



**Cuyahoga County  
Community Mental Health Board**

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***HELPING HAND AWARDS HONOR EXCEPTIONAL WORK  
IN CUYAHOGA COUNTY'S PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM***

CLEVELAND, OHIO –The Cuyahoga County Community Mental Health Board (CCCMHB) presented the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual **Helping Hand Awards** to a crowd of nearly 500 people at its Annual Meeting Brunch on Wednesday, May 31, 2006.

"The compassionate work of the individuals and programs we honor is truly inspiring. Their extraordinary contributions are helping children and adults with mental illness on their path to recovery," remarked Bonita W. Caplan, CCCMHB Chair.

"The actions of each of our award recipients are helping to alleviate the stigma that is still too often associated with mental illness. Their achievements embody what community mental health is all about," noted William M. Denihan, CCCMHB Chief Executive Officer.

The award recipients are:

- **The Kathleen Burton Memorial Award For Mental Health Professionals – William P. Cramer, Cleveland's West Side, Area Director for the Ohio Department of Mental Health**, for going well above and beyond his administrative role to engage consumers to serve as their own advocates, ensuring that supportive services receive adequate funding, devoting his entire professional career, spanning over 30 years, to alleviate the stigma associated with mental illness, and effectively sharing his knowledge with providers, consumers and interested citizens.
- **Legislator of the Year, Local Level – Cuyahoga County Board of County Commissioners – Jimmy Dimora, Peter Lawson Jones and Tim Hagan**, for earnestly working to provide funding for mental health services that are so necessary for consumers to live full and productive lives, and displaying a real understanding of mental health issues and the impact that mental illness can have on the citizens of Cuyahoga County.

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- **Consumer Involvement – Karen Unsworth, Lakewood**, for being an outstanding leader and role model for all consumers of mental health services, sharing her knowledge of recovery, conducting panel discussions in hospital psychiatric wards, and participating in community forums and providing encouraging words.
- **Family Involvement – William Wortzman, Pepper Pike**, for passionately pursuing ways to make the world better for people with mental illness, and transforming his beliefs and compassion into firm, bold action resulting in hundreds of hours of volunteer service and hundreds of thousands of dollars supporting mental health programs.
- **Faith-based Involvement – Bishop Richard R. Williams, Foundation of Truth Church, Cleveland**, for opening the doors of his church to support all people living with mental illness and embracing the principles of the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), becoming certified in WRAP training, and holding weekly support groups to provide encouragement, support and spiritual guidance.
- **Contract Agency Program – Northcoast Community Support Network Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Team, part of the Northcoast Behavioral Healthcare System**, for providing service to the most challenging individuals of the community mental health system, and working to keep consumers of mental health services thriving in the community by providing 98% of services “face-to-face” in consumers’ homes.
- **Special Program Award – Hurricane Katrina Project, Mental Health Services, Inc.**, for providing outreach and supportive services to over 800 Hurricane Katrina evacuees who relocated to Cuyahoga County. Services included assuring that each family applied for appropriate emergency benefits; locating housing for every family who needed it; assisting in the purchase of household items; and providing linkages with religious communities and health services. Individual crisis counseling services were also provided to those who displayed signs of depression or requested additional emotional support.
- **Media - The Call & Post**, for its editors and owners who believe that the community in general, and the African-American community in particular, should be aware of mental health issues, and for publishing articles to inform readers of important topics such as suicide prevention, mental health insurance parity, and adult and childhood depression.

The CCCMHB's Helping Hand Awards were developed to recognize outstanding individuals and organizations that embody the Board's mission, have positively impacted the lives of mental health consumers and helped to alleviate the stigma of mental illness in Cuyahoga County. The Kathleen Burton Memorial Award was created to honor the life of Mrs. Kathleen Burton, a psychiatric nurse and active member and former chairperson of the CCCMHB, who passed away in 1998.

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*Pictures of award winners are available by contacting Scott Osiecki*