

# 2010 ANNUAL REPORT



## Mission

Unity House's mission is to empower and enrich the lives of people in recovery, coping with a mental illness, and/or diagnosed with a developmental disability. This is accomplished by offering supports and services in an inclusive, person-centered environment.

## Vision

All individuals are respected and lead lives of personal fulfillment and acceptance within our community.

## Board of Directors

Cheryl McDowell – *President*

Betsy Sterling – *Vice President*

Jeannette Baird – *Secretary*

Karen Quest – *Treasurer*

David Corey, Jr.

Andrew Cuddy

Anthony DeCaro

Douglas Hart

Karen Merritt

Cynthia Mott

Christopher Sweet

James Vivenzio

Donald White

Cindy Wilcox

Joseph Willson

## Administration

Elizabeth Werner

*Executive Director*

Paul M. Joslyn

*Deputy Executive Director*

*of Administration*

M. Catherine Becker

*Director of Human Resources*

Kelly D. Buck

*Director of Marketing*

*& Development*

Gary Fellows

*Director of Maintenance*

Maxwell H. Haines

*Director of Finance*

Rhonda Lattimore

*Director of Quality Assurance*

## Going Above and Beyond

Summer is coming, and Greg Wetzel and his mother Genevieve “Jenny” Burk are looking forward to spending time together camping at Cross Lake Park. The two of them are big campers, and keep a trailer at the park for weekend visits.

Greg, now 33, was diagnosed with autism at an early age. He has received Medicaid service coordination through Unity House for more than a decade. He and Jenny rely on their Medicaid Service Coordinator, Rinda Kane of Auburn, to help them navigate the Medicaid and Social Security systems and advocate for and assist Greg with any other services he requires.

“Rinda is an amazing person,” said Jenny recently. She truly cares about Greg, and is our ‘go-to’ person at Unity House. “She has helped us immensely with the endless paperwork. I call her ‘our’ MSC because she helps me as much as she helps Greg!”

Rinda has served and supported Greg and Jenny for nearly ten years, continually checking in with Greg at home and at his job with Unity Employment Services. She has taken him to doctor appointments in Syracuse, sought out financial aid so that Greg could take classes at Cayuga Community College, made arrangements for driving lessons, and even obtained discounts at the Auburn YMCA so Greg could become a member and work out there.

“Greg loves to drive and he’s very good at it,” says Rinda. “He got his license several years ago now, and is quite precise about his driving. It is a measure of his independence and freedom. His mother calls it ‘Driving Miss Daisy’ as he transports her around town.”

Greg started out with Unity House in the 1990s by attending the Auburn day habilitation program. As he matured, he moved on, choosing to get a full-time job and live at home with his mother; they just purchased their own place in 2009. Through Unity Employment Services, Greg has been employed with Aramark Food Services in the Auburn school system for several years.

“UES got me my first job at Dunkin’ Donuts in 1996,” says Greg. “They helped me find a job, and when I wasn’t working, had me come in and showed me how to review job openings and fill out applications.”

Greg is meticulous in his work, and at first, admits he was a little slow on the food line. But his boss and his UES job coach helped him pick up speed. “They showed me how to do it fast and how to do it right.” Now he’s so good at his job, his coach only needs to stop by once a week.

Jenny is grateful that Unity House has helped ready Greg for the future: “Greg is the love of my life – a gentle giant and a beautiful young person. Unity House and I have prepared him to handle possible circumstances that might come his way – what to do in case of fire, how to get help if I should need it, etc. They have gotten us through so much, working with Greg on problems he faces and helping him to overcome challenges and anxieties that bother him. These are the things that Unity House does for its consumers – it is above and beyond, in my opinion.”



## Committed and Strongly United



My service on the Unity House board of directors began in 2010, and I was named president in April. I had big shoes to fill as my predecessor, Karen Merritt, chose to step down after twelve years. We are grateful for Karen's commitment to the agency's success and continued board participation. I've relied on her wisdom and experience as I've assumed the leadership role.

Throughout this past year, the board has reflected on many of the challenges faced by the agency and the industry as a whole. In spite of significant budget cuts, we have seen great success with the expansion of the Ithaca Day Habilitation program, the purchase of 56 Grant Avenue in Auburn for the mental health apartment program, and the opening of the Skaneateles IRA. As an agency, we have already made great strides in reaching our new strategic plan's goals and objectives.

