Way to go Kimberly!

Today, Kimberly H. has a zeal for recovery. She is excited about the future and believes that by taking personal responsibility for her actions and maintaining “faith in my higher power,” she can overcome any obstacles in her path. This was not always the case. Kimberly’s struggles with mental illness started early in life. She is a survivor of childhood sexual abuse and, at a very early age, had to learn to cope with the feelings of anger, guilt and shame that often accompany such traumatic experiences. She struggled to reconcile her religious faith and its teachings about forgiveness with her overwhelming feelings of anger and hatred towards her abuser.

At age 14, she found the “courage to write a letter and forgive” her father. He is currently serving a sentence of 99 years for his crimes. She believes that learning to forgive her father has freed her to go on with her life. Kimberly graduated from high school, but soon found herself in an unhealthy relationship. She lived day by day always in fear of physical and verbal abuse.

“I don’t know what is more damaging, the physical abuse or the verbal and emotional abuse,” she said. For several years, she endured death threats and domestic violence. Finally, she found “the strength to stand up for myself and find my voice and not be intimidated.” After leaving this relationship, she channeled her determination for a better life into healthier pursuits. She eventually reached out for help at HOPE Inc. in Tucson, there she found the support and resources needed to enhance and maintain her new found sobriety. “At HOPE, I found anger management, healthy relationships, and learned everyday life skills. HOPE gives me strength and lets me know that I am not alone. The peers here support and encourage me. I get education about how to survive and the coping skills to create my best life possible. As Kimberly celebrates 148 days clean and sober, she is working on her goal of family reunification. Kimberly realizes she still has a long journey on the road to recovery, but is excited to experience the joy of the journey. “I am different in so many ways. I know I can now face all the obstacles I could never face before. My voice has finally found me.” She is also determined to “set healthy boundaries and not make the choices I made before, because my past does not dictate who I am right now today. I can learn from my past.”

September is National Recovery Month!

“Join the Voices for Recovery: Speak Up, Reach Out.” Did you know that people in recovery can achieve a healthy lifestyle and contribute in many positive ways to our communities? That’s what recovery is all about! September is National Recovery Month. You can help raise awareness of the fact that recovery is possible...share with others about substance use and mental disorders, celebrate individuals in long-term recovery, and acknowledge the work of treatment and recovery service providers. Learn more through the Recovery Month fact sheet at: www.azdhs.gov/bhs/index.htm

The Behavioral Health Vision: All Arizona residents touched by the public behavioral health system are easily able to access high quality prevention, support, rehabilitation and treatment services that have resiliency and recovery principles at their core, which assist them in achieving their unique goals for a desired quality of life in their homes and communities.

DBHS manages Arizona’s publicly-funded, statewide behavioral health system. Learn more at www.azdhs.gov/bhs/.
The United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc. (UNITY) is a national organization promoting personal development, citizenship, and leadership among Native Youth. For 38 years the annual National UNITY Conference has brought Native Youth Leaders together to provide motivational messages, team-building exercises, health and fitness activities and cultural exchange with a focus on spirituality, physical, social, and mental development. This year’s conference was held in Portland, Oregon on June 28 through July 2, 2014. More than 1,400 Native American youth from throughout the United States gathered to participate. The theme was “Healing and Empowering Aspiring Leaders with Tradition and Heritage”.

Unique to this year’s conference was the addition of the inaugural UNITY 25 Under 25 Youth Leadership Awards ceremony. It was designed to celebrate the achievements of Native American and Alaskan Native youth ages 14 to 24 who embody UNITY’s core mission and exude living a balanced life. One of the honorees is Maria Juana Bartlett from the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. Her biography along with the other honorees can be found at: http://unityinc.org/index.php/native-youth/25-under-25.

Awards were also presented at the conference. The Golda Cook Memorial Scholarship was awarded to two participants, Iliana Gabriela Cota-Martinez of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona, and Noah Cline Williams of the Bishop Paiute Tribe of California. The purpose of this award is to honor the life of Golda Cook who supported UNITY, especially in the organization’s lean, early years.

Prescription Drug Abuse Reduction Project

MATFORCE began its prescription drug abuse reduction project in 2010. In 2012 MATFORCE became the first test site for the Governor’s pilot Prescription Drug Abuse Reduction Initiative. Today we continue to implement aspects of these projects and develop new ones. The result has been a 28% decline in 30-day use by Yavapai County youth, according to the 2012 AZ Youth Survey.

