# MENTAL HEALTH A Wise INVESTMENT'M:





COMMUNITIES

PEOPLE



FAMILIES

### ENTAL HEALTH: Wise Investment in: People - Families - Communities

Ann, Brian, Michael, Sara, Catherine. They passionate – but also fiscally prudent. are your neighbors, cousins, co-workers. They are in your daughter's class. They fought for your country. They work at your neighborhood bank. They are among the one in five New Jerseyans who have a mental illness or emotional disorder.

For far too long, they were shunned and stigmatized because of their illness. And the toll the disease took on their lives and the community was ignored.

But today we recognize that treatment and services can mean the difference between a person lost and a full productive life. It is time to acknowledge that investing in mental health not only is com-

The cost of untreated mental illness in New Jersey is \$4 BILLION annually, with the toll found in non-psychiatric medical care, prisons, unemployment, substance abuse, disability, shelters, lack of productivity, school interventions, and broken **families**. The dysfunction created by untreated mental illness has a multiplier effect, draining society's resources in numerous, unexpected ways.

Untreated mental illness can show up in symptoms that lead doctors to refer patients for expensive, unnecessary tests and can exacerbate chronic conditions, such as asthma and diabetes. Untreated mental illness

> creates financial drains in the workplace through absenteeism and lack of productivity. Untreated children often do not graduate from school and face a life of substance abuse, imprisonment and dysfunction. Untreated

COMMUNITY CARE MAKES FISCAL SENSE. NEW JERSEY SPENDS MORE TO CARE FOR 3,300 PATIENTS IN STATE AND COUNTY FACILITIES THAN IT DOES TO SUPPORT ANOTHER 400,000 INDIVIDUALS IN THE COMMUNITY.



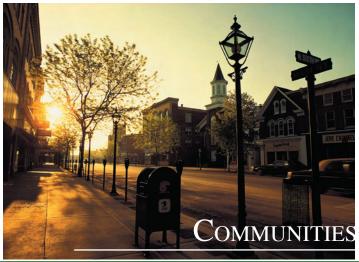


mental disorders have an impact in the workplace, in schools, on families, and in the community.

And yet, we know that treatment works. There are proven interventions that promote recovery for people with mental illness. The success rates of treatment surpass those of other medical conditions. According to the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, providing workers with access to high-quality mental health services reduces employers' total health costs. Numerous studies have demonstrated that the investment in mental health care pays dividends many times over.

New Jersey's non-profit mental health care providers are in every county, providing treatment and support to hundreds of thousands of individuals with mental illness to help them thrive in school, with their families, on the job and in the community. The reclaimed life not only dramatically limits the financial drain on government, but brings rewards to the community in a multitude of ways. The woman who becomes gainfully employed will pay taxes. The child who stops his disruptive behavior and pursues his education may become a teacher. The father who becomes a caring parent may raise a child to become a U.S. Congressional representative. The substance abuser who recovers may devote his life to helping others.

In the following pages, you will learn the stories of real New Jersey individuals with mental illness who are on the road to recovery because of the support and services provided by the state's non-profit mental health care providers. Recognize that the investment in quality treatment and services provides long-term financial benefits. But the value of a life reclaimed is priceless.



- Over half of children with severe mental illnesses do not graduate from high school.
- Individuals with untreated anxiety/or depression utilize three times as much in nonpsychiatric medical treatment.
- Sixty percent of long-term substance abusers have a mental illness.
- Four of the 10 leading causes of disability in the world are mental disorders.
- More than 90 percent of adults with severe mental illness end up unemployed.
- Approximately 15 percent of New Jersey's inmate population has a diagnosable mental illness.
- The economic cost of untreated mental illness is more than \$100 billion annually in the United States.

### INVEST in students

A guidance counselor dies. Gunshots are heard outside a classroom window. A student's brother is murdered. A gang fight takes place in the schoolyard.

Trauma does not wait until a child reaches his/her teen years. For young children, particularly in the inner cities, traumatizing events can be commonplace. But in order to learn and thrive, children need a sense of safety and stability.

In Trenton schools, Greater Trenton Behavioral Healthcare's School-Based (GTBHC) Program serves children in first through sixth grades who face behavioral and emotional issues that are often trauma-induced. GTBHC counselors provide school-based and/or home-based screening, assessment, counseling, referral and case management.

