

Virginia Bainbridge, Executive Director
Molly Brack, Member
Hollis Easter, Member
Tim Jansen, Member
Eleanor K. Letcher, Chair



CONTACT USA

Peter Meyers, Treasurer
Dorothy Triplett, Member
Dianne Wilgen, Member
Peter Wollheim, Member

CONTACT NEWSLETTER

June 2007

CHANGES

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CONTACT USA has gone through some changes during the past month: moving the business office from New Jersey to Indiana, the resignation of two board members and the addition of two board members.

But some things stay the same. We are here to help centers be the best possible.

You can still reach our Executive Director, Virginia Bainbridge at 1-860-464-2144 or you can email her at vbainbridge@sbcglobal.net. For concerns of dues, accreditation, annual reports (statistics, annual accreditation documents, 501©3), you can call or email Jan Schoop at 219-365-9760 or contact-usa@sbcglobal.net.

Included with this newsletter is another attachment of the revised Core Competencies for Training. These can also be found on the CUSA web site.

It is with deep regret that the Board of Directors of CUSA accepted the resignations of Larry Baker and Libby Durham. Both have helped as the CUSA Board has revised the Accreditation

Manual and the Core Competencies for Training.

Thank you Larry and Libby and be well.

As we say good-bye to two, we also say hello to two. The Board of Directors of CONTACT welcome Dianne Wilgen, Executive Director of Contact of Knoxville and Dr. Peter Wollheim to our Board of Directors.

This month we highlight Dr. Wollheim:

“Peter Wollheim, C.C.W., PH.D. began his professional career as a photojournalist working in a psychiatric hospital. He became a hotline volunteer in 1984, and then a board member, president and eventually Executive Director of Idaho Suicide Prevention and Hotline Services. He has served as a founding board member of SPAN Idaho, as Co-Chair of the Idaho Commission on Suicide Prevention, and as founder and director of Boise State University’s Certified Crisis Worker Preparation Program. His continuing work as an investigative journalist focuses on the treatment of persons living with mental illnesses, and his courses deal with both the portrayal of mental illness in the mass media and basics of suicide prevention. He is currently working on a MA in Counseling.”

“Recognitions include a Jefferson Award from the American Institute for Public Service, First Place Investigative Reporting Awards from the Idaho Press Club, awards from the National Alliance

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for Mental Illness, the Idaho Mental Health Coalition, the Idaho Federation for Children's Mental Health, and the Boise State University Foundation."

"Hobbies include organic flower and vegetable gardening, bee keeping, fly fishing, travel, and volunteer baby cuddling at a neonatal intensive care unit."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ACCREDITATION

Contact Crisis Line, Dallas, Texas, and Agora Crisis Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico both achieved accreditation from CUSA during site visits to each center in April - CONGRATULATIONS on work well done!

CONFERENCE

It is never too early to start planning the budget for conferences.

The CONVENING/CONTACT USA conference dates have been set for May 9, 10, and 11, 2008!

As the planning process begins, we would like to hear from you on topics that you would want presented for yourself, for your volunteers, and for your board members. Also, if there is a topic that you would want to present at the

conference, please let us know so that we may include you.

iCarol and CONTACT USA

By Tim Jansen and Molly Brack

Many CONTACT centers (10 at last count) are reaping the rewards of using the iCarol crisis center program. iCarol is the dream of Neil and Jackie McKechnie who many of you have met this past year at the Convening Conference, AIRS Conference or at NASCOD's annual conference. iCarol is a comprehensive data collection, scheduling, and communication tool. Neil and Jackie understand what crisis centers need having volunteered for their local center for years.

iCarol is a system that helps listening and crisis lines run your agency better, improve service to your callers, and increase volunteer loyalty. It does a lot of things we used to do manually or on paper, saving us a lot of time. It's clear that the people who built it have first-hand experience at a crisis center. Major features include shift scheduling on the web, email reminders, call reports, automatic statistics, information & referral tracking and staff & volunteer management. They're always taking feature recommendations and it seems to just keep getting better. iCarol is currently working to become certified for use by AIRS for use in 2-1-1 centers.

Anything that can help run centers more efficiently and help us to spend more

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time helping those in crisis is invaluable. I can hardly wait for my center to sign on. Learn more by going to www.iCarol.com. Watch the video then I suggest setting up a live demo so you can see the site in action. If you like it, just start the 60-day free trial. They can usually import any existing information you have (like volunteer lists and call report templates), so it's easy to get started.

Returning Soldiers

AS the CUSA Board was discussing possible topics for the May conference was the mental health issues of our returning soldiers.

AS that discussion barely started I received, as probably many of you did, the newsletter from CONTACT Pittsburgh. Following is a portion of their newsletter.

CONTACT Pittsburgh Launches 24-Hour Veterans Hotline for Returning Soldiers *Offering immediate crisis support for returning soldiers and their families*

CONTACT Pittsburgh announced the planned launch of its new 24-hour Veterans Hotline for returning soldiers in the greater Pittsburgh area for June 1, 2007. The hotline will provide a source of immediate, round-the-clock emotional support for returning soldiers and their families. Staffed by professionally trained volunteers, the Veterans Hotline was created in response to alarming

increases in the rates of suicide among returning soldiers. According to the Veterans Administration, nearly one out of four people who complete suicide in the United States are veterans.

"It is important to educate not only veterans, but also family members and concerned citizens about the existence of this important service," Christy Stuber adds. "That caring voice on the other end of the phone can truly mean the difference between life and death."

I believe that this could be a good topic for the various list serves.

GENERAL

Please send your center news for inclusion in our newsletter: anniversaries, new programs, new training ideas and other good stuff happening.

