

## Lifeline Connections

2008 - The Year in Review

*Lynn Samuels, Chief Executive Officer*

I wanted to take a moment and provide a summary of the many services delivered in 2008 by Lifeline Connections. I'm a bit of a closet data freak; I love numbers and believe that they can frequently tell a story. I think you'll find the following numbers interesting and maybe even a bit surprising.

### *Did you know:*

- The Lifeline kitchen staff prepared more than 88,000 meals in 2008
- 2524 Chemical dependency assessments were completed
- 1130 Adults received Outpatient Chemical Dependency treatment
- 295 Adults received Outpatient Co-Occurring treatment (IDDT & COMET)
- 298 individuals received services from the Jail Transition Program
- 150 Youth received Outpatient Chemical Dependency services
- 1517 people were admitted into Detox
- 961 people were admitted into Inpatient treatment
- 70 people were admitted into treatment at NW Deaf Addiction Center
- 21,186 urine samples were collected for drug screen testing
- Over 6500 group therapy or education sessions were provided

### *January 2008,*

Lifeline Connections was beginning to experience some stability after several years of growth, transition and difficult fiscal times. Our focus was on providing the highest quality service to our individual clients and the community while supporting our staff and the work that they do. I believe that we accomplished what we set out to do in 2008 and I continue to be proud of the individuals and groups I have the privilege of working with day in and day out.

Unfortunately, many things are different as we begin 2009. We are faced with significant budget cuts in the public money provided for the treatment of mental illness and substance use disorders; some predict the cuts could be as high as 50%. Our unemployment rate is above 8%, many people are losing their medical insurance coverage and the ability to pay for the treatment that they or their family members need. This is a time that calls for critical review of our programs and services to ensure that we are providing the highest level of care possible to the greatest number of people in the most efficient and economic manner possible.

I recently read a quote by ZImay Khalilzad, the departing US ambassador to the United Nations. Mr. Khalilzad was born in Afghanistan and came to the United States as an exchange student. I found his comments regarding our country and the American people apropos, he said: "We're practical people. We think for every problem, there is a solution and we don't remain committed to the wrong course for a long time because of history or ideology. Our strength is adjusting, and we can adjust again. Innovation and pragmatism – this is America for you." I like to think this description would fit Lifeline Connections; our leadership, management and staff. We will struggle in the coming year or two during this recession, but we will remain resilient, innovative and committed to our mission.

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### *Management Team*

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## Meet David Ching Program Manager

### NWDAC at Lifeline Connections

#### The Man, The Myth and The Legend

*Okay,* So maybe we got a little carried away with the headline. But we want you to read about David Ching and then you tell us if we did or not.

*Before* joining Lifeline Connections full time as Program Director for NWDAC David had been an independent contractor with Lifeline for about three years providing Men's Group Therapy. This made for a very short learning curve since David already knew how to maneuver the building without getting lost...no small feat as we all know. His therapeutic philosophies include client-centered strength-based effective interventions, social work ethics, and a grounded belief in recovery as a process. He values a balance of life, chaos, service, struggle, serenity, growth, spiritual connection and enjoying every minute of it he can get.

*David* did his initial CDP training and received an AS degree from Bellevue Community College. He also completed the full 2 year ITP (Interpreter Training Program) at Seattle Central Community College before matriculating to the University of Washington where he earned a Bachelor of Arts Social Worker degree (BASW). He then qualified for the very hard to get into one year advanced standing Master Social Worker (MSW) program offered by UW. When he completed his schooling he did all the requirements to become a Clinical Social



worker in both Washington and Oregon.

David is also certified as an Addictions Counselor in both states.

*Once* his schooling was completed and before Lifeline was fortunate to bring him aboard, David worked at Recovery Centers of King County, Virginia Mason Medical Center's treatment center, Seattle Mental Health. He came south to accept a grant project with Columbia River Mental Health at SW Washington Medical Center then moved to Lifeworks Adult Outpatient in the community before ultimately ending up at Lifeline Connections.

*Born* and raised in Hawaii, David moved to Oregon for his last two years of high school where he met Joanie. Even though David bounced back and forth between the northwest and Hawaii for the next several years he and Joanie stayed in touch and married in 2002. Two years later they became parents to their son Haven. (Do you suppose 2 is this guy's lucky number?)

