The Crisis Services Hotline

Although Crisis Services houses 4 separate and unique programs, the hotline is what most people think of when they hear the words “Crisis Services”. Considered the cornerstone of the agency, the hotline is a one-of-a-kind service in Buffalo and Erie County. Each year more than 87,000 calls are answered by professional staff and highly trained volunteers, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These calls run the gamut, ranging from information and referrals to someone reaching out for human contact after making a decision to end his or her life.

The current economic climate has affected Crisis Services, and particularly the hotline, in many different ways. On one hand, the number of calls coming in to the hotline has increased 33% reflecting the staggering increase in the number of people in this area suffering from unemployment, homelessness, utility shutoffs, substance abuse issues and the multitude of stress-related mental and emotional side effects brought about by these conditions.

Yet, on the other hand, funding cuts in mental health services across the board have directly impacted our ability to keep up with the skyrocketing number of calls coming in to this agency on a daily basis.

The calls in recent weeks are showing a heartbreaking trend. Every day we answer calls from people asking how to make the choice of whether to buy groceries for their family or pay down a utility bill to get their heat turned back on. One mother of four recently told one of our counselors, “I just can’t go on anymore, worrying about getting through another day. I’m ready to die.”

We all tuned into the recent airing of “Extreme Home Makeover”, feeling such pride in our community as we watched thousands who volunteered their time, talents & money to make a dream come true for a very worthy family on Buffalo’s West Side. That same story, with hundreds of different variations, is told day in and day out to our dedicated and compassionate hotline counselors. While we all watched an incredibly “over-the-top” resolution for that family, we are left to deal with the deluge of calls from all of the rest.

Our community truly opened their hearts for the all of the nation to see. This is your opportunity to keep that spirit of neighborliness & goodwill alive right here in your own community. Please consider sending in a gift today to Crisis Services to keep the hotline staffed, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We’ll all rest easier in the knowledge that there will continue to be a human voice on the other end of that line.
Crisis Services is guided by its Board of Directors. Presently, the Board is made up of 12 members from various walks of professional life. Crisis Services strives to have a diversified board so that many population groups of Erie County and Buffalo are well represented. Board members cycle on and off the board every two to three years. Thus, the board is always active in its recruitment of prospective board members for future placement. Should you be interested in serving on the board of directors at Crisis Services, or know someone who might make a good fit, contact Douglas B. Fabian, Executive Director, at 834-2310, ext 121.

Ms. Melinda DuBois - President - Administrative Director of Student Health and Counseling at SUNY Geneseo, has been involved with Crisis Services and the Rape Crisis Advisory Committee for many years. She lives in East Aurora with her husband and 8 year old daughter.

Mr. Scott Weber, Vice President - Vice President in M&T Bank’s Technology Business Services Group managing the internal relationships between M&T’s business lines and M&T’s technology organization. Scott and his wife have 2 daughters and are life long Western New Yorkers who enjoy the winters as much as the summers.

Dr. Robert McCormack, Treasurer - Dr. McCormack is the Clinical Chief of Emergency Medicine at Kaleida Health and an Attending Physician at Buffalo General Hospital. As a faculty member of the SUNY at Buffalo emergency management residency program, Dr. McCormack brings a wealth of experience to the Crisis Services Board of Directors. He is board-certified in emergency medicine and earned his medical degree from the State University of New York Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn.

Det. Lt. William Miller, Secretary - Town Tonawanda Police Department Supervisor - Special Victims Unit - Family Offense/Juvenile - 30 years in Law Enforcement. Det. Lt. Miller has been married for 34 years, is the father of 4, grandfather of 4 with number 5 on the way.

Ms. Rita Chase-Brown - Human Resource Manager of Advanced Facilities Services International, Inc., a property and building maintenance company. Rita and her husband, Christopher Brown, are the parents of 5 year old twins (son Michael and daughter Jordan), and reside in West Seneca. Michael was diagnosed with Autism when he was three and since then they have been very active in the local Autism community. In her limited free-time Rita’s hobbies include, bowling, bird watching, scrapbooking, photography, and cake decorating.

Ms. Dianne Hoffman - Technical Director/ Senior Consultant for Commercial Insurance Consultants (CIC), has been married for 34 years, has one daughter, and is the father of 4, grandfather of 4 with number 5 on the way.

Mr. Ryan Lucinski is an attorney at Hodgson Russ LLP, where he concentrates his practice in the defense of complex products liability and personal injury actions. He has successfully handled major litigation matters on behalf of corporations, insurers, and individuals. An active member of the Buffalo community, he serves as a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity. He lives in Clarence Center with his wife and three children.

Ms. Patricia Vorpahl - Vice President for Physician Services at Kaleida Health, responsible for directing all activities through which Kaleida Health employs physicians and contractually engages physicians and physician groups to perform clinical, administrative, or educational services on behalf of the organization. Patty is married with three children, a daughter in law and a grand-daughter and lives in Pendleton NY. They spend their summers at their cottage at Long Beach, Canada.

