

From the desk of the Executive Director:



Julie Ann Avin, President

It's November and the time of year we all count the reasons for which we are thankful. As I prepare to write my column for this newsletter, I have so many reasons for being thankful swirling through my head that it's hard to reduce them to one small article. You see, here at MIRCI we have many reasons for thankfulness – our dedicated and talented staff members; our progressive and passionate Board of Directors; and the endearing folks we are honored to serve. The year 2016 has proven to be one of the most impactful for MIRCI and our client community.

At our Annual Meeting in August, we had the pleasure of recognizing outstanding staff members in all of our Departments. The following individuals received outstanding employee awards:

<i>Administrative Operations</i>	<i>Ashley Wimberly, Representative Payee</i>
<i>Direct Care Clinical</i>	<i>Latrish Garvin, Housing Coordinator for CoC Homeless Housing Program</i>
	<i>Reginald Campbell, Mental Health Specialist at MIRCI Group Homes</i>
	<i>Ashley Macon, LPCI on ACT Team 1</i>

Ashley Macon also received the Bobby Monts Outstanding Employee of the Year award for agency.

Our Board of Directors raised over \$90,000 through *52 Windows – An Evening of Art*, to support the housing and homeless programs of MIRCI in 2016. The Board implemented a new 3 year Strategic Plan in January 2016 which includes the development of new youth and young adult focused programs. Recognizing that by intervening early, we can perhaps prevent young people from becoming chronically homeless and/or developing a chronic/persistent mental illness, the Board is leading efforts to develop housing for homeless unaccompanied youth age 17 to 24; and for operating a drop-in center to be open 365 days a year to support the recovery of homeless youth with mental illness, substance use disorders, or co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders.

New funding has been secured to support the new youth and young adult programs, as well as to expand our Homeless Outreach Team. These new funds include:

- *\$400,000 per year for 3 years from SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) to operate the youth drop-in center*
- *\$55,000 per year from United Way of the Midlands to support the youth drop-in center*
- *\$50,000 one-time grant from City of Columbia to upgrade our kitchen and other areas at the youth drop-in center*
- *\$179,299 per year for 5 years through a PATH grant from the SC Department of Mental Health to support our Outreach Team, including new psychiatric clinic time for homeless individuals and the addition of a youth specific outreach worker*

The people we are honored to serve are perhaps those for whom I am most thankful. These people trust us to share in their recovery journeys. And then remarkably, they pay it forward and give back to support MIRCI and others in their journeys of recovery. Please take the time to read the article on page 3 of this newsletter in which Ms. Patricia so eloquently shares her recovery story and how she pays it forward at MIRCI.

So as you can see, for 2016, I have many reasons to be thankful. I am honored to work with these dedicated staff, passionate board, and endearing people on their journeys. I hope you'll join me in giving thanks for all the good things happening at MIRCI, and maybe consider finding a way to support MIRCI and those we serve on their journeys.

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United Way of the Midlands

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Ways to Give During The Holiday Season

Monetary Donations:

- A gift of \$25 pays for medications for a month.
- A gift of \$50 provides start-up groceries for a client moving into housing.
- A gift of \$150 will set up an apartment with household essentials.

Food Pantry:

The food pantry is stocked year-round. Items needed include canned meats and vegetables and other non-perishable goods. Food donations may be dropped off at 3809 Rosewood Dr., Columbia SC 29205.

Clothing Items, Household Items and Personal Hygiene Items

These items may also be donated to the Rosewood location. For a list of items please visit our website at www.mirci.org

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

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.



Client Story

Both Sides Now

“I am an alcoholic,” states Patricia, a MIRCI client since 2014.

The impact of mental health and substance use issues sometimes takes years to evolve (or dissolve) into functional impairment in an individual’s life. Patricia had experienced depressive symptoms through her adult life, but maintained her career in healthcare for over twenty five years before she began using alcohol to cope with the effects of a difficult relationship. She ultimately attempted to complete suicide, and her sister had her committed for inpatient treatment “so she would not lose me.”

Patricia spent several months receiving inpatient services at Bryan Psychiatric Hospital. The social worker contacted MIRCI’s outreach team, who arrived for a screening and determined Patricia met criteria for MIRCI services. She moved into permanent supportive housing in 2014, then began receiving intensive services from MIRCI’s ACT Team such as individual and group therapy, as well as psychosocial rehabilitative services in addition to her mental health appointments. MIRCI’s Benefits Specialist assisted Patricia in completing her application for SSDI prior to her discharge from the hospital, so she began receiving benefits soon after she was housed.

Today, Patricia has been sober for two years and three months. She has voluntarily worked as a receptionist at the Rosewood office for over a year, and has reconnected with family members and developed healthy support systems in the community. She was recently asked to share her story at MIRCI’s annual meeting, at which time she summarized her experience of the past two years: “This program has been the best for me and my recovery. I found myself again and put my life back together- my life has been changed for the good, and I am truly grateful.”



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April 2016—October 2016**

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Geoffrey Williams

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