The board of directors has also made changes to its inner workings to increase efficiency. We have streamlined a number of our standing committees and have implemented training opportunities that explore ways to become a more effective board. These changes make better use of our time and help to ensure that we are not only committed but strongly united as we continue to make tough decisions that benefit the agency and the individuals we serve.

As we embark on 2011, we are looking forward to a year of continued success. While state budget cuts and other regulation changes will place stumbling blocks in our path, we can remain confident that our leaders will work diligently to ensure that the care provided to our residents remains strong and consistent. I speak for the entire board when I say we are grateful for the continued support of our friends and the ongoing efforts of our staff, who work together on a daily basis to implement the mission and vision we all share.

**Cheryl McDowell, Ph.D.**  
*President, Board of Directors*

As anticipated, 2010 shaped up to be a year that required the agency to look internally at its systems and processes, seeking efficiencies that would allow us to keep on point with our mission. Sometimes, the most difficult work undertaken by administrative teams is making long term plans when revenues are so tentative. We have had to incorporate for-profit business strategies and ideologies into the nonprofit world. While the state certainly needs to review how it provides and funds services, I am deeply concerned that nonprofits such as Unity House have built an infrastructure based on existing revenue streams that have allowed for lean budgets at best. To ask voluntary nonprofits to make do with even less is troublesome.

Last year I talked about the incredible commitment of the board of directors and the staff at Unity House. I am proud to tell you that it was just as true for 2010. At all levels, we kept asking and answering tough questions: "How can we streamline?," "What can we change?," "Why do we do this?," "Is this really necessary?," all with a clear focus on preserving the quality of service for very important customers. As a result of our collaborative efforts, Unity House saw an 18% reduction in overtime and a 23% reduction in office expenses. This year we will target mileage expenditures.

As Cheryl mentioned, implementation of the 2010-2012 Strategic Plan is underway. The renewed energy that was present during the 2009 planning process has sustained itself during this first year of initiatives. Committee members have clear direction and are enthusiastic. While all elements are important, the Consumer Advisory Panel is perhaps the most special to me – I look forward to hearing directly and regularly from the people most dear to this organization.

Other happy events for Unity House this year included the opening of the Skaneateles IRA, final approval from OMH for the relocation and redesign of our mental health residential program, and the first-ever consumer gala dinner-dance in April. This event brings me such joy to remember – there were limousines, gowns, food, and lots of dancing. It was truly an affair to remember.

**Elizabeth Werner**  
*Executive Director*



# Implementing the 2010-2012 Strategic Plan

## *A first-year progress report*

Businesses and nonprofit agencies utilize strategic planning as a tool to realize their desired future goals. Such a plan is important because it matches strengths with opportunities, determines priorities, and allocates resources and direction to meet goals.

In fall 2009, Unity House embarked on a planning exercise that resulted in a 2010-2012 Strategic Plan. Seven elements were identified to guide the agency for the next three years. The first year of planning and execution took place in 2010. Committees were formed, goals set, and progress highlights within each element are reported below. Unity House purposely does not prioritize these elements; each is equally important to the future success of the agency.

### Wellness

*Goal: To offer employees and consumers information, education, opportunity and access to programs that support health and wellness.*

- Offered biometric testing and health risk assessments to all employees; completed for approximately 63% of all staff
- Created a Gold/Silver health insurance option tied to successfully completed wellness initiatives
- Developed monthly e-newsletter for employees to increase awareness of wellness related issues
- Compiled and sold copies of a cookbook of healthy recipes

### Consumer Advisory Panel (CAP)

*Goal: To further refine and grow advocacy services to meet the needs of all consumers and their families.*

- Created pamphlet to introduce CAP to the consumers
- Held meetings with managers to identify consumers interested in participating in CAP and related training

### Infrastructure

*Goal: To analyze existing processes and identify improvement and efficiencies for the agency.*

- Organized residential Beautification Days in collaboration with Volunteerism Committee
- Toured the Tompkins County Recycling Center for ways to cut waste, increase recycling, and save money
- Updated the agency's vehicle inventory to reflect current assets

### Fiscal Health

*Goals: To ensure a fluid, comprehensible and efficient fiscal process; to implement a dynamic fundraising program that will assist the agency in meeting unfunded mandates.*

- Conducted an overview of the agency's financial policies and procedures to make them more user-friendly
- Reviewed existing business ethics policy and fiscal code of conduct to ensure agency compliance

### Staffing

*Goal: To ensure a healthy and positive work environment that will attract and retain the best talent for the benefit of our consumers.*