Mr. Robert Zielinski - manager in the General Services Department at Dopkins & Company, LLP, a full service public accounting firm. Robert grew up in Cheektowaga, and has recently returned to Western New York, after spending twenty years in Boston, MA, to be closer to family and get involved in the community that has been near to his heart, for his whole life.”
A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

True Value

When I work on a project at home, I seldom turn to the “big box” home improvement stores for my tools or advice. I like to turn to my neighborhood “True Value” store. Unlike the big box stores, the customer attention I receive is friendly, timely and more accurate than not, and for me, the smaller floor plan is easier in which to navigate. All in all, I get a truer sense that the store and its employees are with me on my home project, no matter how challenging it may be. I have a difficult time with the image of a big box store truly getting behind me as I struggle with my home repair.

Last year, Crisis Services and its Board of Directors set out on a mission to develop a strategic plan. Our first step, in order to better understand how the agency impacts the many communities of Erie County, was to conduct a survey of 60 non-profits in the “helping professions”. In an unbelievably short period of time, nearly 75% (42) were returned completed. Here is what was said about the Hotline at Crisis Services:

- How aware are you of the hotline at Crisis Services? 98% were very aware
- How important is the hotline to your organization? 75% said very important
- How satisfied are you with the hotline? 78% said very satisfied
- Would you change how the hotline is run? 75% said emphatically no
- In the future, will you use the hotline? 80% said emphatically yes

It is clear that the Hotline at Crisis Services is well received and, in most cases, highly valued. To prove this point, it should be noted that a very significant number of psychologists and psychotherapists, as well as mental health clinics and homeless shelters in this area have the hotline number on their answering machines as an “in case of emergency” contact for those calling after normal business hours!

As we struggle through this economic recession, more and more people are turning to the agency’s hotline for assistance. But the hotline, like the larger agency, Crisis Services, will not be available to all that truly need our immediate response unless our Buffalo and Erie County leadership understand and appreciate the value of our hotline and its importance to all that it serves. The reality is that more dollars are needed to keep the hotline available and responsive by trained staff day and night.

As the cold air turns warmer in Buffalo and the grass becomes green, my True Value store will see less of me during the golf season. The hotline at Crisis Services remains very active throughout the changing seasons, ever proving its True Value to all of Erie County. Thank you to all of the dedicated staff and volunteers of the Hotline!

Douglas B. Fabian, Executive Director
$24,000 Raised

Crisis Services MEN WHO COOK, a night of food, fun and awareness was a huge success with 300 people turning out on Tuesday Oct. 6th, 2009 at the Statler Grand Ball Room. Guests enjoyed tasting numerous culinary delights prepared by various restaurants and celebrity chefs.

$24,000 was raised to support the crucial work of the 4 programs of Crisis Services. During the evening, agency staff and volunteers were honored for their years of service to the agency. Crisis Services introduced the Inaugural Michael B. Coppock Exemplary Service Award, in memory of a loving staff member who we lost unexpectedly in December 2008. Also recognized for our Community Partner of Excellence Awards were Loaves and Fishes and Sexual Violence Prevention Program, Wellness Education Services, University at Buffalo. Channel 4’s Victoria Hong served as emcee for the event.

Thanks to our amazing restaurants and celebrity chefs who cooked up some delicious dishes for our many guests to taste throughout the evening.

AN EVENT TO REMEMBER - MEN WHO COOK

Celebrity Chefs:

Participating Restaurants:
- Auntie Rose Cookies
- Buffalo State College Hospitality & Tourism Program - Campus House
- Chef’s Restaurant
- Harry’s Harbour Place
- Ilio DiPaolo’s
- Left Bank
- Park Lane Catering
- Ristorante Lombardo
- Ulrich’s Restaurant

YEARS OF SERVICE AWARDS TO STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

5 YEARS
- Deanne Montgomery – Fiscal Manager
- Rachel Morrison – Homeless Program Supervising Counselor
- Melanie Wirth – Homeless Case Manager
- Patty Zagare – Crisis Counseling Program Volunteer
- Jerry Spinley – Crisis Counseling Program Volunteer

In memory of Michael Coppock, Outreach Counselor, who would have been with the agency 5 years this year.