At times, counselors may focus on large groups of children affected by one traumatizing event, such as when a gunfight erupted within earshot of a school. Other times, the focus is on the single child and his/her family.

Without treatment, the traumatic experiences can lead to learning deficiencies, performance problems, disruptive behavior, truancy, school drop-out, substance abuse and a variety of related anti-social and criminal behaviors. It is not just trauma,

however, that can cause psychological problems. We now know that mental illnesses often have genetic roots and can begin in early childhood.

School-based programs such as this can engage the family and impact the child early enough to avert more serious and disruptive problems in later years. Such efforts can reduce the need for police response, Division of Youth and

#### RETURN ON INVESTMENT

GTBHC School-Based Per Child One-on-One\*

\$1,200

OUT-OF-DISTRICT PLACEMENT
STATEWIDE

Between \$20,000 to \$70,000

\$18,800 to \$68,800 in Savings

\*Lower costs for group activities

Family Services involvement, hospitalization, and out-of-district placement. Responding to the needs of the young child is a vital investment that will help him/her succeed and thrive.



Seven-year-old Catherine was defiant and had received multiple disciplinary referrals and suspensions. Shortly after beginning counseling, GTBHC's school-based counselor learned that the young girl had been sexually molested earlier in the year and alerted child protective services to investigate. Over five months, Catherine received individual counseling at the school and home-based family counseling.

The young girl showed great progress in school, including improved

academic performance and getting along with classmates. Not only have her disciplinary problems ended, but she has become a peer group leader. Catherine is one of hundreds of Trenton youth served in the program each year. Thanks to the timely treatment provided, the quality of life for these children and their families vastly improves, as does the odds of their success – both in school and in life.

TRAUMA DOES

NOT WAIT UNTIL

A CHILD REACHES

ADOLESCENCE.

We sit in the school next to the child traumatized by abuse...

# INVEST in youth

Thousands of children in New Jersey each year are traumatized by physical abuse and neglect at the hands

of those who were supposed to care for them. This treatment can lead to emotional disturbance, self-destructive behavior, suicide attempts, anger, substance abuse and a lifetime of turmoil.

While the programs such as Rainbow of Hope are not inexpensive, the return on a five-month investment can mean a lifetime of savings.

Rainbow of Hope provides a small number of beds in a community setting for children ages 11 to 17 who have experienced trauma and/or serious emotional disturbance. The program provides family and individual therapy to help the youngsters return home and explore and pursue their dreams. The vast majority of the children are high risk who would have to stay in a hospital or intensive residential treatment setting if they did not have this option, and many may have been on a path to the criminal justice system.

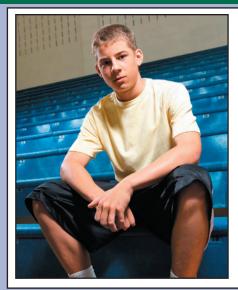
The effect of trauma on the development of a child can have serious long term results, destroying a life and creating enormous financial burdens on society. The implications are found in costs to the educational, criminal justice and adult mental health systems. New Jersey has recognized that failure to care for these children today will result in tremendous loss later on.

> While the programs such as Rainbow of Hope are not inexpensive, the return on a five-month investment can mean a lifetime of savings.

> Over the last several years, the state has begun

to focus resources on the child welfare, behavioral health and juvenile justice systems. But the reform remains in its infancy and has not produced the desired results. And in an effort to reduce the caseload of state workers, New Jersey has shifted much of the responsibility to underpaid, overloaded youth case managers, who have seen the number of children whom they serve triple in one year.

A true reform requires an improved partnership among all the involved entities, adequate resources in the community, appropriate client-staff ratios and a focus on outcomes. Serving the whole child and the whole family is a wise investment for the whole community.



Fourteen-year-old Mel was one of those children whose formative years were scarred by a "family friend" before he moved to a supportive home. Mel had a history of self-injury, aggressive behavior, playing with fire and demonstrating pain insensitivity. Extraordinarily anxious, Mel would chew on his skin and squeeze his neck to slow down circulation to his head. The teenage boy came to Rainbow of Hope, a non-profit group home that serves adolescents in southern New Jersey, after assaulting a teacher's aide.