- Created a two-year management training plan using online training resources
- Conducted training focus groups with agency managers to gather information about in-house training needs

### Volunteerism

*Goal: To offer meaningful volunteer opportunities in our community to improve and develop the operations of our departments and the experience of our consumers.*

- Took survey to identify agency needs that could be addressed by volunteers; from results, implemented residential Beautification Days in collaboration with Infrastructure Committee
- Started a database of potential volunteers
- Contacted other human service agencies to learn about their volunteer programs

### Technology

*Goal: To maximize technology to support the highest levels of efficiency for our agency and consumers.*

- Updated the agency's inventory of IT assets
- Created an electronic IT work order process to track the status of IT needs and repair issues



Owen Redmond is "king for a day" at the Auburn Day Hab, where he has attended programming since 1999 and continues to enjoy interacting with his peers, staff, and the community.

View the full 2010-2012 Strategic Plan at [www.unityhouse.com/about.html](http://www.unityhouse.com/about.html).

# Unity House Financial Report 2010

## The Year in Review

FY 2010 was a continuation of 2009 as we sought to reduce costs and increase efficiencies to help offset significant budget cuts from our primary funding providers. We were able to cut both the fixed and variable costs that we have control over. Transportation expenses continue to be a concern with rising fuel costs.

For 2010, our revenue increased 10% over the prior year. This was the result of one-time prior year and current year trend monies received from the state, along with a \$220,000 state grant for a site relocation project in Auburn and a \$70,000 federal grant for vehicles. We were also able to keep our expenses in check with only a 7% increase in expenditures. The 3% difference flowed to the bottom line and contributed to our profitability. We are fortunate to have a slight surplus to carry over into the next year.

We expect 2011 to be a difficult year. As federal stimulus money goes away, the impending state budget cuts will prove to be a challenge in allowing us to maintain our high service standards. Increased transportation costs coupled with an anticipated rise in non-funded mandates and other expenses beyond our control, such as rapidly rising food, utility, and maintenance costs, will make for a very interesting year.

**Maxwell Haines**  
*Director of Finance*

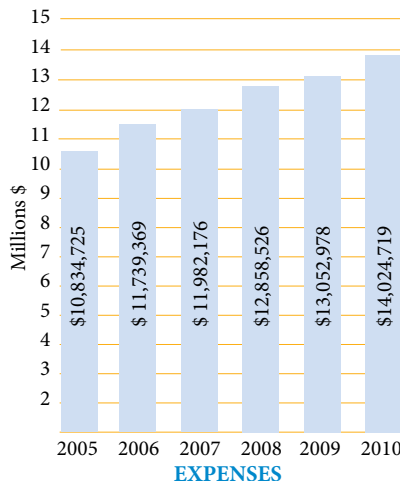
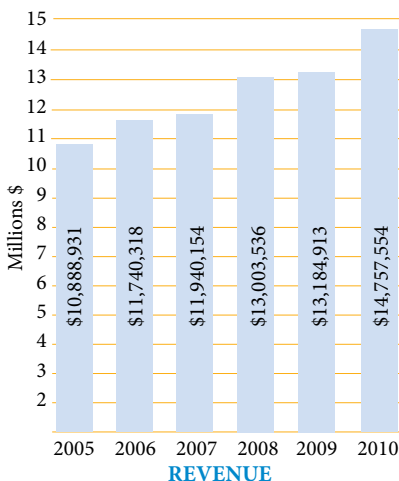
### OUR FUNDING (Unaudited)

#### REVENUE

Medicaid	10,158,926
Program Fees	1,771,586
VESID	524,621
OMH	469,737
OPWDD	503,260
OASAS	311,807
Other Revenue	1,017,617
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>14,757,554</b>

#### EXPENSES

Restorative Services	8,932,826
Rehabilitative Services	3,589,021
Employment Services	1,336,187
Fundraising	102,114
Administrative	64,571
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>14,024,719</b>



## Developmental Disabilities Services

Office of People with Developmental Disabilities	Capacity / Unit Approval	Number of Individuals Served	Occupancy Rate / Hours / Service Units
Residential / Cayuga County	36	36	99.2%
Residential / Tompkins County	68	83	92.6%
Respite Bed Cayuga County	1	16	3,305.25 hours utilized
Day Habilitation / Cayuga County Day Habilitation / Tompkins County	17,817 combined	69 91	83%
Community Habilitation / Cayuga County Community Habilitation / Tompkins County	2,548 2,877	11 25	102%
Medicaid Service Coordination Cayuga, Onondaga & Tompkins County	Weighted caseload limit of 40 per MSC	148	1,501 billable units

