

Mental health recovery through the healing power of friendship

www.compeer.org

'Tis the season...



...for the spirit of friendship!

Capital District Compeer staff, volunteers and friends enjoyed a Holiday Wreath-making party in December. Using fresh conifer greens donated by a Compeer volunteer who had recently trimmed yard pine trees, participants created a personal expression of their individual holiday spirit. Clockwise from top left are Barb H., Philip K., Amanda G., Jill T., and Program Director Josh.

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President's Message

Dear Compeer Friends,

It has been a year since I began my leadership role at Compeer, Inc. This is a reflective time as I acknowledge who Compeer Inc. serves, the impact of this service, and celebrate Compeer's affiliate program outcomes in the communities served. Compeer Inc. is an organization that provides supportive leadership to its affiliate programs which in turn serve their local communities.

If you are to believe that each of us is here with a purpose, we can then recognize that Compeer Inc. has had a long history of community service and positive outcomes in fulfillment of its purpose: To provide one-to-one supportive friendship to individuals in mental health recovery.

2010 was a year of outreach and research as I sought to assess Compeer's presence in local, national, and international communities. Part of my earliest research involved understanding the existing relationship of affiliates with Compeer Inc. and its leadership team. I am excited and motivated by the positive support of affiliate leadership teams and volunteer coordinators who enthusiastically shared their thoughts, ideas, challenges, and commitment to the Compeer program. I am appreciative of the many personal conversations that we have had this year.

Several of these important conversations with affiliate leaders have become the cornerstone of input to the Compeer Inc. strategic planning process. Compeer Inc. is in an organizational development change process that is fundamental to our strategic leadership role as an international organization. We are starting with the basics in this change process: it begins from a clear understanding of current strengths and weaknesses at the affiliate level to a complete restructuring of our board of directors. It includes creating the foundation with a robust board of advisors that will move us forward to the realization of our future vision.

The support services that Compeer Inc. provides to its affiliate programs will need to be funded very differently from local programming support. The development of the affiliate programmatic support services will need to come from multiple funding areas: corporate foundations, private foundations, corporate and government partnerships, collaborations, and fundraising events. With that said, fund development and fundraising is the key strategic action in the coming year.

Some of the primary strategic initiatives will include branding of the Compeer Model; internet expansion of foundational services, i.e., training and education support at program start-up; best practice management; volunteer recruitment strategies; timely news and information; regional and national conferences; web conference educational series; and program model development as a registered, evidence based practice model.

Also during the first half of this year, my outreach included a business trip to Rockville, Md. to meet with primary SAMHSA personnel. This meeting was important for

our direction in two ways: I saw that Compeer is a welcome participant at the national (U.S.) table; in presenting the core Compeer Model. I reaffirmed that its history of positive outcomes, adaptability, and cost-effectiveness made it even more pressing that Compeer Inc.'s time is now to build the partnerships with collaborative organizations that will help us evolve our program model to meet the needs of different demographic populations.



"Compeer is itself a transformative model for engagement to foster social inclusion and connection, while also building bridges for consumers to the world beyond mental health treatment." (Kathryn Power, M.Ed., Director, SAMHSA; Center for Mental Health Services, excerpt from letter, January 12, 2010)

In early November I had the unique opportunity to represent Compeer at an invitation-only symposium at the Carter Center which focused on returning veterans and their families. This high-level event allowed me to position Compeer to a broad audience, and I am happy to report that from this two day intensive experience the vision for Compeer in 2011 and beyond is becoming very clear. New program development and collaborations have begun for Compeer Inc. to expand its model to serve veterans.

It has been my pleasure this year to meet many of you who are so very committed to helping adults, children, and families ease the mental health challenges they face. The simple idea which is the foundation of the Compeer Model, that friendship has the power to heal, is proven every day and every volunteer hour that Compeer friends meet. We have the hard evidence that can be identified in our survey outcomes, but more importantly we have your real life stories of rebuilding lives with acceptance, companionship, new activities, social competence, and confidence, the earmarks of community integration and social inclusion for individuals on the path of recovery. Thank you for the opportunity to serve and build a robust Compeer Inc. supportive leadership organization to support you and your program teams.

Looking forward to 2011, and making friends, changing lives through the healing power of friendship!

All the best,

Lida

A Friend, Indeed!



Ann Hartka knew firsthand how Compeer could change a life. She had a family member in Pennsylvania who was matched in a one-to-one friendship. Today that family member has two college degrees and speaks publicly about the impact Compeer makes.