*He* also has a few hobbies. He loves riding motorcycles and is a long distance cyclist. He is an avid hiker and mountain climber and once climbed Mount Rainier. David also enjoys woodworking, beading and making stained glass windows – both copper foil and leaded types. And as they say on television "but wait. There's more!" He is a musician who owns 11 guitars, two bass guitars, a full drum set, congas, a synthesizer and 72 track recording studio on his home computer. So far he owns the copyright on 36 songs.

*David* also has a web site design company that he has been running since 1998. www.awablue.com. And, oh yeah, he has been clean and sober for 16 years and treasures his recovery first and also knows that everything he's obtained thus far in his recovery is a result of taking the next indicated step.

## The Third Recipient of The Dan Clune Award of Excellence

*This* quarter we have chosen to honor Norma Adams for excellence as a Detox Aide. She joined the Lifeline team on June 4, 2008.

*In* Detox some of Norma job duties include monitoring client vital signs, charting in the medical file, assisting with medications as prescribed, conducting screenings and admissions, and helping with discharge planning. She interacts with clients, listens, ensures they eat, assists with housing and other resources, etc.

*Norma* has already been identified as a staff member who stands out as a dedicated team player who goes above and beyond the call of duty by being named the Detox Rock two months in a row. She has consistently taken the initiative to offer to cover the majority of shifts due to sickness, death, snow, surgeries and staff vacations. One specific example that stands out vividly was when the snow storm in December caused there to be a 24 hour gap in shift coverage during a 36 hour period. Norma brought in supplies to stay over two nights in a row in the exam room to ensure there was always someone available if other staff members couldn't cover their shift. Norma maintained a great attitude through the whole ordeal.

*Therefore,* this Dan Clune Award of Excellence has been awarded to Norma Adams in honor of her outstanding work performance and exceptional team contributions.

## And.... Welcome to the New Members of the Lifeline Team

Sarah Anderson, RFS  
Vicki Crop, RFS  
Janice Schaefer, Admin. Assistant  
Ron Verry, Cook  
Stacy Bancroft, Intern  
Jody Maxwell, Intern  
Michelle Pliske, Intern  
Warren Rush, RFS  
Jeffery Strange, RFS  
Kassandra West, RFS  
Ruby Gulso, MSW/CDPT  
Raquel Herrera, Detox Aide  
Derrick Abbey, RFS  
Martie Waitas, Food service Aide  
Brandon Bressi, RFS  
Kari Deavila, Detox Aide  
Shelley Estes, RFS  
Michael Lambert, RFS  
Marie Higgins, Detox Aide  
Phillip Blomberg, House Manger  
Candace Davis, RFS  
James Clune, Reception  
Wendy Gile, RFS  
Melissa Hockett, CDPT/CDP  
Gilbert Simas, Medical Doctor  
Amanda Young, RFS  
Charles Riser, RFS

## *Smoke, Smoke, Smoke That Cigarette*

*By Dan Glune, Clinical Director, Lifeline Connections*

*I* am on my way to work at Lifeline Connections when, for the second day in a row, I pull up next to the same car that I had noticed the day before at a red light. Two things get my attention; first, the middle aged woman has her head half way out the window as she smokes a cigarette. She is apparently trying to not get the smoke into her car; but it is raining and I think...duh, how intolerant of me.

*This* is "déjà vu all over again" as she struck the same pose the day before, at the same time, at the same light, only it was not raining then.

*I* was watching a psychodrama I could have not seen the image more accurately with or without the rain. The cocked head, the two fingers holding aloft some precious offering; presenting, "THE smoking cigarette", as she flicked ashes off the end. Her eyes were glassy and her gaze fixed on this "moment." Where was she I wondered? In ecstasy or pain? Neither I decided, just numb. Whatever, it was fleeting as the light changed and she casually flicked the butt out the half raised window.