Projects include:

- Prescription drug drop boxes at ten law enforcement offices throughout the county.
- Dump the Drugs events held twice a year. Our next event is October 25th at six locations. Last year a record 12,931 pounds was collected.
- A “Sign up to Save Lives Campaign” asking physicians and pharmacists to enroll in the state’s Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). Enrollment has increased from 14% to 40%.
- Area hospitals adopted policies limiting opioids being dispensed from Emergency Departments.
- Prescription drug abuse educational programs were taught, reaching 6,000 students last year.
- Law enforcement expanded investigation of prescription drug fraud and diversions.

Projects are made possible with the help of agencies, organizations, volunteers and supporters who come together in workgroups to implement these reduction strategies. For more information: visit matforce.org or call 928-708-0100.
Tips for Heart Health

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in Arizona. Some of the things that increase your risk of heart disease are genetics, high blood pressure and cholesterol. Other risks are lifestyle related issues such as smoking, unhealthy diet, and lack of exercise.

If you know what leads to heart disease you can take steps to reduce your risk.

- Talk to your doctor about your health history. Get your blood pressure checked, and ask if taking an aspirin a day is right for you.
- If your blood pressure or cholesterol is high, take steps to lower it. This could include eating healthier, getting more exercise, and following your doctor’s orders about medications.
- Eat heart healthy by choosing fresh fruits and vegetables, lower sodium foods and cutting down on the fat and cholesterol in your food.
- Make exercise part of your daily routine. Try to do 2 ½ hours of moderate exercise a week.
- If you smoke, quit as soon as possible, and if you don’t smoke, don’t start.
- By eating a healthy diet, staying more physically active, stopping smoking, and knowing what your blood pressure and cholesterol numbers are you are on your way to staying heart healthy!

Heart disease is a risk for everyone, but people with behavioral health issues are more at risk of getting a preventable medical condition.

These conditions can lead to heart disease. Some of these conditions are diabetes, smoking, depression and obesity.

Prescription Drug Abuse

Half of the prescriptions taken each year in the U.S. are used improperly, and 96% of patients nationwide do not ask how to use their medications. This fact is important because anyone could be impacted by this misuse of prescription medications. Additionally, persons taking medicine for behavioral health conditions may see different healthcare practitioners for physical health care and may have multiple prescribers. This increases the risk of an adverse drug interaction. Our current quarterly health initiative can help you learn and prevent drug misuse. Click here to learn more and gain some tips and questions to ask your medical provider.

Healthy Recipe

Here’s a quick recipe to add omega-3s to your diet which helps your heart curb inflammation in the blood vessels, makes abnormal heart rhythms less likely and slows plaque buildup inside the blood vessels.

Ingredients:
- 4 (4 oz.) fish fillets
- Black pepper
- 3/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

1. Heat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Season fish to taste with pepper. Place on a cookie sheet or in a 9 x 13 inch casserole dish and bake 10-12 minutes.
3. While the fish cooks combine remaining ingredients and whisk well. Microwave covered on 50% heat for 2 minutes, stirring half-way.
4. Drizzle glaze over fish and serve.

Per serving: Calories 165; Total Fat 4.0 g; Saturated Fat 0.5 g; Trans Fat 0.0 g; Polyunsaturated Fat 0.5 g; Monounsaturated Fat 2.5 g; Cholesterol 49 mg; Sodium 73 mg; Carbohydrates 10 g; Fiber 0 g; Sugars 10 g; Protein 20 g

Prep time: 5 minutes; Cook time: 15 minutes
Serves 4; about $2.42 per serving

Source: American Heart Association
Mercy Maricopa was proud to host the “Focus on Employment: Creating Careers for a Brighter Future” conference June 27, 2014. More than 250 people attended the conference, held at Black Canyon Conference Center, featuring workshops, speakers and community resources. Professionals also shared how employment is important to a person’s recovery journey. Lydia L’Esperance, Mercy Maricopa’s employment vocational administrator, said the all-day event included information about résumé writing, networking and wellness, and more. Most importantly, the event allowed people to meet and hear from peers who are working at jobs they love. “It’s about increasing self-worth and self-esteem,” L’Esperance said. “It’s about being part of the community, just like everybody else.”

Allere Campo: Successful Partnering of Prevention and Treatment

The Guadalupe Prevention Partnership hosted the “Fun Camp” or, when translated into a Yaqui term, Allere Campo held over a two-week period (July 14-25) with 60-70 youth participating daily. The camp had three goals; one was to have youth acquire healthy and social skill sets. The second was to revitalize tribal culture by teaching youth traditional crafts. The third was to have a cultural play at the end of camp. The play would depict the story of the origin of the Yaqui People. Youth in the Cultural Play workshop learned dance steps, costume design, and most importantly the story of the “Talking Tree.”

