



2006 ANNUAL REPORT

GREATER BUFFALO COUNSELING CENTERS, INC.

"For all the struggles eased, all the fears conquered, and all the hearts lightened ..."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Get Help. Get GBCC.

Things change. Nothing stays the same. I think the technical terms are "Significant Life Event" and "Life Transition". We all have them. They are the way life works. Sometimes we plan them and make them happen; often times they happen on their own. Sometimes they are exciting and wonderful changes; other times they bring with them fear and anxiety. They can throw us into turmoil, leaving us unprepared, emotionally or physically.

How do we manage these transitions? Sometimes, not that well. We need some help, some guidance and support. We need a mentor – an understanding, skillful, compassionate, and well trained counselor – someone who can help us find our way through these stressful times.

That is the description of a Greater Buffalo Counseling Centers Volunteer Counselor. For more than 45 years, each volunteer counselor at GBCC has been just that – a well-trained listener and guide who knows how to help us help ourselves. Each week they listen, they coach, they encourage and support, they enable our clients to grow, to change, to heal and to deal with life. And, what is truly unique about our program, that help is there regardless of an ability to pay.



We are excited to bring you our 2006 Annual Report. Our organization is energized with new board members who bring us fresh ideas, and enthusiastic new counselors who thrive on the high quality training offered by our professional staff. We are looking at new outreach avenues and community collaboration opportunities. And we are looking forward to a new GBCC website that will provide another way for clients and volunteers to learn about our services.

In this report you will hear from some old friends and supporters of GBCC. It is a wonderful testament to the value of Greater Buffalo to know that our "alumni", former counselors and Board members, remain so attached to GBCC and often return to us again as their life transitions allow.

The volunteers, staff and board members thank you all for your generous support and encouragement in 2006. We are grateful to have friends like you.

Janet R. Mazzaroppi
Board President, GBCC, Inc.

Who We Are

Greater Buffalo Counseling Centers, Inc. (GBCC), is a not-for-profit agency that offers low-cost counseling services to members of the WNY community. In addition, the agency provides real-life experience to area college students and compassionate individuals from all walks of life who want to assist others through life's difficulties.

What We Do

The counselors and staff at GBCC use a Client-Centered Therapy approach to counseling. The agency provides a safe place for people who find themselves paralyzed by feelings of despair, anxiety, anger, and hopelessness. It also provides an assessment and referral service to people who are having difficulty navigating the complex human-service system.

GBCC provides the same safe setting for volunteer counselors to learn about the counseling process. Our counselors come from all walks of life but all have one thing in common: a desire to use their skills to help others while learning sophisticated counseling techniques.

Third Time's A Charm!

GBCC's Third Annual Awards Dinner, held Oct. 18, lived up to the old adage, raising a record \$2,500 for the agency, and drawing about 60 staff, board members and friends for a wonderful evening of food, prizes and inspiration.

This year's honorees were

Dr. Martin

Gerstenzang, the founder of ECMC's Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program, and **Gary (pictured) and Linda Tatu**, founders of Harvest House. In addition, **Sister Denise Roche**, GNSH, president of D'Youville College, graciously served as the guest speaker.



Goodbye

In January of 2007, GBCC lost one of its closest and dearest friends, with the passing of **Hon. Elloeen D. Oughterson**.

Elloeen was one of the founders of the agency and a tireless advocate for those in its care. Fittingly, GBCC's highest honor, the Hon. Elloeen Oughterson Lifetime Achievement Award, bears her name. Simply, we would not be what we are today without



Magic & Transformation

In fifth grade, I began reading Freud and thought he was a magician. I wanted to do what he did: enter other people's unconscious, pry out hidden, mysterious childhood traumas and transform those people's lives miraculously, happily ever after.

Later, as a volunteer counselor at GBCC, I had that chance. And, almost immediately, I learned that the instantaneous transformation that Freud describes is rare. The magic of GBCC, of counseling as a whole, is of a subtler sort, a process that is ongoing over a lifetime.

The real magic that anyone associated with the counseling center discovers — be they a volunteer counselor or client — is the personal magic, the mindful attention in listening and speaking that occurs in that privileged, intimate client-counselor relationship. This process works the minor miracles of everyday change that comes from knowing the self better. Then, the process begins.

Self-knowledge not only heals, but in many traditions is synonymous with enlightenment. And with self-knowledge comes a broader awareness that extends influence in the larger community. Conversely, lack of self-knowledge can destroy the self, family and community. Consider how King Lear destroys his kingdom and the child he loves because, as another daughter says, "He hath ever but slenderly known himself."

GBCC's client-centered counseling philosophy encourages us to extend the same principles that we apply to ourselves to our clients. This leads to trust, the source of real magic.