10 YEARS
- John Bell – Family Violence Case Manager
- Donna Krzes – Homeless Case Manager
- Jessica Pirro – Associate Director

INAUGURAL MICHAEL B. COPPOCK EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD NOMINEES
- Kendra Daigler, Outreach Counselor
- Erin Knight, Outreach Counselor
- Mike Ostrander, Crisis Counseling Specialist
- Bill Diehl, Homeless Hotline Specialist
- Sean Doherty, Homeless Afterhours Case Manager

2009 Winner: Kendra Daigler

MEN WHO COOK 2009 EVENT SPONSORS

GOLD PLATE SPONSOR

Foundation

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M&T Bank
Hodgson Russ LLP

BRONZE PLATE
Phillips Lytle LLP
First Niagara Risk Management
UB Dept of Emergency Medicine,
University Emergency Medical Services, Buffalo General Hospital
FDR Medical Services PC
Flying Bisons Brewery

HONORARY CHEFS
Wegmans
Kaleida Health
UBIMD Physicians Group
Friends of Tony Masiello
Premier Wines

We want to thank all of our amazing sponsors for their support and making Men Who Cook a huge success!
THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

For the past 41 years, Crisis Services has assisted people in need, whether it’s a victim of domestic violence, a homeless family of four, or a despondent caller needing to talk to someone. We are there 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

We thank the following donors for their very generous contributions to our agency over the past year. Memorial gifts are made in the name of friends or family who have passed away, as a meaningful expression of sympathy. Special Occasion (Honorarium) gifts are made in the name of friends and family as a way to honor them for birthdays, weddings or to simply acknowledge them.

Your support ensures that the Crisis Services’ safety net will be here to support all who need it in our community in the days and weeks to come.

Anonymous (10)
Ms. Judith Andruczyk  
In memory of Patricia Ann Frey
Dr. Lavonne Ansari
Ms. Gail Arthurs
Ms. Stephanie Artis
Mr. Adam Ashton
Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Balzano  
In memory of Helen Balzano
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Bieron  
In honor of Dr. Lisa Hoffman
Ms. Bonnie Bleeze
Mr. James Boles
Ms. Roberta Bothwell
Mr. Hank Bromley
Ms. Amy Brown
Ms. Leora Buddenhagen
Ms. Elizabeth Burgio
Ms. Colleen Burke
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Caraotta  
In honor of Cannon Heyman & Weiss
Ms. Renae K. Carapella  
In memory of Raymond Carapella
Ms. Christine Carey
Ms. Rita Chase-Brown
Mr. Donald Cloudsley
Mr. & Mrs. James Coles  
In memory of Ed Carter
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Crissy
Miss Connie Davis
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
Ms. Susan Dolan
Mr. William Dowdall
Ms. Maripat Downey
Ms. Jutta Drechsler
Ms. Melinda DuBois
Mr. Alan Erzku
Ms. Johanna M. Fallon
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Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Frankel
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Mr. Jeff Gardner
Ms. Sandra Gasiwycz
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Mr. Matthew Gryta
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Healy
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Mr. Robert Kochanski
Mrs. Christina Kruse
Mr. James Kunkemoeller
Lotempio & Brown
Ms. Lori Lussier  
In honor of Brandon Lussier
Dr. Clifford Mahler
Marco’s Deli
Mr. Edward Marien
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Marrone
Mr. Jonathan Maurer
Ms. Kathleen McCarthy
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Ms. Molly Sibley
Mr. Stanley Smith
Ms. Gayle Smith
Ms. Cynthia Smith
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Ms. Suzanne B. Taub
Mr. & Mrs. David Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. James Taylor
Uniland Development
Mr. Jim Wagner
Ms. Patricia Walker
Mr. Walter Wilczak
Dr. Merwin Woli  
In memory of Karen Korka
Word of Faith Church
Ms. Kathleen Wright
Mrs. Deborah Wright
Mr. & Mrs. Martin Wright

BECOMING A CRISIS SERVICES VOLUNTEER

Help us provide our services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year! Crisis Services relies heavily on volunteers. Please consider joining our Crisis Counseling Program (hotline) or our Advocate Program. Both programs require completion of a 40 hour training session.

To receive more information about becoming a crisis services volunteer, visit our website at www.CrisisServices.org or call 834-3131.
OUR MISSION

Crisis Services is dedicated to promoting the health, safety, and well being of the community through prevention, education, immediate intervention and access to community wide resources 24 hours a day.

TRIBUTE GIFTS TO CRISIS SERVICES

Make a donation today in support of Crisis Services and those who depend on our critical services.

Remember a friend, loved one or family member for a birthday, anniversary or special celebration or to offer a meaningful expression of one’s sympathy, love and respect at the time of death with a gift to the Crisis Services Foundation. Your gift today can help Crisis Services continue to provide its excellent services and programs to individuals in need in our community, as it has since 1968. Treating and assisting people in emotional crisis through a variety of therapeutic services (24 hour hotline, suicide prevention, homelessness, rape and domestic violence, and mental health and trauma) need your ongoing generous support. Enclosed in this newsletter is a convenient envelope for your use, or make a donation online by visiting our secure website at:

www.crisisservices.org

and charge your gift to MasterCard, Visa, or American Express.