

## CONARD HOUSE AWARDED GRANT FROM MARGOES FOUNDATION

### Funds will Help Develop a Self-Management Training Curriculum for People with Chronic Mental Illness Living in the San Francisco Community

**San Francisco, Calif. –July 20, 2009–** [Conard House](#), a pioneering nonprofit organization developing resources to help people self-manage mental illness since 1960, announced today that it has received a \$25,000 grant from the Margoès Foundation to help develop and field-test a self-management training curriculum for people with chronic mental illness living in the community, along with their providers.

Conard House offers a number of innovative programs in the San Francisco area, such as Residential Treatment, Supportive Housing, Supportive Employment, Money Management and Harm Reduction. Each of the 2,100 clients that Conard House serves annually participates in at least one of these client-empowering services -- all designed to help them reduce their symptoms, find healthy pathways to recovery and promote long-term independent living.

“Conard House is catalyzing change in community mental health,” said John Blum, Principal Manager, Margoès Foundation.

With the grant, Conard House will develop a self-management training curriculum for chronic mental illnesses. This training program is made urgent by already announced and looming cuts in San Francisco’s Public Health budget.

“With psycho-social rehabilitation at the bottom of the City priorities, the impending cuts will result in massive service reductions to those living with chronic mental illness,” said Richard Heasley, Executive Director of Conard House. “The Project is a clinically efficacious response that directly advances our mission of helping people self-manage mental illness.”

Improvement in the self-management skills of mental health clients living in the community supports their empowerment to move toward more independent living. A key part of the adapted curriculum will address client-students’ community-living goals. Five ongoing resources are necessary for people with serious mental illness to live successfully in non-institutional settings:

- Stable housing
- Function-enhancing medication (if needed)
- Adequate personal funds
- Authentic personal goals
- A substantive form of psycho-social support

“Beyond conventional life skills training, the curriculum will bring a practical advantage of teaching students strategies for dealing with what life throws at them – especially in regard to their particular mental illness and its symptoms, but also the emotional stress of simply having a chronic disease,” said Heasley.

### About Margoès Foundation

The Margoès Foundation is a private California foundation, established in 1984 by the Will of John A. Margoès. One of the program objectives of the Margoès Foundation is to be a resource and catalyst for supporting imaginative and creative programs that enable people with mental disabilities and challenges to live in non-institutional environments and lead productive lives. The Foundation prefers to award grants as seed money to jump start new program initiatives that effect strategic change and to leverage its support with contributions from other donors.

**About Conard House**

Conard House, Inc. is a private, nonprofit organization providing mental health services to residents of San Francisco. Founded upon core principles of self-empowerment, self-determination and the least restrictive, community-based living, Conard House opened its doors in 1960 as the City's first "halfway house" for adults following hospitalization. Today it serves more than 2,100 people in a dozen locations. Support for its programs and services come from various city agencies, service fees from organizations, rents from residents, grants from foundations, and gifts from donors. For more information about Conard House and its programs, please visit [www.conard.org](http://www.conard.org).

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