Carl Rogers, the man responsible for the approach to counseling taken by GBCC's staff and volunteer team, teaches that "By trusting in the capacity of the human individual for developing his own potentiality, we can permit him the opportunity to choose his own way in learning." Rogers tells us to trust the client to do what needs to be done until he can trust himself. In doing so, he has also taught us to trust ourselves. We all lose trust from time to time, but the secret we learn isn't that we must cling to trust, or struggle to regain it, but to discover how to give it to others.

*"trust,
which, at the
heart of things,
is the source of
the magic."*

So many wisdom traditions state: "To know thyself heals the world." And this quest, the journey to know thyself, is what GBCC offers. Even now, years after my involvement with the center began, that magic behind transformation continues for any of us lucky enough to have found our way to the Greater Buffalo Counseling Center.

This piece was written by Penelope Prentice, author, playwright, and former counselor/board member at the Greater Buffalo Counseling Centers, Inc.

Financial Information

2006 REVENUES

University Presbyterian Church (Value of Counseling Facilities)	\$ 13,750.00
Annual Awards Dinner	\$2,501.33
Client Contributions	\$1,922.00
Presbytery of WNY Grant.....	\$1,400.00
Individual/Corp. Donations	\$1,080.00
United Way & SEFA Contributions	\$1,063.18
Total	\$21,716.51

2006 EXPENDITURES

University Presbyterian Church (Value of Counseling Facilities)	\$ 13,750.00
Professional Staff Stipends.....	\$6,000.00
Administrative Staff Stipends	\$4,825.00
Misc. Expenses (phone, printing, etc.)	\$1,069.59
Total	\$25,644.59

OUR DONORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Thank You to Our Supporters

Greater Buffalo Counseling Centers, Inc., has served our community for more than 40 years. This accomplishment is simply not possible without the support of our volunteers and donors. We are grateful to all, for you make it possible for GBCC to continue its important mission!

Kathy & John Aman
Daniel F. Braun
Antonio Cardarelli
Shirley A. Chesebro
Yvonne Chicon
Theresa Coogan
Elizabeth Czech
Larry Dunwoodie
Keith Elkins
Jim & Marilyn Fleckenstein
Mary Ellen Gabor
Marcia Gerstenzang
Peter Gerstenzang
Paul Gerstner
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Deborah & Michael Haendiges
Natalie Haendiges
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Lebro's Restaurant
McClain Foundation
Meals on Wheels for WNY
National Fuel Gas
Niagara University
Northtown Lexus
OLV Institutions
Presbytery of Western New York
Sorrentino's
T.L. Cannon Mgmt. Corp. (Applebee's)

Tim Horton's - Grand Island
University of Buffalo
University Presbyterian Church

2006 Board & Staff

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Tom Lucia, *Vice President*
Jim Fleckenstein, *Secretary*
Philip Wiggle, CPA, *Treasurer*
Douglas Salmon, *Past President*

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Keith Elkins
Hon. Elloeen Oughterson
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Social Worker
Dr. Charles Weiss, PhD,
Clinical Psychologist

Elizabeth Czech
Suzanne Moxham
Cordell Porter

Shaping Tomorrow's Counselors

GBCC takes pride in offering its volunteer counselors the real-world training and skills they need and want. Here are just two of our success stories:

Jane Dewey arrived at GBCC with a love of psychology, but with only a minor degree in the field and no practical experience. After a year and half of the agency's regular Thursday-night sessions, Jane's passion had become Jane's path. Today, she is enrolled in the Counseling Psychology PhD program at Seton Hall University. "GBCC gave me the support and guidance I needed to pursue a career in the mental health field. Volunteering was one of the richest experiences of my life."

Since GBCC, **Rachel Manella Kraatz** has graduated with her Master's Degree in Social Work and is working at Child & Adolescent Treatment Services as a Functional Family Therapist. She has also started work on her Master's degree. "GBCC helped me to realize that counseling and the social services was a career that I wanted to pursue," she says.

We are always seeking dedicated and compassionate individuals to serve as volunteer counselors (like Jane & Rachel), or as members of our board. Call us today at 833-5993 to join the GBCC family.

2006 By the Numbers

COUNSELING

Clients Served	153
Year-end Active Clients	40
Client Hours	456
Client Contributions	\$1,922
Average GBCC Hourly Counseling Fee	\$4.21

COUNSELOR TRAINING

Counselor Trainings	29
Counselor Supervisions	215

Overall, the center bested the previous year's totals in clients served (94 in 2005), year-end active clients (27 in '05), client hours (327), and counselor supervisions (213).