Five months of intensive work at Rainbow of Hope, which is affiliated with Cape Counseling, helped Mel manage his anger without hurting himself or others, learn to follow the rules and get along with others, understand and express his worries, and build better relationships with his family. While he still struggled to deal with his history, Mel graduated from Rainbow of Hope and moved back with a supportive grandmother and family. Attending public school and continuing to improve, he is once again experiencing the joy of youth.

#### RETURN ON INVESTMENT

RAINBOW OF HOPE STATE RESIDENTIAL CENTERS SAVINGS

ANNUAL COST

ANNUAL COST

\$140,000

\$190,000

\$50,000

### INVEST in friends

New Jersey's prisons and jails have replaced psychiatric institutions as the primary location to house individuals with mental illness, with approximately 15 percent of the prison population diagnosed with a mental illness. Prisons often are terrifying and dangerous places for individuals with mental illness, many of whom have not committed a serious crime.

Under a program run by University Behavioral Healthcare, New Jersey is dramatically improving mental health services provided in state prisons. Additionally, the state has created several programs that aim to prepare inmates for reintegration into the community, reduce recidivism and avert inappropriate imprisonments.

At CarePlus New Jersey, one of a dozen community mental health care providers offering programs for those involved in the criminal justice system, they have developed a comprehensive system that addresses the needs of inmates with mental illness while they are in jail, preparing for release and back in the community. The program provides substance abuse groups in jail and

(3,250 inmates in state prison have) a diagnosable mental illness.

helps inmates prepare for release by ensuring basic needs are met and links them to treatment and services.

The staff also is there before a person is sent to

#### RETURN ON INVESTMENT

PER CAPITA ANNUAL COST

Jail Diversion State Prison \$2,500 \$45,000\*

\$42,500 SAVED

(ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST OF INCARCERATION AND MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT IN STATE PRISON SYSTEM. COSTS IN COUNTY JAILS VARY.)

jail, helping people who have run-ins with the criminal justice system avoid unnecessary imprisonment by finding appropriate alternatives.

But many more services are needed throughout the state. Only a handful of diversion programs are either underway or are in the startup stages in New Jersey. And not enough assistance is available for the mentally ill inmate in the state prison system who is preparing for release.

New Jersey must continue to expand its services and improve coordination between the criminal justice and mental health systems. Doing so will save lives and tax dollars.



Ann, a 37-year-old woman diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, could have become one of the thousands of individuals with mental illness trapped in New Jersey's jails and prisons. This woman, who experienced severe psychotic symptoms after several traumatic experiences, including a childhood rape, would become agitated and aggressive when she destabilized. An incident with a police officer led to charges.

But rather than heading to jail, Ann became involved in the Jail Diversion Program through CarePlus New Jersey, a mental health care provider in Bergen County. Ann was placed on probation and mandated by the courts to follow her prescribed treatment regimen and follow up with intensive case management services. For several years, she has remained stable and involved in the program, avoiding additional conflicts with the criminal justice system and following an upward path toward recovery.

The annual cost of the Jail Diversion Program is only a few thousand dollars per participant – a fraction of the cost of incarcerating an individual with mental illness.

We guide inmates to a productive life outside prison...

## INVEST in families

More than 11,000 New Jersey children are in out-of-home care, with most in foster care. For more than half these children, the goal is to reunify them with their family. But as the state undertakes a massive and expensive reform of its child welfare system, it struggles with the dilemma of how to safely reunify parents – many with addictions and poor parenting skills – with their children. Of the thousands of children reunified with their families, more than a quarter return to out-of-home care within a year.

As the plan for Child Welfare reform acknowledges, successful family reunification requires a broad range of services and "frequent visits in the least intrusive and safest setting possible."

Reunity House, which is located in a renovated Victorian house in South Orange, provides a comprehensive and unique program to safely reunite families who have been separated due to abuse and neglect. Operated by Family Connections, Reunity House works with some of the most difficult families— parents at risk of losing their parental rights. While the children stay with foster parents, the biological parents address their problems— such as addiction and abusive tendencies – and learn to parent effectively. They learn to control their anger, set limits, play with their children, and handle responsibility and stress.

In a homelike setting, families learn to bond through everyday activities, such as sharing a meal, playing, and doing homework. During supervised visitation, they learn to develop healthy relationships and interact for extended periods before they are expected to succeed on their own. As the family develops skills, its members move up to overnight visits in an apartment supervised by compassionate and dedicated staff members who ensure safe visits.

