

## *In this issue:*

- pg. 2 Wellness Program
- pg. 2 Senior Drug Abuse
- pg. 3 New Board Member
- pg. 3 A Brighter Future
- pg. 4-5 Seeking Wholeness
- pg. 6 Community-Based Services
- pg. 7 Foundation Awards
- pg. 7 Fast Food to Whole Grains

## ***R U Fit?! Inspires Healthy Living***

Odyssey House  
launches  
employee wellness  
program.  
(See page 2)



## ***Senior Drug Abuse Continues to Rise***

Treatment admissions double for  
Americans aged 50 and over.  
(See page 2)

## ***Art Show Explores the Search for Wholeness***

The Odyssey  
House Art Project  
opens its 6th  
exhibition.  
(see pages 4-5)



**Odyssey House®**  
Where recovery lives



# Community Garden Teaches Odyssey House Children About Nutrition

With obesity among the top public health concerns facing today's children, residential programs such as Odyssey House, where families live with us for several months, offer a unique opportunity to educate parents on the importance of choosing healthy foods for their families. The Odyssey House Manor Family Center has begun taking advantage of this opportunity by letting families get their hands dirty at a local community garden.

Odyssey House was given two plots at the Carver Community Garden on East 124<sup>th</sup> Street, a three-minute walk from our family center on East 121<sup>st</sup>. Whittaker Wright, program director of the Manor Family Center, said that the garden is a way to help connect residents to their food sources, reinforce the lessons being learned through our healthy eating program (see page 7),

and to offer an educational opportunity for children living with their parents in treatment.

Preschool teachers have incorporated garden trips into their lesson plans and created age appropriate curricula to teach the children about plants and nutrition. The lesson plans also take advantage of a compost system at the garden to teach families about recycling leftover food to produce fertilizer and nutrients for the plants.

After building new beds for the plot with the help of New York Cares, in early spring Odyssey House residents and their children began planting a variety of vegetables, including tomatoes, collard greens and bell peppers. The children cannot wait until they can sample the fruits of the labor.

*Continued on page 7*

# R U Fit?! Inspires Healthy Living



Recreational coordinator Andre Matthews (with trophy) with the MABON/Manor team, winners of the annual staff softball tournament.

This spring, Odyssey House employees were introduced to a free wellness program, R U FIT?!, to encourage them to incorporate health and fitness into their lives. This new wellness initiative is a continuation of Odyssey House's commitment to support and encourage good health and preventive care.

Staff members already have access to exercise equipment at our facilities, and many have participated in *Run for Your Life* and other

intramural sports activities. With R U FIT?!, they now have access to online, confidential health coaching and personalized programs that promote weight and nutrition management, exercise, smoking cessation, stress reduction, and lifestyle-related improvements.

R U FIT?! was greeted with enthusiasm by Odyssey House employees – 86% of full-time staff participated in the first phase of the

program. This summer, they will have the opportunity to compete with their colleagues in the *10,000 Steps a Day* challenge.

## Staff Role Models Support Treatment

The wellness program is a natural fit at Odyssey House, where providing holistic treatment is part of our mission and we believe wellness is essential to a full recovery from substance use and mental health disorders. To Odyssey House President Dr. Peter Provet, employees' health and well-being is particularly important because staff members serve as role models to the residents under their care.

"Role model staff inspire, challenge, check, and motivate clients to look at themselves and realize they can become far more than what they have been," said Dr. Provet.

Odyssey House has long offered programs that teach clients health literacy, good nutrition, and more, in addition to promoting their participation in yoga, running, basketball and other team sports. Encouraging staff to act as role models provides an additional incentive for individuals in treatment to embrace healthy living. ●

## Senior Drug Abuse Continues to Rise

As baby boomers, many of whom experimented with drugs in the 1960s and 1970s, head towards late middle age and their senior years, the number of older Americans with substance addictions is growing dramatically. A survey by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) found that treatment admissions for adults 50 and older more than doubled in the U.S. between 1992 and 2008.

The *Associated Press*, reporting on the SAMHSA survey results, interviewed Odyssey House President Dr. Peter Provet about this "silent epidemic." Dr. Provet said, "There is a level of societal denial around the issue. No one wants to look at their

grandparent, no one wants to think about their grandparent or their elderly parent, and see that person as an addict."

