



SHG Peer Services win back-to-back statewide Awards

By Southeast Health Group

October was a good month for the staff members at “Peer 613” in La Junta and “Day One” in Lamar, two programs of Southeast Health Group that offer support and resources for people who are in recovery from mental illness and addictions.

On Thursday, October 5th, the Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council awarded Southeast Health Group’s Peer Support Program with the “Golden Lightbulb Award” at its statewide annual conference in Breckenridge. The Golden Light Bulb is an award granted to a project, methodology, system or procedure that demonstrates “best practices” in a clinical area. Competition was fierce from around the state with 11 outstanding programs vying for the

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award. Peer Specialists were on hand to accept the award in Breckenridge.

“I was so shocked when they called our name!” said Kristi Roe, supervisor of the Peer 613 program in La Junta. “I am extremely proud of the hard work and dedication of the Peer Specialists at Peer 613 and Day One. They are committed and focused on making a difference every day in the lives of the people they support.”

On Friday, October 6th, U.S. Representative Scott Tipton presented Southeast Health Group’s Peer Support Program with the “Innovative Solutions” Award at the State of the State Summit dinner in

Pueblo, sponsored by the advocacy organization Action 22. The award recognizes organizations who have introduced or significantly enhanced projects that help improve efficiencies, expand capabilities, bridge gaps, fulfill unmet needs and/or, ultimately, better serve their community. Action 22 works toward strengthening the voice of Southern Colorado through interaction with legislators in developing legislation that is critical to the success of its 22 member counties.

“I think that having someone in your corner that can provide a ‘been there, done that’ perspective is always helpful, no matter your situation,” remarked Landi Wagner, supervisor of the Day One program in Lamar. “It’s even more important in recovery from mental health or substance use disorders because of the stigma surrounding those issues. The peers are doing great things everyday--some small, some big--that help the clients get the services and support they need to succeed. It is awesome to see the Peer Specialists get praise and recognition for their work.”

The robust peer program operates two peer houses in La Junta and Lamar and an overnight supported stay option. Eighteen peer specialists, who make up 14% of SHG’s paid workforce, independently run the facilities. The peer staff offers daily support, encouragement, and hope to help people as they navigate through recovery. They can help someone connect with community resources, find a sense of



SHG Peer Specialists accept the Golden Light Bulb Award in Breckenridge on October 5, 2017. Pictured left to right: Lisa Rodriguez, Jonathon Melendez, Rebekah Mazarella, Kristi Roe, Tim Baker, and Landi Wagner. **Photo credit: Laura DiPrince**

community and the opportunity to participate in different groups and do activities in a relaxing and supportive environment.

Peer 613 and Day One offer opportunities to cook, bathe or do a load of laundry. They also have phones, computers and a comprehensive resource guide to connect individuals with housing, jobs, education, volunteer opportunities, food banks, and other community resources. The Peer Specialists offer GED and academic tutoring, and assist with resume writing to help people in recovery get back into the job market.

On-going funding for the program is provided by Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) Flex Funds. Additional funding is provided by a Recovery Support Services grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), administered by the OBH.

For more information about Southeast Health Group’s peer support program, call 1-800-511-5446, or visit www.southeasthealthgroup.org.