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MIRCI

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From the desk of the Executive Director:



Julie Ann Avin, Executive Director

As many of you are probably doing, I've found myself referencing *before the flood*, and *after the flood* as I describe when something occurred. But more than the *before* and *after*, I've recently found myself focused on what happened *during* the flood. As those of us close to MIRCI have come to know, there is a protective force that seems to envelope our programs and our clients – whether one wants to call it divine intervention, fortune, fate or karma.....doesn't matter, what matters is the outcome.

During the flood, we saw this protection. MIRCI houses over 300 individuals and families within the midlands of SC. Of those 300, only 3 individuals were displaced, and only temporarily, from the flood. As staff and volunteers cautiously headed out to check on these 300 individuals and families following the flood, we were all in awe of what we encountered. At many of the apartment communities either owned by MIRCI, or with conventional units leased for our clients, destruction literally was at the perimeters of these properties – but stopped short of damaging the homes of our clients. For instance, we own a complex in the Coldstream area, but our property was untouched. As I drove up to a property in Forest Acres, the road was literally gone just 20 yards from the entrance to the complex. Our office is on Rosewood Drive, not far from the intersection with Garners Ferry Road where so much devastation occurred. I expected our building which has standing water after any rain to flood, but that didn't happen. Other than the boil water advisory, we were unaffected at this location.

During the flood and the immediate response, we experienced such caring and compassion. MIRCI staff from all over the midlands got out immediately to check on our clients; to take their medicine to them; to deliver water and food; and to calm people's fears. One of our psychiatrists made house calls to see some of her patients. United Way of the Midlands had truckloads of water delivered to us to distribute to our clients. Churches and individuals delivered water and food to us to share with our clients.

So as we enter this holiday season, we at MIRCI have much for which to be thankful. Not the least of which is the protection *during* the flood of the folks we are honored to serve. As the holidays begin, I am confident this fate, this protection, this fortune will continue. I invite all of you to join me in giving thanks, and to join me while including contributions during the holidays to allow MIRCI to continue serving those who need our help the most. The gifts our clients need are simple, as you'll see on the list on page 3 of this newsletter. Deodorant, soap, toilet paper, etc., probably weren't on your shopping list. Please consider adding them so MIRCI's fortune may continue to support folks, *after* the flood, *during* the holidays, and *beyond*.

One Man's Journey

I first met Michael* in December 2014; at that time he slept on the streets in downtown Columbia. He arrived to Columbia a year earlier from Louisiana, where he lived in the woods for over a decade. Michael had a long term history of homelessness due to a diagnosis of Bipolar disorder with psychotic features and he struggled with near-constant auditory hallucinations. After losing his job after a 6-month hospitalization, (in the very hospital where he had worked), his life started to spiral out of control leading to the end of his marriage, separation from his son, and the beginning of his long period of homelessness.

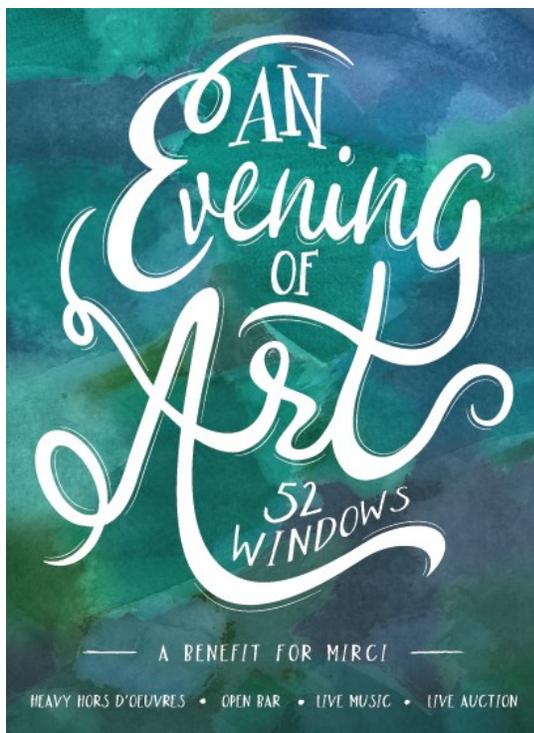
When I met Michael he had no recent mental health treatment; he experienced many cycles of starting mental health services, becoming frustrated, stopping his meds, missing appointments, repeat. Due to his extreme anxiety, outreach workers engaged Michael slowly, one step at a time, to build a therapeutic rapport. After he got a bed at the shelter, Michael became enrolled in community mental health services and started psychiatric treatment.

By April, Michael entered MIRCI services and moved into an apartment (his first place of his own in 10 years!) and became quickly approved for SSI benefits and Medicaid in less than 40 days using the SOAR model, a best practice model to assist individual who have mental illness and are homeless or at risk in obtaining benefits. Michael was flagged as needing the services of a representative payee due to his vulnerability. Our payee staff helps Michael manage his monthly bills and stick to a budget, assisting him with building financial literacy skills.

Now there is one less individual sleeping on a park bench at night or waiting in the early morning for the library to open, in order to seek solace from the weather outside. As you drive by downtown Columbia and see human beings lined outside the local soup kitchen, remember that many of them have similar stories to Michael. They are waiting for the help they need and deserve.

*Name changed to protect client identity

Save The Date



Help After A Disaster



A huge thanks to United Way of the Midlands for the truckload of water for MIRCI residents affected by the flood.



We are so thankful for the generous donation of water and non-perishable food items from Pine Grove Baptist Church in Lugoff.

Holiday Giving

Your gifts truly make a big difference in the lives of those we serve. Please consider donating a gift this holiday season.

SHOPPING LIST :

- * New Dishes
- * New Bedding
- * New Towels
- * Cleaning Supplies
- * Toilet Paper
- * Deodorant and Soaps
- * Tooth Paste
- * Women's Toiletries
- * Adult Socks
- * Gloves and Scarves
- * Non –Perishable Food items
- * Money



Tax Benefit of Giving to a 501 (c) 3 Organization

Under IRC Section 170, individuals giving to a 501(c)3 organization that is a public charity (e.g. Mental Illness Recovery Center, Inc.) may deduct contributions representing up to 50% of the donor's adjusted gross income (AGI) if the individual itemizes on his tax returns. Corporations may deduct all contributions to 501(c) 3 organizations up to an amount normally equal to 10% of their taxable income.

MIRCI

Mental Illness Recovery Center, Inc.

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*Thank
You*