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Unity House of Cayuga County Inc. Relocates Drop-In Center



New Drop In Center office and
rec space

AUBURN - Unity House of Cayuga County Inc., a leading provider of transitional and permanent housing, rehabilitative, and employment services and programs to more than 700 individuals a day with developmental disabilities, mental health illnesses, and those recovering from chemical dependencies, has relocated effective May 29, 2008 its Mental Health Services and Programs' Drop-In Center, from 38 East Genesee Street in Auburn to 90 Franklin Street, also in Auburn.

The Center's new location is a result of a space-sharing partnership between Unity House and the Calvary Food Pantry of Central New York, Inc., the sole tenant occupying the bottom floor portion of the former Calvary Presbyterian Church at the Franklin Street address.

"We are delighted to have the support of Nancy Sheffield, coordinator of the food pantry service, and the benefit of her and the pantry's outreach service as it will relate to our new location," said Unity House Executive Director Joyce Williams. "What we offer and what the Calvary Food Pantry offers is similar in that each of us provides vital community support."

"In discussing Unity House's search for space for its Drop-In Center with the agency, it became apparent our Food Pantry and the Drop-In Center each emphasized outreach and that having the Drop-In Center adjacent to the Food Pantry would make a good fit," said Sheffield, who first associated with the Pantry as a volunteer when it originated some 24 years ago and who guided the service's provision of 78,035 meals to more than 1,524 families throughout the community last year. "There will be many benefits to both our efforts and we think we'll work well together. Communicating with each other will be the key and we're both confident we'll keep our commitments to do so."

Started in 1992 and previously housed with Unity House's Mental Health Services Intensive Psychiatric Rehabilitation Treatment Program (IPRT), which just recently moved to a new location at 1110 Corporate Drive in Auburn, the Drop-In Center is known as a 'Pure Peer Program' and is recognized by the N.Y. State Office of Mental Health as a viable self-help service. In conjunction with the Cayuga County Mental Health Department's Social Club, which is run from the department's Mental Health Clinic Continuing Day Treatment space on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, the Drop-In Center ensures that community residents in need will have seven-day-a-week access to this necessary community support.

Unity House's Drop-In center, whose hours at the new location will be 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Wednesdays and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, services between 15 and 17 individuals daily, offering them a safe and nurturing environment where they learn social

interaction skills, engage in scheduled activities, consume daily meals, and gain staff advocacy essential to their well-being. Individuals access the Center via its links to the therapeutic community and by word-of-mouth.

The Drop-In center's new phone number effective June 3, 2008 will be 315-252-1039. Unity House Director of Mental Health Support Services Susan Sloan will continue to oversee the Drop-In Center's operation.