

# 2007 ANNUAL REPORT

*Celebrating Achievement*



**Unity House**  
Empowering Lives. Securing Futures.

## Celebrating Achievement



**2007 Unity House Board of Directors** (*seated, l to r*) Betsy Sterling (Vice-President), Karen Merritt (President), Fred Atkins (Treasurer), Jeannette Baird (Secretary), (*standing, l to r*) Douglas Hart, Cynthia Mott, Karen Quest, Joyce Gover, Andrea LeBaron, Anthony DeCaro. Not pictured: James Vivencio, David Cory

### Administration

Joyce Williams, MBA  
*Executive Director*

Elizabeth Werner, MS  
*Deputy Director*

Maxwell Haines  
*Director of Finance*

M. Catherine Becker, MS  
*Director of Human Resources*

Steven Pearlman, MPA  
*Director of Quality Assurance*

Paul Marron, MS  
*Director of Marketing & Development*

Gary Fellows  
*Director of Maintenance*

Mary E. Fishlock  
*Executive Secretary, Administrative Manager*

### Mission

Unity House is a human service agency that works with individuals for the purpose of achieving their goals.

### Vision

Unity House is dedicated to freeing the community of stigmas through innovative services and education.

### Core Values

Quality  
Diversity  
Balance  
Respect & Dignity  
Empowerment & Teamwork  
Opportunity & Growth



**2007 Unity House Tompkins County Advisory Board** member Chris Martelli (*center*) with (*l to r*) Director of Nursing Services' Mary Mancinelli, Tompkins County Director of Residential Services Amy Carioggia, Tompkins County administrative associate Karina Carnack, Unity House Executive Director Joyce Williams. Not pictured: Joan Holden, Don White (Tompkins County consumer representative)

# Celebrating Achievement in 2007, Our 30th Year



## Karen Merritt

*Board President*

What a year of achievement and success we had in 2007! The 30th Anniversary celebrations were well attended, well received and well done! The festivities started in January with a hugely successful Open House at 108 South Street in Auburn. In April the agency held its Annual Meeting and presented special 30th Anniversary awards to the Board and several staff who achieved multiple years of service. The next celebration was in July with the 30th Anniversary Gala at Emerson Park. This event was one of the most successful affairs that Unity House has ever had. The evening featured big band sounds, speeches and beautiful, exciting fireworks. The

food was excellent and the company great!

We will miss Board member Joyce Gover, who participated fully with the 30th year planning committee and who is moving to Tennessee. Her contributions to the agency have been many and we wish her much happiness in her new home!

The agency unveiled in 2007 a newly designed website that features the latest news and events. The formatting and building of the site was donated in part by a very talented, local design organization. You can visit the agency online by going to <http://www.unityhouse.com/>. Our agency newsletter *The Spirit*, expanding to three editions in 2008, was reborn in 2007 and is also posted online, as is our completed agency DVD.

As happens every year, Unity House also celebrated many other achievements in 2007. Programs were added as needs were identified and the agency is, in my opinion, at the forefront of many initiatives. The new OPTS program is allowing five young women to live on their own for the first time and efforts were initiated to find expanded space for the Auburn Day Hab and new space for our Auburn Employment, IPRT, and Independent Housing services and programs in 2008. The various Board committees including Program, Personnel, Buildings and Grounds, Finance, Corporate Compliance, Special Incident Review and Tompkins County Advisory Committee have all worked hard this year. The Finance Committee in particular has done an exemplary job. The Special Incident Review Committee has actually gone beyond what is required by the state in investigating cases and ensuring the safety of consumers. Every board and staff member on these committees deserves our thanks!

Next year will bring more changes. It is my hope that as we continue to provide outstanding care and support to consumers and their families, we also will remember to celebrate in our unwavering commitment to our mission, vision, and values, as we did so well in 2007.



