



Southwest Community Services, Inc.
FY 08
Annual Report
Highlights and Accomplishments

Agency Highlights

Looking back at its 37 year history, this year just may be remembered as the year of re-birth. There were many, many internal changes that were implemented to assure an even longer history of providing quality services. In addition to the reorganization of the Board of Directors, SCS directors and administrative staff have worked diligently this past year to:

- Update entire Policy Procedure manual
- Create sound fiscal practices
- Consolidate programs to reduce costs
- Increased collaborative efforts with other organizations
- Incorporate a new program: "Thisability Enterprises"
- Operated a balanced budget

Program Highlights

The **Community Enterprises Mental Health** program and the Community Employment Services program relocated to the Tinley Park facility in late March 2008. This was a huge undertaking for all involved including consumers, staff, linkage agencies, transportation providers and other stakeholders. The overall result is an efficiently run service array for all of our consumers.

An Open House was held in April 2008 featuring the newly refurbished CE and CES areas as well as the agency food service training program "Munch and Lunch." Consumers served as tour guides and hostesses for the Open House. Referral and linkage sources, consumers, families and friends attended and joined in the celebration.

Community Employment Services consumers and staff participated in DRS "Dress for Success" fashion show held at Prairie State College in Chicago Heights. The networking event was well attended by consumers, agencies and employers. In addition, they also participated at various job fairs including: the Chicago Tribune Job Fair at Navy Pier, Prairie State College, Tinley Park Business Expo, South Suburban College, ACCESS at the Oak Lawn Hilton and Moraine Valley Community College.

The Chicago Southland Employment Network, founded by SCS, continues to meet on a quarterly basis to share job leads and network. Over 20 agencies, support groups and businesses partake in the meetings, hosted at SCS.

CES is pleased to have a working relationship with the following businesses that hired our consumers this year:

Discount Tires
La Quinta Hotel
Jewel-Osco
Panera Bread
Target

Beggar's Pizza
Chili's Restaurant
Walt's Foods
K-Mart
Exxon

The Community Enterprises Mental Health program continued its focus on Recovery and Resiliency by having many services in natural settings. The Blowitz-Ridgeway Foundation funded a grant towards community integration expenses that assisted consumers with monies towards travel and activity expenses.

Twenty-eight consumers and 8 staff participated in the state sponsored "Say It Outloud" mental health awareness campaign kick-off at the Crystal Gardens Ballroom at Navy Pier. It was an exciting event as the Chicago news stations broadcasted the event. All of consumers that attended received t-shirts and goodie bags. Information is available on the DHS webpage.

Eight CE consumers and 2 staff members attended the annual statewide recovery conference - the Peer WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) seminar at the Ramada Inn in Lisle, Illinois. During the luncheon, CE Recovery Support Specialist, Carol Volpi, was awarded the annual Peer Leadership Award.

The **Developmental Training II** program received a renewal grant for the Illinois Voices self-advocacy project. Consumers and staff attended a daylong seminar with other local agencies at Prairie State College in Chicago Heights. Training was also provided at SCS by Sheena Martin, Illinois Voices liaison, focusing on Creating and Making Your Own Dreams happen.

DT II was the recipient of the "Sunshine Through Golf" grant. The golf pro at the Odyssey Country Club in Tinley Park provides golf lessons for a small group of consumers who learn the guidelines of golf. This is a wonderful opportunity for many of our consumers who have never golfed or been to a golf course.

Six consumers and 3 staff members attended the annual ARC of Illinois Convention at the Hilton Hotel in Lisle, Illinois. The consumers attended through a free scholarship sponsored by ARC/IL. They participated in various consumer rights and advocacy seminars and enjoyed a delicious lunch. A consumer also had his artwork chosen for display in the art auction.

The DT II Media Room has been refurbished with computers corrals and new computers and monitors and a small in-house library. The consumers have a beginning computer group and also utilize the computer on their breaks and lunches. The library is used for leisure time and introduces consumers to checking out books and the responsibility of a library book. A Tinley

Park Library Group visits the library each week. These enrichments were made possible by a grant from Fidelity

Bogard Services program maintains a steady enrollment, in spite of, many consumers' compromised medical conditions. Staff continues to work in collaboration with Suburban Access in providing quality community integration services to the nursing home residents. All of the residents that formerly lived at Oak Forest Hospital continue to receive services through SCS.

The **Phoenix Center** is now in its fourth year and continues to experience growth. There has been such a positive response to treatment that this program is looking for a larger space to call home. Physical therapy, occupational, speech-language, and medical massage therapy services are offered. Suit therapy remains the core therapeutic service. A full-time occupational therapist was hired and Early Intervention services have been reestablished.

Donor Recognition

SCS would like to thank all their donors for their generous contributions

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