As the number of older people with substance use disorders increases, so does the demand for treatment. Odyssey House's ElderCare program has been focusing on the special needs of this population since opening in 1997. The program, with an 85% completion rate in the last fiscal year, has helped more than 200 seniors successfully re-integrate into their communities and regain productive, drug-free lives. ●

*\*To read the full article and view the accompanying video, visit the newsroom on our website at [odysseyhouseinc.org](http://odysseyhouseinc.org).*

## Save the Date!

Odyssey House  
6th Annual Run for Your Life  
5K Run & Recovery Walk  
Saturday, September 24th

Join us at Icahn Stadium on Randall's Island for music, entertainment, children's activities and more!

The fun begins at 9 am with children's races. For more information or to register online: [odysseyhouseinc.org](http://odysseyhouseinc.org)

# Branding Expert Joins Boards of Trustees



Odyssey House and Odyssey Foundation have added a new member to their Boards of Trustees: Justin Peters, Global Executive Creative Director at Siegel+Gale. Mr. Peters has extensive experience in strategic brand development, and he is excited to use his expertise to help further Odyssey House's mission and support individuals and families in recovery.

Mr. Peters first worked with Odyssey House last year while developing a refreshed visual

identity that captured the breadth and diversity of its programs and services. Mr. Peters was impressed with the commitment to building a brand that exemplifies Odyssey House's energy and focus in such a fresh and differentiating way. "As a board member, I look forward to helping Odyssey House find new, creative ways to communicate its innovative offerings," he said.

Mr. Peters joined Siegel+Gale in 2005, driven by a commitment to effect positive change on a global scale through leveraging the power of strategic thinking and design. His expertise at leading complex brand engagements marries an unconventional visual sense with leadership skills honed over two decades of working with diverse clients around the world. Mr. Peters has led strategic positioning, design development and market implementation of identity programs, print communications, branded

environments and interactive experiences for clients such as Kodak, Ingersoll Rand, National Geographic, Sesame Workshop, Disney, Scholastic, GE, The White House Millennium Council, Tata, The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, to name a few.

His work has been recognized in numerous industry journals and periodicals, and he has won several notable distinctions including the Presidential Design Award.

Mr. Peters holds a BFA from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, certificates from Rhode Island School of Design and Parsons School of Design, and he has completed the Omnicom Advanced Management Program at Babson College. ●

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# GED Graduates Look to a Brighter Future



**Valedictorians Troy H. and Herbert H. celebrate their accomplishments at the graduation ceremony.**

When Troy H. dropped out of high school a few years ago, college was the last thing on his mind. Today, he is the teen valedictorian of the 2011 GED graduating class, with his sights set on a degree in social work.

Troy was one of 51 residents who were recognized for passing their GED tests at a ceremony earlier this summer. His excitement to be at the graduation – his

first since the fifth grade – was obvious as he said, "I couldn't wait until the day I could say, 'Mom, I did it!'" Addressing his fellow graduates, he said, "I want you all to understand something. It doesn't stop here. 'Can't' and 'try' shouldn't be in our vocabulary, and we can do anything we put our mind to. We just have to want it enough."

Troy, 18, entered the Odyssey House Teen Leadership Center in December 2009 and is expected to complete the program by the end of the year. He has made the most of his time at Odyssey House. In addition to his educational accomplishments, he has completed relapse prevention and parenting classes and has recently started an internship for a young adult mentor program.

Keynote speaker Deborah Brinkley, a vocational rehabilitation expert, congratulated the graduates on their accomplishment and offered them some words of encouragement. "Don't stop here. Continue learning. You can be anything and everything you want to be, one day at a time,

one step at a time, one moment at a time. It is never too late to become the person you were always meant to be," she said.

Herbert H., a 60-year-old ElderCare resident, also left high school before graduating. More than four decades later, he is the ElderCare valedictorian, with the highest score of the entire class.

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**"Odyssey House has saved my life by giving me the tools and knowledge to live a drug-free life." – Herbert H.**

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Odyssey House's Vocational Rehabilitation Services, in partnership with the New York City Department of Education and Project Restart, provides on-site educational services available to all residential clients and administers the GED exam five times a year. ●



# Art show explores the search for wholeness

**“Seeking Wholeness”** is the sixth exhibition by members of the Odyssey House Art Project, composed of individuals in residential treatment for substance use and/or mental health disorders. This year’s show explores mandalas as symbols of recovery and the search for spiritual wholeness. Artists, including the children of residents in treatment, were encouraged to use a variety of media, such as painting, photography, needlepoint and a hand-cranked spinning wheel, to capture the spirit embodied in these ancient images and portray how they continue to resonate and guide individuals in search of balance and wholeness.