The process doesn't end once the family is reunified. Ongoing

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Annual Cost per Family:

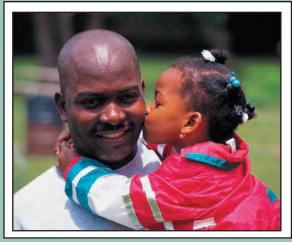
REUNITY HOUSE FOSTER CARE/RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT

(AVERAGE 2 CHILDREN)

\$7,000 \$20,000-\$160,000

\$13,000 - \$153,000 Savings per Family

support and meetings help families work through the inevitable trials and difficulties. The process of intensive treatment, training, assistance, support and trust pays off in a high success rate. More than 90 percent of the families have stayed together, with parents developing coping skills and children finding love and support.

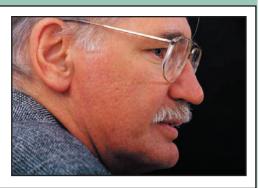


Michael, a father of five, was referred to Reunity House when he lost custody for being physically abusive to his children. None of the injuries required hospitalization.

Michael needed to come to terms with his own history of suffering from abuse. Extensive therapy and parenting classes helped him develop coping skills and better ways of disciplining. Reunity House gradually reunited the father with his children, who learned to trust him again. They moved back with their father and feel safe.

Michael continues to attend classes and gets help when he feels overwhelmed, while the children and mother participate in therapy. This family—and many others— have found hope for a brighter future and the end of the cycle of abuse and dysfunction.

## INVEST in neighbors



Fifty-year-old Brian lives in the community, playing pool, participating in sports, and attending plays. He does chores around the house, budgets his money and prepares meals. He is considering pursuing part-time employment.

For most people, these accomplishments would seem unremarkable. But for an individual who spent 18 years of his life in a psychiatric institution, they are tremendous milestones on the road to recovery. When Brian first considered moving back to the community four years ago, he was fearful and his family was apprehensive.

However, after careful planning, Brian moved into a group home run by Triple C, a non-profit mental health care provider that offers safe, affordable, well-maintained housing with flexible and responsive support systems. Brian has lived in his home four years without a relapse to the hospital. Previously, Brian would spend most of the time in his bedroom, but now he enjoys the camaraderie of friends, sports and community activities. Not only has Brian discovered the joy of living outside institutional walls, his move is saving the state of New Jersey more than \$70,000 a year.

Hundreds of individuals with mental illness are inside state psychiatric institutions awaiting housing options in the community. Thousands more are either living on the streets, in homeless

shelters, in prisons iails and suband standard housing. Elderly parents throughstate care for adult children

One of those initiatives, Triple C Housing's Wellness Program, takes the lead of consumers, who help select the topics they want to explore. The residents helped design the curriculum and carry

#### RETURN ON INVESTMENT

GROUP HOME \$70,000

STATE INSTITUTION \$146,000

\$76,000 in Savings to the State

with mental illness at home and worry what will happen when they can no longer do so.

New Jersey has recognized the need for and value of providing affordable housing for disabled individuals, particularly those with a mental illness. Last year, the state approved a \$200 million bond issue to provide for the construction and rehabilitation of 10,000 housing units over ten years.

But bricks and mortar are not

enough. For individuals institutionalized for decades, living in the community presents a host of frightening obstacles. Everything from riding a bus, meeting with family members to inviting friends over for dinner can seem daunting. To help individuals with mental illness achieve the goal of living as independently as possible, innovative programs are underway to offer a means to transition from institutional to community living.

out the activities on their way to becoming more independent and increasing their ability to utilize local resources. For Brian and his housemates, the program has helped them become valued members of the community. The residents helped design the curriculum, including learning to read bus schedules, finding local recreational activities and planning a dinner party, on their way to becoming more independent and increasing their ability to utilize local resources.

Hundreds of individuals with mental illness are inside state psychiatric institutions awaiting housing options in the community. Thousands more are either living on the streets, in homeless shelters, in prisons and jails and substandard housing.

### INVEST in co-workers

The pride that comes from a job well-done and independence afforded by a paycheck can be critical components of selfworth. But for individuals with mental illness, finding fulfilling employment is a daunting task.