## Joyce Williams

*Executive Director*

Here we are again, reflecting upon another challenging and exciting year for Unity House of Cayuga County Inc. In 2007 we were certainly challenged in many regards, with funding cuts, tremendous increases in operating costs including gasoline, heating, food and insurances, and the ongoing struggle to attract and retain qualified staff in these highly regulated times. These challenges, although large in scope, did not stop the outstanding work that we have all come to expect from Unity House. You all know the saying "when the going gets tough, the tough get going;" this is exactly what we did in 2007. Through the collaborative efforts

of the entire staff, making needed compromises and offering exciting and valuable suggestions for increased efficiencies, we maintained our standard of excellent and high quality service to people with disabilities in a wise and affordable manner. And throughout the year we saw amazing strength and growth from our consumers as they worked tirelessly on their individual goals and strived to reach their ultimate dreams. For this teamwork of working side-by-side through the good times and the bad we celebrate the unique and creative talents that make Unity House the choice for people and their families seeking assistance. Therefore, it is my pleasure to present the Unity House 2007 Annual Report with the theme of "Celebrations". It is in these moments that we re-affirm why we do what we do and yet rarely take the time to properly reflect upon and celebrate those successes. That is what we hope to accomplish here, now and in the future. Please enjoy reading our Annual Report and sharing in our celebration of our many successes in 2007! Thank you!

*"The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate" – Oprah Winfrey*





## A Very Successful 2007

As we strive 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to provide only the best housing, habilitation, and employment services and programs to our consumers with developmental disabilities, mental health illnesses, and those recovering from chemical dependencies, and their families, too often we fail to recognize and acknowledge all that we achieve. In 2007, our 30th year of offering superior help and care to those in need, Unity House is proud to celebrate the many outstanding efforts it made on behalf of its consumers and their families, in empowering their lives and helping secure their futures. This year's annual report highlights some of our staffs' most memorable accomplishments...

### **CELEBRATE** Unity House's MRDD Cayuga County Residential and Day Habilitation Services: helping consumers with developmental disabilities fully participate in community



*133 Prospect Pointe IRA opened to serve five more Cayuga County MRDD consumers*

**life** - of the many 'successes' our MRDD Cayuga County residential staff experienced in 2007, the expansion of Individual Residential Alternative (IRA) services via the opening of a new program site at 133 Prospect Pointe in Auburn, to provide 24-hour supervision in four separate apartments for young women just moving from their parents' homes, stands out. Further cause for celebration occurred when the program grew at the end of the year with the addition of a fifth young woman. Additional, noteworthy MRDD Cayuga County accomplishments in 2007 included reduced staff turnover for the third straight year in residential and day habilitation (day hab) services and the completion of plans to expand the day hab program in 2008.

### **CELEBRATE** Unity House's MRDD Tompkins County Residential and Day Habilitation Services: creating an environment of outstanding care for consumers with developmental disabilities

Our Fayette Street Individual Residential Alternative (IRA) in Ithaca, NY in 2007 experienced zero medication errors on the part of staff, consumers, and family members, demonstrating a level of care excellence rarely achieved in the direct support profession. Other MRDD Tompkins County achievements of note in 2007 included the initiative and foresight of the Danby Road IRA manager, Candi Saxman, and her staff in generating wholesale positive change in a consumer's chronic illness that also resulted in a significant cost savings for Unity House; two State Street IRA consumers reaching their goals and moving to their own apartments; and the completion of plans to expand the day hab program, which grew substantially due to increased demand for its services.



*Fayette Street IRA: commitment to the best care*

**CELEBRATE** Unity House's Medicaid Service Coordination (MSC) services: guiding consumers with developmental disabilities to realize their dreams and grow into their maximum potential - Auburn-Based, Unity House MSC coordinator Jaeseena Bertot defined well the N.Y. State Developmental Services Office MSC term 'everyday hero' with her exceptional, successful efforts in helping Unity House consumer Tiffany Chapman and family buy their first home. Coordinating all aspects of the purchasing process, move, and post-move care requirements with Tiffany, her mother, and other necessary parties, Bertot went above and beyond in ensuring her consumer realized her lifelong dream of owning and living in her own home.



