

HIGHER GROUND
A TIYOSPAYE INC.
PROGRAM
247 N. MARKET
WICHITA, KS 67202
(316) 262-2060
FAX:(316)262-2740



“Helping People Choose to Change”

I S T Q U A R T E R

2008

Promoting Healthy
Families

Substance Abuse
Prevention /
Intervention

Bilingual Spanish
Services

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Faces of Higher | 2 |
| Staff Update: Robert Montes | 3 |
| Board Notes | 3 |
| Fast Facts | 4 |
| Corrections... | 4 |

Can You See Us Now?



www.higherg.org

Thank You Donors & Sunflower Foundation...

You Funded our new website!
It's working & chock-full of nifty NEW features:

- * Download Job openings
- * Read about News & Events
- * Make a donation online
- * Review every HG program in detail
- * Download any of our back newsletters
- * Watch our video

Higher Ground's Mission: Empowering culturally diverse youth and adults to recover their lives and hope by providing innovative and effective prevention, treatment and counseling for drugs, alcohol abuse and related life challenges.

Faces of Higher Ground: Pueblo Path Program

In 1995, there were almost no services for Spanish-speaking adults and families, who needed help for substance abuse, in Wichita, or anywhere else in Kansas. Recognizing this void Tiyospaye (later re-named Higher Ground) was founded and began The Pueblo Path Adult Program providing Spanish-speaking treatment services based on



Martha Arana, MSW.

an “extended-family and healthy community-building” philosophy.

Pueblo Path currently serves 120 clients a year plus an additional 200 family members.

Martha Arana, Senior staff member of the Pueblo Path, says the cultural differences can be a challenge. “97% of our clients are male. In the Latin culture, there can be

some resistance to a female in a leadership role.” However, she says the problem is largely diffused by the culture’s respect for teachers.

Although there are now some other Spanish-speaking programs in the area, none cater to the complete cultural needs of the clients the way Pueblo Path does, including service of the client’s families. “The family is so important in this culture. We make sure we involve them from the start.” They come to a meeting once or twice each month, often participating in an experiential activity.

Although Spanish-speaking clients face a number of unique challenges, they also have a motivation that some of their Anglo counterparts may not. “We remind them that they have opportunities that their parents and grandparents did not have,” Martha explains. “They all had dreams to build something for themselves and their families. We ask them to look at the effect alcohol is having on those dreams. Is it worth it?”

“The men range in age from 18 to 60 and many the younger clients have trouble seeing that there will be consequences to their behavior. “But when they listen to the older men talking about what drinking has cost them—broken families, ruined careers, etc.,

they suddenly realize that they are heading down the same road.”

The program mixes parts of twelve step treatment with active learning, where clients are encouraged to interact with each other as they explore the way they react to various problems and to build a base of skills that will allow them to deal with those challenges more effectively.

“They all had dreams of building something for themselves and their families. We ask them to look at the effect alcohol abuse is having on those dreams.

- Martha Arana

Experiential activities range from group role-playing games to sessions at Higher Ground’s Rope Course in Augusta. They also participate in sweat lodges.

“The sweats can have profound results,” Martha says. “Memories come flooding up from the past. It’s a great release - at the end of a three hour sweat you feel completely rejuvenated.”

“There is an array of responses across the age spectrum,” Martha says. “The younger guys go for the interactive games and the Ropes Course; the older ones get more out of the sweats.”

From Pg 2

Occasionally one of the clients will decide we are 'too hard' and try another program," Martha says. "They come back after a few weeks. They say that we changed their perspective.

"We had a counselor who used to say to the men: 'When you leave Higher Ground, you may decide to drink again - but you will never again be able to pretend that it isn't hurting you.'"

In 2007, 85% of Pueblo's clients successfully graduated. Of those, 100% reported better family and work relationships.



Robert Montes, Pueblo Path Counselor

Staff Update: Robert Montes

Higher Ground welcomes Robert Montes, a full-time Counselor Assistant in the Pueblo Path program.

Robert is new to experiential therapy and recently experienced his first sweat lodge, which he really enjoyed it.

"Especially, near the finish when Mike [Hunter] really poured it on. I like heat!"

The Pueblo staff are impressed with Robert's patience and positive attitude. "He is always thinking of the clients' needs; always willing to go the extra mile to help them," says Martha Arana. "They really relate to Robert."

Robert's sports background – which includes baseball, basketball, and football – gives him a good basis for building those relationships

Robert tries to vary his approach according to

the needs of the client. "Some of the men get a lot out of a hands-on activity; others have already moved to a different level and find the 12-step part of Higher Ground's program to be more effective."

Robert can relate to the sense of alienation many of his clients feel; he was born in Guadalajara but raised in Lutheran Minnesota, where he often felt like an outsider as a youth.

"I always treat them the way I would like to be treated," Robert explains. "I always treat them with respect."

Robert is currently finishing his studies for a degree in addiction counseling at Butler Community College and spends his spare time -what little he has - writing. He has written several short stories and two books.

Board Notes

Higher Ground's board held elections at its annual meeting on Feb 22nd. The 2008 officers are:

- Delia Jackson, Chair;**
- John Salem, Co-chair;**
- Dan Hawkins, Treasurer;**
- Yolanda Camarena, Secretary.**

We also gained a new board member: Harold Pickler. Harold is a graduate of Washburn, a member of the State and Local Bars and has practiced law in Wichita for 30 years. He currently serves on the Family Law and Fee Disputes Committees.

Welcome aboard, Harold!



Fast Facts

Drug Abuse, What is the Price?

Those of us who have been close to substance abuse know how debilitating it can be to everyone around it. The emotional and psychological damage is devastating, not only to the addict, but also to friends and family. Many of the indirect effects are long-term: teens forfeiting their health and education; distraught parents losing contact with their children; innocent victims losing their lives to those driving under the influence.

Even from a strictly economic perspective, drug and alcohol abuse has effects that are much more widespread than most of us realize. Domestic violence, emergency medical treatment and burgeoning prison populations are some of the costly results of abuse. It is estimated that in the United States alone, direct costs are over \$50 billion annually. Indirect costs - Including incarceration - are over \$100 billion.*

The estimated lifetime cost to society of a single at-risk teenager who becomes a heavy drug user is approximately \$1 million. Nevertheless, funding for drug and alcohol treatment remains far below the level needed to address the problem. It is estimated that each year almost 4 million persons needing treatment services, receive none.*

* Office of National Drug Control Policy

Corrections...

We regret that, due to an error during file transmission of our last issue, one of our event sponsors- Don Hattan Chevrolet - was inadvertently omitted from our *Thank You* page.

Thank You, Don Hattan!



Get Involved!

There are many ways you can become involved at Higher Ground.

- Volunteering
- Financial Donations
- In-kind Donations
- Friend and Family Referrals

Please contact Shirley Toy at (316) 262-2060 for more information on how you can make a difference in our community!

**Call
262-2060
Today!!!**

Higher Ground, a TiyoSpaye, Inc. Program is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. "Higher Places" is published via e-mail to Higher Ground supporters and corporate community members. If you have any questions, comments or would like to be removed from our contact list, please contact, Shirley Toy, Assistant Director, via e-mail at shirley@higherg.org or call (316) 262-2060.