It is estimated that more than 120,000 New Jersey individuals with serious mental illness are unemployed, with the majority interested finding jobs. However, there are numerous obstacles that stand in their Too many way.

of the illness to recognize the strengths of the job applicant. The job seeker may have neither sufficient education, training sistance available. or experience, nor the appropriate cloth-And most importantly, he or she may lack Dumont, is designed to aid individuals the necessary self-confidence.

is an integral piece of the recovery pronumber of New Jersey mental health care on-the-job support. In addition to help- are priceless

In her mid-30s, Sara had a bipolar disorder and had been addicted to painkillers. Although she was addressing her substance abuse, she had been unemployed for a decade, lived a chaotic life in transitional housing and was struggling to piece her world back together. But Sara had a lot of strengths. She was out-going, intelligent and well-spoken.

Job Tracks focused on Sara's strengths, helping her to build a resume, develop her interviewing skills and find job opportunities. Sara was hired as a bank teller, becoming a dependable and valuable employee. When Sara had difficult days, job coaches were available to provide support. The woman moved up to assistant head teller and is looking for other job opportunities to continue

providers are tackling each of these baremployers cannot see beyond the stigma riers, providing education, training, job service personnel and bank tellers. coaching, and various support services. However, the need far exceeds the as-

to grow. She is out in the world, making friends with co-workers, assisting customers, finding her value in the community and looking forward to each day.



ing individuals explore job opportunities, Job Tracks helps them prepare a resume, practice interviewing, and find the right attire. Once the individual has been hired, Job Tracks coaches stand by to help the new employees through the difficult periods.

Job Tracks participants may have the appropriate education or experience, but their lives were interrupted by illness and they don't know how to get back on track. They may fear losing public financial support and then being unable to maintain the job. Job Tracks coaches respond to each of these individual concerns and help the employment seekers focus on their abilities, rather than their disabilities, and find jobs as stock clerks, landscapers, salespersons. customer

The benefits to society are extraordinary, producing greater productivity, reduced need for disability or unemployment Job Tracks, an employment payments and other forms of government ing or interviewing skills for a job search. service at Vantage Health System in support, and ultimately, increased tax receipts. Through employment, individuals with mental illness who are homeless. with mental illness develop greater inde-Recognizing that employment It assists with finding housing and empendence, gain a feeling of self-worth and ployment, career exploration, on-site become contributing members of their cess for individuals with mental illness, a training, employment counseling and community. The benefits to the individual

#### RETURN ON INVESTMENT

INVESTMENT- JOB TRACKS REDUCTION IN DISABILITY

SALARY EARNED IN NEW JOB TOTAL SAVINGS/PRODUCTIVITY

\$1,800

\$10,964

\$23,000

\$32,164

ANNUAL, PER PERSON

AVERAGE NATIONWIDE SUPPORT ESTIMATED ENTRY-LEVEL

REALIZED

### INVEST in veterans

They served our country and risked their lives. But for many veterans, the trials of war or the inability to cope with life when they left the service sent them on a spiral of depression, addiction, joblessness, homelessness and hopelessness. Today, approximately 8,300 veterans are living on the streets or in homeless shelters in New Jersey. Even if they access treatment, many of these former service men and women lack the supports and services they need to establish productive, independent lives.

# HOPE HAS ARRIVED FOR HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERANS.

But hope has arrived for honorably discharged veterans. The largest transitional housing program for homeless veterans in the tri-state area, Hope for Veterans, seeks

to break the destructive cycle through supported housing, recovery services, case management, mentoring, work readiness, life skills training, and, ultimately, links to employment and affordable housing. The nonprofit organization, Community Hope of Parsippany, transformed a former medical building on the Lyons Veterans Affairs campus into a 75-bed residential facility where today veterans are breaking the cycle of homelessness, re-entering the workforce and regaining their independence.

Thousands of other homeless veterans, however, continue to live on the streets and homeless shelters of New Jersey. The need continues to grow. Additionally, thousands of other individuals struggle with both mental illness and a substance addiction and are turned away each year because of a lack of treatment beds. There is a desperate need of integrated treatment services for individuals with co-occurring disorders.

HOUSING, PRISONS, ER, ETC..

Veterans, and others, who have contributed so much to society. deserve opportuthe nity to regain their lives and once again become productive members of the community.