*Unity House MSC Jaeseena Bertot (l) and consumer Tiffany Chapman (r): helping consumers fulfill their dreams and achieve greater independence*



*UES creates and supports consumer-employee successes like Tim Van Riper in the competitive job marketplace*

**CELEBRATE** Unity House's Unity Employment Services (UES): integrating ability, self-determination, and productivity into consumers' lives - Our UES-Geneva staff's support and dedication to the habilitation and employment of Timothy Van Riper, one of their many outstanding consumers, was fundamental to the evolution of his job skills and to meeting other challenges his disabilities presented, in placing him in the competitive job marketplace. Stable and happily employed by a corporation with nationwide presence, Tim's growth and capacity to work embody the success Unity House's Geneva, Auburn, and Syracuse UES sites have in assessing, teaching, employing, and supporting their consumers in job development and placement.

**CELEBRATE** Unity House's G.R.A.C.E. House: promoting opportunities, offering choices, and consistently supporting consumers recovering from chemical dependencies - Unity House's G.R.A.C.E. House chemical dependency residence and supportive living programs in 2007 successfully built the skills, independence, and self-esteem of its consumers committed to recovery. Typical of its achievements in 2007 was the outstanding progress made by consumer Kami Hawks. Kami entered G.R.A.C.E. House halfway house in April 2007, graduated to its supportive living apartment program, and enrolled in and will graduate from the regional BOCES certified nursing assistant program in 2008. In addition, with Unity House support, Kami was able to resume parental guardianship of her two year-old son Jadin, who would join her and her newborn baby girl, Nevaeh, in her own independent apartment.



*G.R.A.C.E House consumer and program graduate Kami Hawks and daughter Nevaeh: reaping the benefits of supported recovery*



*Unity House Mental Health Services: striving to help consumers stabilize and gain self-sufficiency*

**CELEBRATE** Unity House's Mental Health Services: providing the necessary skills, resources, and growth for individuals to achieve independence and self-sufficiency - Our supervised community residence housing, certified apartments, independent housing, intensive psychiatric rehabilitation treatment program, drop-in center, and Wayne County forensic supported housing programs and services were successful in helping their consumers achieve their clinical and social goals in 2007. From the Family Consultation program to the every-Wednesday evening Game Night of social activities, both started in 2007, Unity House's mental health services continued to provide a nurturing, caring environment emphasizing progress and attainment for consumers and their families.



## CELEBRATING Unity House's Support Services

Often overlooked, rarely featured, yet absolutely integral to any success achieved by our primary programs and services, Unity House's support services – Human Resources, Quality Assurance, Finance, Nursing, Maintenance, and Marketing & Development – also accomplished some impressive goals in 2007 worthy of acknowledgement and celebration:

**HUMAN RESOURCES' Transition to Paperless Processes** – Unity House's Human Resources (HR) Department in 2007 spearheaded an agency-wide conversion of the organization's information technology (IT) payroll and benefits systems, from their time-consuming, repetitive, and costly processes to enhanced, integrated, web-based programs that allowed for employee self-service of payroll and benefits and uniform employee time management. The department also played a pivotal role in an agency-wide hardware and software upgrade to accommodate these and other IT enhancements.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE'S Superior Oversight** – Unity House's Quality Assurance (QA) Department continued to provide professional review and guidance of all Unity House services and programs in 2007. Notable department achievements included overhauling the agency's OMRDD incident reporting system; the development of new policies, procedures, and staff trainings pertinent to the promulgation of Jonathan's Law; updating agency residential program and physical plant auditing tools; the establishment of a risk management committee; and the revision of the agency's customer satisfaction process.

**FINANCE'S Collaboration** – successfully managing once again the agency's 'money in, money out' responsibilities in 2007, Unity House's Finance Department also worked year-round to streamline its obligations to agency services and programs.