## “Wholeness of the Self”

Mandala is a Sanskrit word meaning “circle.” In various spiritual traditions, mandalas are used as a spiritual teaching tool, for establishing a sacred space, and as an aid to meditation. Preeminent psychologist Carl Jung saw the mandala as “an archetypal image whose occurrence is attested throughout the ages. It signifies the wholeness of the Self.” He encouraged his patients to create them as “movement towards psychological growth, expressing the idea of a safe refuge, inner reconciliation and wholeness.”

Artists interpreted the meaning of mandalas in different ways. Jose C., an ElderCare client, created a visual interpretation of the baby boomer experience in the form of a clock (see right). Using cut-out photos he created a circular timeline starting from 1945 to today. A self-taught artist, Jose gradually stopped making art until he joined the Odyssey House Art Project. “I was gratified to find I still had that creativity in me,” he said.

## Engaging in Treatment

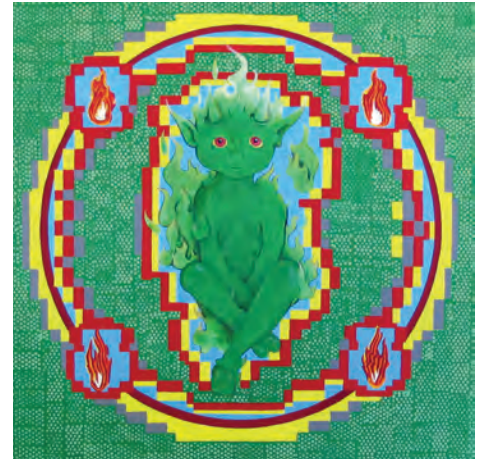
Odyssey House has an active and vibrant expressive arts program. Creating art helps residents find new ways to access and communicate their feelings. Many residents, who were socially and culturally isolated by their addiction and/or mental illness, are encouraged to become engaged in the creative process. For residents in recovery at Odyssey House, discovering their broader potential within a positive pro-social environment is integral to their continued growth.

Residents who participated in the art program found it to be a rewarding and satisfying experience. Fred P., a resident in our adult component, said the program helped him relieve stress and gave him a new perspective. “Art has a redemptive power,” he said. “No matter how dark your past is, you can use it to create something beautiful.”

“Seeking Wholeness” will be open through December 23, 2011 at the Haven Art Gallery, 239 E. 121st Street in Harlem. View additional selections from the exhibition on [odysseyhouseinc.org](http://odysseyhouseinc.org).



“Time Marches On” by Jose C.



“Green Imp” by Gary S.



“Squirrely” by Gary S.



Park Avenue tenant Jack C. with his painting “The Alchemist”. A graduate of the School of Visual Arts, “Seeking Wholeness” is Jack’s 24th art show.

# Taking Recovery Into the Community

Innovative programs that address the ongoing needs of people with substance use and mental health disorders are a hallmark of Odyssey House treatment. Along with intensive residential and outpatient services that provide access to primary medical and dental care and offer educational and vocational support, our approach to recovery includes community-based services that promote independent, sober living. In the last several years Odyssey House has been awarded five federal grants from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) that recognize our commitment to innovation and excellence in delivering community-based treatment services. Three of the current grants support distinct substance abusing populations: women with children; older teens, young adults and their families; and adults in early recovery. Each of these new services enhances recovery by utilizing treatment expertise to reach out to extended family and accessing community resources.

## Focus on Family Connections

Healthy Mothers Healthy Families (HMHF) is a component of the Odyssey House Family Center of Excellence, a comprehensive treatment service that provides a safe, supportive residential community for substance abusing pregnant women and mothers, and their young children and babies. Women address the problems that have led them to drugs and prevented them

from being responsible mothers, while their children take part in daycare and preschool programs that help them develop intellectual and social skills.

With the support of licensed social workers and certified alcohol and substance abuse counselors, at least 150 women and 225 children have participated in a range of enhanced therapeutic interventions designed to reinforce connections with family members, including partners and the children's fathers.