# RETURN ON INVESTMENT HOPE FOR VETERANS ANNUAL COST OF HOMELESSNESS\* \$12,000 \$90,000 \$78,000 SAVINGS \*Annual cost is per person, and includes costs of trnsitional



Forty-two year old Greg Riley, who served in the Navy in the 1980s, was a heroin addict and drug dealer. In and out of prison for drugrelated crimes and homeless, Greg participated in the Veterans Affair's short-term residential rehabilitation program. However, once he was discharged to the streets, Greg was unable to do his laundry, pay his bills or get a job. He returned to his destructive habits.

Greg again went through the rehab program, but this time it was followed by a move to Community Hope's Hope for Veterans Program. Through their support services, Greg was able to regain his life. He continues on his upward trend more than a year after entering the program, working as resident assistant at the facility and helping other veterans to transform their lives.

### BOTTOM LINE:

#### You can't afford to ignore mental health

Even though New Jersey's mental health care providers serve hundreds of thousands of adults and children with mental illness, many thousands more do not obtain the assistance they need, leading to unemployment, imprisonment, homelessness, substance abuse, suicide and family dysfunction.

#### WHAT IS NEEDED?

\_\_\_\_ LABOR CRISIS

While additional services are necessary for many children and adults, New Jersey's mental health care providers, because of a labor crisis, are struggling to serve those already in the community system. Inadequate salaries make it difficult to hire and retain experienced employees, with high turnover and vacancy rates leading to long waits for service.

COLA

Annual contract increases have not kept up with inflation, leading to inadequate raises and insufficient funds to meet the increased costs of uitilities, fuel and healthcare insurance.

HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES

Adequate services, such as case management, counseling, education, employment training and daily living skills to support the affordable housing being created and the recovery of consumers, are necessary...

\_\_\_ADEQUATE MEDICAID RATES

Medicaid rates, some of which have not increased in more than 30 years, must be increased to reflect the true cost of services.

EXPAND MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE INITIATIVES

New Jersey began to make tremendous strides last year by implementing recommendations from the Governor's Task Force Report on Mental Health. The state must continue to build upon the programs begun last year to ensure their success.

REDUCE UNNECESSARY PAPERWORK

The state must continue its progress in reducing unnecessary and counterproductive micromanagement policies that are not focused on outcomes. Excessive documentation requirements take staff time away from direct service to consumers.

\_\_\_\_ Focus on Recovery

State policies must be revamped to remove impediments to a recovery-based system and should inspire innovation among community providers.

MENTAL HEALTH PARITY

The state should adopt comprehensive Mental Health Parity legislation that would require insurance coverage for treatment of mental illnesses under the same terms and conditions as are provided for other illnesses and diseases. Employers would experience tremendous increases in productivity and reductions in other medical expenses as a result.

Every wise investor would take advantage of the opportunity to reap such an enormous return on their investment. The members of a compassionate society would surely invest in the lives of their neighbors, co-workers, friends and family.

#### Savings to New Jersey

\$4 BILLION\*

A \$3.7 BILLION RETURN

ON THE INVESTMENT

\*Based on nationwide statistics from the National Institute of Mental Health

### How much will it cost?

\$70 MILLION
First year of 3-year plan for salary parity between state and community workers, whose salaries lag one-third behind.

\$98 MILLION
Cost of Living Allowance of 4 1/2% for all DHS contracts

\$10 MILLION Housing Support

\$29 MILLION
Expansion of Mental Health
Task Force Initiatives

\$10 MILLION Expanded Recovery Programs, such as education, employment and medication support

\$100 MILLION

Improved Medicaid Rates to reflect true costs (\$50 million reimbursed by federal government)

\$317 MILLION TOTAL

NJAMHA represents 125 non-profit community-based mental health care agencies. Utilizing a variety of funding sources, these agencies employ thousands of dedicated and compassionate employees who serve 400,000 adults and children throughout New Jersey each year. These organizations provide an array of services to assist individuals with mental illness and behavioral health problems and their families. Housing, employment, substance abuse treatment, couseling, coping strategies, and foster services are only a few of the many programs designed to help individuals with mental illness recover.

For almost 55 years, NJAMHA has been a tireless advocate for the one in five persons who has a mental illness and remains committed to improving their lives and recovery.

### THE NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF MENTAL HEALTH AGENCIES, INC.

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These stories are the real case histories of individuals helped by New Jersey's community mental health system. Some of the names have been changed and representative photographs have been used to protect confidentiality.

#### Invest In Your Community