**NURSING SERVICES Optimizes MRDD Consumers' Prescription Refills** – in teaming with OMNICARE and its Information Solutions service, Unity House's Professional Nursing Services in 2007 forged a far more effective and efficient MRDD residential consumer prescription refill process. Result: a huge time savings for nursing and care improvement for consumers.

**MAINTENANCE Undertakes Major Projects and Sustains Operations** – In addition to renovating Unity House's 518 East State Street IRA in Ithaca, NY, Unity House's Maintenance Department in 2007 also oversaw such projects as the installation of new roofing at the agency's Cayuga County Day Hab and support service space at 31 Market Street in Auburn. One department that never rests on its many, many well-deserved laurels, Unity House's maintenance staff once again proved how indispensable it is to organizational success.

**MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT Continues to Evolve** – in 2007, the department helped overhaul the agency's website, logo, and tag line; resurrected its newsletter; revamped the agency's communication efforts; and designed and started to execute an agency development plan.

# Unity House Financial Report 2007

## Revenue and Expenses

In 2007, Unity House of Cayuga County Inc.'s total revenue increased a modest 1.7% from 2006 total revenue. This small percentage gain is attributed in part to a decrease in the utilization of our units of service in our Restorative Services programs. Our total expenses in 2007 rose 2.1%, largely due to increased transportation, healthcare, and staffing costs.

Financial prospects for our fiscal year 2008 are encouraging, given the several projects we will be undertaking. These include the expansion of our Cayuga and Tompkins counties Day Habilitation programs, due to a substantial increase in referrals and subsequent need for these vital services to grow further. We also anticipate greater growth with our Mental Health services resulting from our agency proposal to the NY State Office of Mental Health to better meet the needs of our consumers.

As with each fiscal year, 2008 also will challenge us with uncertainty, due mostly to the 2008 New York State budget and inevitable cuts in revenues earmarked for the programs and services Unity House provides. Ultimately, we can expect to face additional unfunded mandates and reduced reimbursements resulting from efficiency adjustments. Also influencing our state budget will be the state of the national economy as a whole: no doubt, it will have a major impact on our cost of doing business, as expenses agency-wide are increasing rapidly while our reimbursements fail to keep pace with inflation.

Unity House is prepared to meet and overcome these challenges in fulfilling its mission of continuing to provide the quality programs and services for which it is known.

*Maxwell Haines, Director of Finance*

### OUR FUNDING (Unaudited)

#### REVENUE

Program Fees	1,655,684
OMH	402,384
VESID	520,822
OASAS	327,325
OMRDD	470,734
Medicaid	7,658,615
Other Revenue	904,590
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>11,940,154</b>

#### EXPENSES

Restorative Services	8,028,227
Rehabilitative Services	2,706,777
Employment Services	1,062,575
Fundraising	92,147
Administrative	92,450
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>11,982,176</b>





## Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Services

Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities	Capacity	Number of Individuals Served	Occupancy Rate / Hours / Service Units
Residential Cayuga County	31	32	95%
Residential Tompkins County	69	75	94%
Respite Bed Cayuga County	1	14	2,909 hours utilized
Day / At Home Res Habilitation Cayuga County	–	56	8,568.5 units of service
Day / At Home Res Habilitation Tompkins County	–	75	6,072 units of service
Medicaid Service Coordination Cayuga, Onondaga & Tompkins County	–	156	1,756 face-to-face visits

### Day Habilitation and Cayuga County Residential

Darlene Podolak, MSM, *Director*  
 31 Market Street  
 Auburn, New York 13021  
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 dpodolak@unityhouse.com

### Tompkins County Residential

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 acariogga@unityhouse.com

### Medicaid Service Coordination

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 Or, 607-272-1741, ext. 244  
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### Professional Nursing Service

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 408 East State Street  
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 mmancinelli@unityhouse.com

## Chemical Dependence Services

Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services	Capacity	Number of Individuals Served	Occupancy
Community Residence Cayuga County	16	64	5,501 Days of Service
Supportive Living Facility Cayuga County	14	27	2,453 Days of Service