## Expanding Youth Services

The transition from adolescence to young adulthood can be a difficult period for many young people, but for those with histories of substance abuse, navigating this process can be especially challenging. To help these youth (many of whom have aged out of foster care, school-based, or other intervention services) emerge as independent and drug-free young adults, Odyssey House has established an alternative treatment program that offers community-based individual and family support outside the purview of traditional residential and outpatient programs.

Called Bronx Urban Youth Initiative or BUY-In, this is an evidence-based program proven to be effective in empowering 18-24 year olds to make healthy lifestyle changes on their own through skill-building activities

and utilizing resources within their home communities.

## Recovery Mentors Make a Difference

One of the most relapse prone times for former substance abusers is the period following the conclusion of formal treatment services. During this period individuals, who in treatment have managed to maintain a drug-free lifestyle, find the transition to independent living can be isolating without the support of a peer group.

Odyssey House Recovery Oriented Care System (OH ROCS) provides timely access to a network of peer mentors who have successfully navigated the transition from treatment to independent living and are trained in personal coaching techniques proven to support individuals in early recovery, including crafting and following a recovery plan, attending peer-to-peer support groups, and pursuing goal-oriented incentives. OH ROCS enrolled its first mentees earlier this year and is on target to serve a projected 330 individuals in early recovery within three years.

To find out more about our community-based services, contact Odyssey House Admissions at: 212-987-5100; or send an email to: [admissions@odysseyhouseinc.org](mailto:admissions@odysseyhouseinc.org)

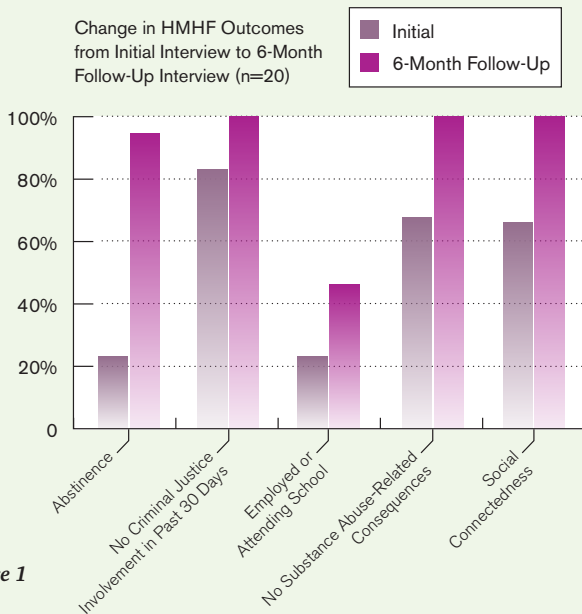


figure 1

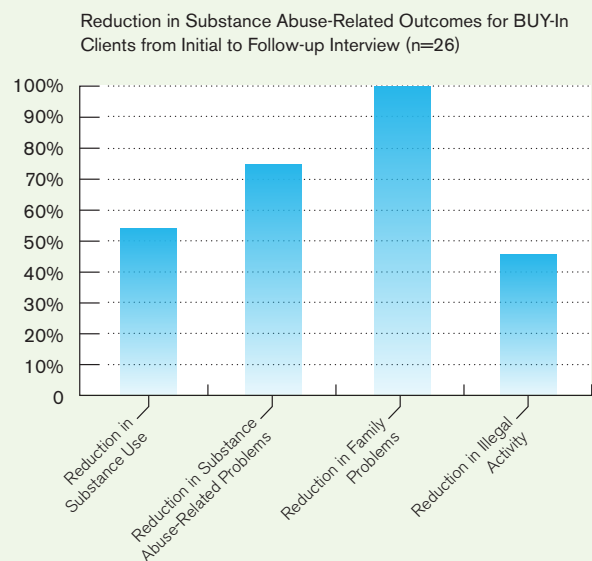


figure 2

# Foundation Awards Fund Innovative Services

## *Unrestricted grant supports agency-wide services*

Private support from foundations, corporations and individuals funds many of the innovative treatment programs Odyssey House develops, from health and wellness initiatives to facility renovations. Working in partnership with our supporters we are able to enhance the treatment experiences of the individuals and families in our programs and increase their chances of achieving a long-term recovery.

A recent unrestricted award of \$50,000 from the Lavanburg Foundation will help fund improvements to our administrative systems that benefit clients in treatment across our service lines. Expressing his thanks to the trustees of the foundation, Dr. Peter Provet said he was especially grateful to receive support for general operating costs and acknowledged long-time Odyssey House and Foundation board member Stephen Gross for introducing us to the Lavanburg Foundation.

