Ohio Department of Mental Health's Chief of the Office of Capital Planning and Management. Mehrizi was honored for his work to strengthen and enhance the community behavioral health system. The CEO Award for Distinguished Leadership went to *Columbus Dispatch* writer Alan Johnson for taking action to improve the quality of care for mental illness and/or addiction for Ohio citizens. To read the press release in its entirety, please visit: [www.oacbha.org](http://www.oacbha.org).

For more information about behavioral health issues in Ohio please visit:

[www.oacbha.org](http://www.oacbha.org)

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