The play was a first for the community! The youth attending the scenery workshop designed and built the stage background using recyclable items whenever possible. Youth also developed three public service announcements (PSA) videos regarding school bullying and driving under the influence. Fierro HD Media Production, a local media production company, donated their services to videotape and edit the PSA’s. Health, nutrition, bullying, conflict resolution, domestic violence, and prevention workshops were classified as core subjects and required mandatory participation by all campers. All the rest were designated as electives.

DUI Treatment Programs

More than three-thousand inmates successfully completed addiction or DUI treatment programs provided by the Arizona Department of Corrections in the most recent fiscal year, which ended June 30. 2,052 inmates completed various substance abuse treatment programs, and another 1,123 inmates successfully completed Level I and Level II DUI treatment programs. These programs are vital to the department’s work. Typically in recent years, more than 20 percent of Arizona inmates have been committed for a drug-related offense. Many other crimes can be traced to some involvement with illicit drugs. We are all familiar with the tragic consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Therefore, it is very important that substance abuse treatment programs are made available, and that they are effective.

Addiction treatment programs operate on a six or 12 month timetable and require inmates to participate in two hour sessions twice a week. Arizona is among a small number of states in which inmate addiction treatment programs are provided by licensed, certified substance abuse counselors. It’s essential to have professional counselors who can work through the treatment process with the inmates. In order for inmates to transition back to society, as we expect them to do, they need the best possible assistance, and using licensed and certified counselors goes a long way to reaching that goal. Having more than two-thousand inmates complete this important step for addiction treatment and another 1,100 for DUI programming in the past fiscal year is a great achievement.
How to Build Your Support System:

Support systems are important for most everyone to have, especially during the not so pleasant times of our lives. For people with Mental Health issues, it can be helpful to discuss feelings with others. It can be scary to reach out for help fearing that you might be judged. Often talking about the issue is the first step in the healing process and also allows you to grow as a person. Having a good support system starts with people who are trustworthy and who can listen non-judgmentally.

Here are some things to look for in a person when choosing them to be a part of your support system:

- Someone who gives good advice when you ask for it
- Respects, cares, and trusts you
- Allows you enough space to make your own choices and even make mistakes
- Listens to you and shares their own experiences both good and bad
- Allows you to express yourself without judging you or criticizing your feeling and emotions
- Assists you in finding a solutions when difficult issues arise
- Ultimately has your best interest at heart

Look towards family, friends, a faith leader or anyone you feel comfortable talking with to support you through your journey of recovery. You may also consider joining a peer-support group or self-help group. There are many national and local support groups available in different numerous settings. Recovery is a process that takes time and can be challenging. Having a support system to care for you and stand behind you can make things easier and possibly less complicated.
Peer Support Training at Marc Community Resources, Inc.:

Would you like to become a Peer Support? Marc Community Resources, Inc. is hosting a Peer Support Training!

When: September 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Where: The Marc Center - 924 N. Country Club Drive, Mesa, AZ – Building 1, 2nd Floor in the Training Room

You must attend all four Friday's consecutively to successfully complete the training program if you are enrolled in Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care - MMIC (the new RHBA).

11th Bi- Annual Kickball Event:

It’s that time of year. Dust off your sneakers and get ready to kick that ball! Let the games begin! Get ready to support your organization by participating in this inspiring event. Opening ceremonies start at 9:00 a.m.

When: November 7th, 2014 at 9:15 am
Where: Kiwanis Park - 6111 S. All American Way, Tempe, AZ.

If you have any questions please contact Cheryl Anderson from Marc Community Resources, Director of Recovery & Resiliency Support Services, at (480) 969-3800 ex 295.

The DBHS’ Blog Connection

More MHFA instructors join the Arizona effort

We launched Mental Health First Aid ARIZONA in 2011 and since then have trained more than 7,000 people throughout our State! MHFA is a public education effort to teach the public to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. Last week we proudly were able to add 30 new MHFA instructors for the Adult curriculum! Congratulations to all the instructors and welcome to the ARIZONA MHFA team!

Interested in attending a MHFA class near you? www.mentalhealthfirstaidaz.com

For more Behavioral Health News, visit the blog at http://bhsblog.azdhs.gov. Hint: you can subscribe to receive the information as soon as posted!

To submit an article: email your article to DBHSCommunications@azdhs.gov no later than the 15th of each month for publication the following month, pending on space available. Maximum length is 200 words, must be in an editable word document and picture(s) included within the document. By submitting an article you authorize the Editorial Board to edit as appropriate. Bylines or independent writers’ names are not included in the publication, instead you can include a link to your website or resources within the article. Thank you!

Mental Health: Everyone Has It!