“It was amazing what Compeer did,” said Ann, who lives in Sarasota, Florida, about her relative’s recovery..

When Ann realized that people were being jailed in Florida who really didn’t need to be, she decided to do something to help the people in her community: she wrote a letter to Brother Geenen.

Brother Geenen, founder of Senior Friendship Centers in Florida, was impressed and gave Ann his approval to gauge interest. The interest was there, and in late Spring 2010, the Compeer Florida Gulf Coast was born from Ann’s efforts.

Ann’s cousin, Jeff Shair, of West Chester County, Pa. notes: “My cousin Ann is gifted with various skills, but most of all I love her for her kindness and optimistic outlook on life. Ann made it her mission to start a Compeer affiliate in her area, and I am thrilled to see her efforts come to fruition.”

Compeer publishes survey report

Compeer Inc. administers an annual survey in four parts to its affiliate programs:

- Part I, Service Statistics
- Part II, Adult Programs
- Part III, Youth Programs
- Part IV, Customer Satisfaction

4th quarter 2010, Compeer affiliates report:

- 4,830 clients served by
- 3,885 volunteers
- 154,262 volunteer hours
- 2,777 additional clients eligible for engagement services

According to the results of the 2009 survey published in early

Access the full report at www.compeer.org

Grant awards showcase program versatility

Wichita, Kansas A three year grant of \$325,000 was awarded to the Compeer program in Wichita by the Federal Dept. of Education. Through the Recreation Life Grant, Compeer will provide enrichment, education, and activities for adults and youth over age 14. The purpose of the grant is skillbuilding for future employment

Rochester, New York Young people in Monroe County who have a parent in state or federal prison will continue to have access to local mentoring and support services as a result of a federal grant renewal.

The U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services Administration for Children, Youth & Families has awarded Compeer Rochester Inc. \$250,000 annually for three years to help fund its Mentoring Children of Promise program, which it began in 2004.

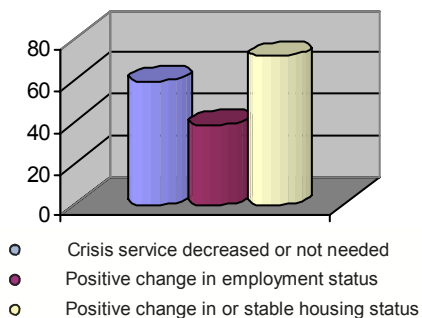
Newark, Ohio The Compeer program of Mental Health America in Licking County has just completed a smoking cessation project as a result of a designation and support grant from the federal government.

“25 Pioneers for Smoking Cessation,” a program of the Center for Mental Health Services of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, is the second phase of a project which started in 2009. In the first phase a competitive process selected 100 projects throughout the U.S. targeting the education of consumers and behavioral health professionals about the deadly toll tobacco usage has inflicted upon individuals who experience severe and persistent mental illness. The local Compeer project goal was to identify and advise consumers in their program who are seen as high risk.

In the second phase SAMHSA selected 25 of those original participants to continue with a more targeted project. Compeer’s winning proposal applies SAMHSA evidence-based education on consumer tobacco cessation directed to behavioral health professionals and case managers in Licking County.

“This training will address common misconceptions among health professionals about individuals with severe mental illness in our community who use tobacco projects, and provide them with accurate information about cessation opportunities,” said Kristen Frame, Compeer coordinator for the MHA .

2009 Compeer Inc. Annual Survey
Figure: Adult Outcomes by Constituency Average (Client, Volunteer, Mental Health Professional)





Volunteering (is Good for Us!)

According to a survey reported in the September 2010 issue of Success Magazine, of people who volunteer:

- 73%** say it lowers their stress level
- 92%** say it enriches their sense of purpose in life
- 68%** say it makes them feel physically healthier
- 88%** say it provides networking/ career development opportunities

Provided courtesy of
Volunteer Power News - Number 90
Author: Thomas W. McKee
"Volunteer Power News" Monthly Newsletter
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The Gift of Friendship

Every day Compeer affiliates make friends and change lives. Compeer supportive relationships positively impact the lives of adults and children in mental health recovery, their family, friends, and community! A Compeer friendship is a gift that gives back in many, many ways.

Compeer Inc., through supportive leadership to its programs, helps make a difference in communities in the United States, Australia and Canada.

Help us help them share the gift of friendship by considering a gift to Compeer Inc.

Making friends. Changing lives.

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CompeerReview is a publication of
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CompeerReview



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