*I* was trying to see the ash tray as "half empty", hoping that her purpose in having her face partially outside the car window were her attempts to get the smoke out of the car. The butt throwing I am sure was an attempt at recycling. (Isn't tobacco organic?) I wanted to ask her if she knew that 440,000 out of a total of 2.4 million deaths a year are caused by smoking. By 2020 the World Health Organization predicts that 10 million people a year will die from smoking throughout the world? I imagine her answer; as my judgmental self prevailed. "Yes" I answer, in what is now a covert dialog, I do know that everyone has to die "some way", yet most smoking related deaths are long, drawn out and painful, robbing people of the last healthy years of their lives.

*I* am on a roll now; Men increase their chances of dying by lung cancer by 22 times if they smoke. For the smoker who rationalizes that they will quit tomorrow, or when they are older, they have 5 times the chance of dying of a heart attack in their thirties and forties.

*The* second thing that caught my attention, lest I forget, was the two young children snugly strapped in their safety chairs in the back. In some ways their safety was important to her. "What about their breathing" I was thinking...They were being exposed to a very toxic air supply. One out of four children exposed to second hand smoke will develop asthma, or some other respiratory ailment.

Lucky for me she pulled away and went in a different direction but some unsettling thoughts lingered.

*Unfortunately*, smoking is still acceptable behavior for some, actually for a lot of folks; "45.1 million people per year of which 1 in 5 then go on to die from the effects of smoking. That's a staggering 438,000 people every year! Smoking causes more deaths per year than deaths by car crashes, HIV, drug use, alcohol, suicides and murders combined."

*I* can't help thinking the attention this person would have gotten had she been seen drunk driving, or shooting heroin in her car.

*So* how did we get so far into this addiction? I was asking myself now as I focused on my own recovery from nicotine and smoking. Some personal anecdotes may give up some clues. I can't remember my mother's birthday but I can remember all those cute jingles about smoking from the fifties and sixties. As a former smoker I had brand loyalty too! LSMFT; "*Lucky Strike Means Fine Tobacco*". What the hell is "fine tobacco?". I thought. My brother, would "*Walk a Mile for a Camel*".....huh? He learned that from dad. Anyway you get the picture. Social acceptance, advertising, and modeling by significant others introduced most of us to one of the world's most addictive substances, *nicotine*.

*My* recovery from nicotine addiction is well under way, about thirty some years since my last smoke. I have now evolved into an observer of smokers, ok somewhat of an obsessive observer of smokers. I do know that every 17 minutes the average smoker will begin craving nicotine. I know that they will take about 6-8 breaks during their work day to feed that habit. You do the math.

*I* seem to have less tolerance for this addiction than I have for other addictions and the folks that suffer from them; maybe it's those two little guys strapped in the back seat.



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### *Client's Corner; His Story In His Words*

*"Boy,* this has been an amazing experience. I know hindsight doesn't count for anything but I wish I would have faced up to myself years ago", Scott, 43, said. "It's hard to put into words what treatment and the people at Lifeline have helped me accomplish."

*"I was* born and raised right here in Vancouver and I first got into meth 23 years ago and day by day I allowed it to take over my life. I lost my young family, I stopped fishing and hunting and other things I loved, I lost jobs and got busted a few times, starting with possession. None of that slowed me down. I kept using and dealing until I hit rock bottom and was ordered by the court to seek treatment."

*"And* that turned out to be a lucky break for me because that's when my life began to change. Not immediately, because I had a lot to work through. But coming to Lifeline has been a real blessing for me. I've been acquiring the tools that got me on the road to recovery by getting rid of a lot of repressed garbage I was carrying around. With the help of everybody, the RFS, the staff and especially Lon, my main counselor, I'm replacing that wasted baggage I was dragging around with self esteem and self confidence a couple of pretty important things that I never had much of in my life before. Everyone here, including the other clients, have been welcoming and positive in their attitudes with me from the beginning and encouraged me to be honest with myself. That sounds easy but it was a big lesson to learn. I've also gained some weight and feel better physically."

*"After* all these years I am reuniting with my family. My mom and dad come and visit me regularly and offer their strength and encouragement. My son I hadn't been close to for 21 years is back in my life and is about to make me a grandpa! I attend parenting classes on Sunday. This is the most real and exciting time of my life. I'm looking forward to moving into Oxford housing and becoming a part of the real world."

*"Lifeline Connections* gave me the opportunity to connect with myself and I'm glad I grabbed it."