“It is increasingly rare for nonprofit organizations to receive unrestricted grants to help with the complex administrative, financial, and communication functions they are expected to perform. This generous award from the Lavanburg Foundation will make a real difference to our overall operating capabilities, in particular the continued implementation of clients’ electronic clinical records and other needed improvements.”

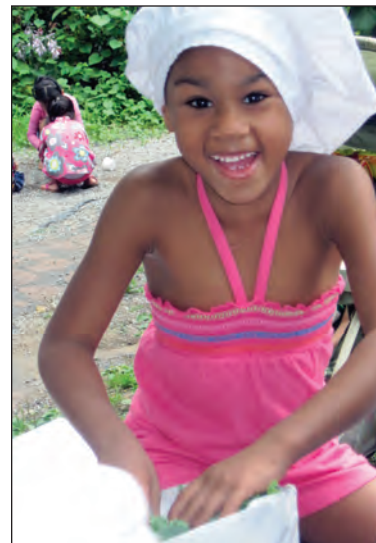
## *Renewed support from Broadway Cares*

Prevention services for HIV/AIDS received a second year of funding from theatre district partners Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. The \$5,000 award will augment our HIV/AIDS testing services and target women in treatment at our family centers. ●

# Gardening for Health Continued from page 1

“It’s pretty hard to get kids excited about vegetables, but the garden managed to do it,” said Mr. Wright.

He continued, “It also helps to develop more connections between Odyssey House and the community.” The families have been attending monthly meetings at the garden and volunteering at events, such as preparing produce bags for distribution to the homeless. In addition, Odyssey House has connected with another local organization, Nourishing NYC, as a result of our participation. Gardeners from Nourishing NYC, a community food program that strives to achieve “nutrition for all” in New York City, will be visiting the Manor Family Center to provide a Healthy Summer Eating workshop for children and ElderCare clients. ●



**Preparing produce bags for the homeless.**

## From Fast Food to Whole Grains

### *CHEF program teaches healthy eating*

The first cycle of the new Creating Healthy Eating Families (CHEF) program wrapped up at Family Re-Entry this spring with a potluck dinner. The program, created with a \$25,000 grant from Aetna, focuses on improving the basic nutrition and eating habits of parents and their children. It provides hands-on nutrition and cooking classes for parents living with their children in the Odyssey House family centers.

Participants met with nutritionist Paulette Sinclair-Weir twice a week for six weeks and learned about topics such as reading nutrition labels, reducing portion sizes, increasing fruits and vegetables, and food safety. Sessions included hands-on cooking instruction, giving participants the opportunity to try out their new culinary skills. The classes culminated in a potluck dinner where residents each prepared several vegetarian dishes for their families and neighbors, demonstrating what they learned during the program.

It was clear the program has already had a positive impact on the participants’ lives as they talked about the changes they have made in their diets as a result. One resident, Teresa, was able to reduce her cholesterol medication by making healthy substitutions, like baking instead of frying. Another mother, Bernadette, who said she was skeptical of the program at first, started using fresh herbs to flavor her food and reduced her sodium intake. She said, “The program taught me how to cook meals to my taste that were still healthy. And I learned I don’t have to put so much on my plate to be satisfied.”

The CHEF program is being implemented at the Manor Family Center this summer for nearly three dozen residents as part of Odyssey House’s ongoing commitment to improving the health and wellness of parents and children in residential treatment. ●



Odyssey House®

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## On the Horizon



*Odyssey House 6th Annual  
Run for Your Life  
5K Run & Recovery Walk  
Saturday, September 24th  
Join us to celebrate recovery  
in New York City!*



Help us spread the word  
[facebook.com/OdysseyHouse](https://www.facebook.com/OdysseyHouse)



Follow us at  
[@OdysseyHouseNY](https://twitter.com/OdysseyHouseNY)



## It is the mission of Odyssey House:

To provide comprehensive and innovative services to the broadest range of metro New York's population who:

- Abuse drugs
- Abuse alcohol
- Suffer from mental illness

To provide high quality, holistic treatment impacting all major life spheres: psychological, physical, social, family, educational and spiritual.

To support personal rehabilitation, renewal and family restoration.

In all of its activities, Odyssey House undertakes to act as a responsible employer and member of the community, and manage the assets of the organization in a professional manner.