### Residential

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 56 Osborne Street  
 Auburn, New York 13021  
 Phone: 315-258-3998  
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 mleonello@unityhouse.com

## Employment Services\*

Vocational Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities	Contract Number	Number of Individuals Served	Stabilization / Rehab
Unity Employment Services Cayuga, Onondaga, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne & Yates Counties	131	315	117 placements 14 stabilized for 3 months 85 greater than 90 days

\*as of contract expiration on 9/30/07

### Director

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## Mental Health Services

Office of Mental Health	Capacity	Number of Individuals Served / # of Visits	Occupancy Rate / Number of Units
Community Residence	14	27	87.2%
Supportive Apartments	33	44	92.2%
Independent Housing* Cayuga County	55	88	100%
Independent Housing* Wayne County	23	28	100%
Intensive Psychiatric Rehabilitation Treatment	27	47	7,114 units of service
Drop-In-Center	20	2,408 visits	15 per day average

\*Data per CAIRS reporting system

### Residential

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### Day Programs

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## Strategic Plan Priorities in 2007

Unity House continued to meet the objectives and goals of the six key priorities formulated in its 2005-2009 Strategic Plan. Our 2007 achievements included:

**FISCAL GROWTH – Strategic Priority 1** – Mental Health residential services researched and prepared its proposal to develop and offer hybrid services; IPRT initiated its Family Consultation program / MRDD residential services opened and expanded Prospect Pointe IRA; Day Habilitation services received an amended, retroactive rate increase / Unity Employment Services negotiated a contract increase with VESID and proposed unifying its three site contracts

**STAFFING – Strategic Priority 2** – Internal initiatives (e.g., creation of employee ‘Thank You’ cards) were completed to validate employees / Several proposals provided (management/direct care staff retreat, unification of departmental team-building efforts) to address staff turnover

**INFRASTRUCTURE – Strategic Priority 3** – Internal systems and processes were analyzed and improved (reconfiguration of cell phone contract, centralized program and office product ordering, agency hardware/software inventoried) / Human Resources developed new criminal background and Medicaid exclusionary checks / Two new

## Strategic Plan Priorities (continued)

staff support and training positions, Senior Medicaid Service Coordinator (MSC) and MRDD Assistant Program Director, were created and filled / Agency program, service, and office relocations were confirmed and initiated / Our MSC and Day Hab services transitioned to using our AWARDS software / Employees created an employee newsletter / MRDD IRA billing transitioned to paperless process

**COMMUNITY EDUCATION – Strategic Priority 4** – Auburn and Ithaca programs and services participated in 15 primary community events / Our Auburn Day Hab manager, Angie Dudley, honored as CNY region's Day Hab Manager of the Year / Unity House earns Silver Level Contributor award from Cayuga County United Way / Unity House staff and consumers recognized for participation and achievement in several athletic, legislative, and mentoring community events / Unity House generates 57 documented media contacts educating communities about agency programs, services, consumers, and staff / Agency consumers now involved in 17 community volunteer activities a day

**CUSTOMER SERVICES and ADVOCACY – Strategic Priority 5** – Unity House staff and consumers continue participating in peer support groups via S.A.F.I.R.E., Inc. and Cayuga County NAMI / Agency staff and consumers participated in the S.A.F.I.R.E. and S.H.A.C. Auburn and Hutchings Psychiatric Center 'Connecting with Community' education and advocacy conferences / Agency staff presented at NAMI education classes

**TECHNOLOGY – Strategic Priority 6** – Agency website redesigned / Agency-wide software and hardware projects including implementation of HR Online, Time Labor Online, and workstation upgrade, initiated / Grant writing and gift prospecting programs started to establish and continue sources of funding to maintain agency technology

## 2007 Corporate and Community Financial Supporters

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*A special "thank you," to our friends and sponsors for their continuing generous support, participation in our special events and donations of gifts in kind that directly enhance ongoing programs.*



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Empowering Lives. Securing Futures.

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