

Conard House to Host Workshop on Self-Management of Mental Illness at California Association of Social Rehabilitation Agencies (CASRA) Conference

While Health Care Legislation Promises Better Long-Term Access to Mental Health Care, CASRA Session to Discuss a Powerful Approach to Achieving Healthier Lives with Diminishing Resources

San Francisco, Calif. – March 31, 2010 – Conard House, a pioneering nonprofit organization developing resources to help people self-manage mental illness since 1960, today announced that the organization has been invited to host a workshop at this year's CASRA Spring Conference, April 7-8, 2010 at the San Mateo Marriott.

The Executive Director and six (6) Conard House presenters will discuss and demonstrate Stanford University's Chronic Disease Self Management Program and its applications to chronic mental illness. With psycho-social rehabilitation at the bottom of local priorities, this program is made urgent by deep cuts to public health budgets for the coming fiscal year and beyond. As clients and their providers face this unprecedented funding catastrophe into the foreseeable future, better self-management becomes a necessity for anyone with a chronic mental illness living in the community as well as the significantly fewer people who will remain to provide emergency treatment and services.

"Without on-site bio-psycho-social support and coordination, without clinical treatment and without the resources to support clients' rehabilitation and recovery goals," said Richard Heasley, executive director of Conard House, "the consequence of a 'housing-and-medication-only' approach will be to turn back the clock 50 years, to recreate the wards of Napa State Hospital from 1960 in the SRO hotels today, to 're-institutionalize' clients in the very same supportive housing intended for de-institutionalization – except there is no support."

Conard House was founded in 1959 by Elaine Mikels, a visionary social worker committed to social justice for all people, especially those outside of traditional society. Recognizing the need for a "normalizing transitional community" for people with mental illness returning to San Francisco from Napa State Hospital, she created the first halfway house in San Francisco, Conard House, named in honor of her social work mentor, Conard Rheiner.

What: CASRA Spring Conference

When: April 7-8, 2010

Topic: Conard House Workshop -- Community-Supported Self Management: A Strategy for Transformation

Where: San Mateo Marriott, 1770 South Amphlett Blvd., San Mateo, CA, 94402

Panelists: Richard Heasley, Executive Director
Tom Genelli, Director, Clinical Training
Christian Intemann, Health Education Coordinator
Anne Asher, Health Psychology Research Analyst
Alan (Mickey) Shipley, current Board Member
Alex Kutik, former Board Member
Nao Kuboyama, Development Program Assistant

For more information on the CASRA Spring Conference, please visit:

http://www.casra.org/education/conference_program.pdf or call 1-650-653-6000.

For more information on Conard House, please visit: <http://www.conard.org>

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 2,000 people in two 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.

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