## Employment Services\*

Vocational Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities	Target Total	Number of new Individuals Served	Job Placements
Unity Employment Services Cayuga, Onondaga, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne & Yates Counties	133	325	151

*\*as of contract expiration on 9/30/10*

## Chemical Dependence Services

Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services	Capacity	Number of Individuals Served	Occupancy Rate
Community Residence Cayuga County	16	74	94.4%
Supportive Living Facility Cayuga County	19	49	76%

## Mental Health Services

Office of Mental Health	Capacity	Number of Individuals Served / # of Visits	Occupancy Rate / Number of Units
Community Residence	14	33	67%
Supportive Apartments	33	48	73.6%
Independent Housing** Cayuga County	58	78	95.4%
Independent Housing** Wayne County	18	26	98.8%
Intensive Psychiatric Rehabilitation Treatment	27	43	7,474 units of service
Drop-In Center	25/day	3,172 visits	3,172 units of service

*\*\*Data per CAIRS reporting system*

# 2010 Honor Roll of Donors

With a full year under my belt at Unity House, I am delighted to report that we are making excellent progress. Changes to our Articles of Incorporation were approved at the state level, allowing us to now reach out to individuals as we advance our fundraising efforts. This in turn charts our course of action for 2011, a time when we will concentrate on developing the new Fund for Unity House and the Fred Atkins Community Service Fund and Award recognizing volunteerism. As a human service organization, Unity House places great emphasis on giving back to the community and on the care and nurture of our fellow citizens.

It is with deep appreciation that we recognize the individuals and organizations below for helping Unity House meet its many needs during 2010. Thank you.

**Kelly Buck**

*Director of Marketing & Development*

## GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Cayuga County Department of Mental Health  
NYS Department of Education  
NYS Office of Mental Health  
NYS Office of People With Development Disabilities  
NYS Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services

NYS Department of Transportation  
Ontario County Department of Mental Health  
Seneca County Department of Mental Health  
VESID  
Wayne County Department of Mental Health

## FOUNDATIONS & GRANTMAKING ORGANIZATIONS

Auburn Rotary Club  
Cayuga Community Fund  
Key Bank Foundation  
Price Chopper's Golub Foundation  
United Way of Cayuga County  
Women's Fund of Central New York

## CASH GIFTS

Balloons Restaurant  
Jeannette Baird  
Cathy Becker & Ken Scofield  
Kelly Buck  
Buffalo Wild Wings of Auburn  
Cayuga County Women's  
Republican Club  
Douglas & Clara Clark  
Sally Clauss  
Andrew Cuddy  
Anthony DeCaro  
Morgan Elmer

Fingerlakes Community  
Recycling Center  
Mary Fishlock  
Bradford N. Froude Charitable  
Remainder Unitrust  
Wendy Goldman  
Phillip & Elly Gross  
ITT Goulds Pumps  
Home Depot of Auburn  
Maria Hyland  
Paul & Kathy Joslyn  
Tim Laird

Kenneth Larson & Diane Koester  
Rhonda Lattimore  
Karen Merritt  
David & Jill Miller  
Allan & Helen Miskell  
Loyal Order of Moose, Auburn  
Cynthia Mott  
Pet Depot of Auburn  
Robert & Peggy Pierce  
Karen Quest  
Smith Charitable Trust  
Betsy Sterling & Ken Perri

Chris Sweet  
Tops Friendly Markets  
James & Peggy Vivenzio  
Rozena Walcott  
Watkins Glen International  
Wells College Activism  
Symposium Club  
Kurt & Elizabeth Werner  
Cindy Wilcox  
Ann L. Wiley  
Raymond & Joyce Williams  
Joseph Willson

## IN-KIND GIFTS & SERVICES

John Barnoski  
Calvary Food Pantry  
Downtown Auburn BID  
Mark & Mary Fishlock  
Flower Shop, The  
Hollywood Restaurant  
Home Depot of Ithaca

Lincoln Gallery  
Lowe's of Auburn  
Marietta of Cortland  
Metro Mattress  
David & Jill Miller  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
(NAMI) of Auburn

Bill & Doris O'Hara  
Karen Quinn  
Sunset Restaurant  
Taco Bell of Auburn  
Target #1476 of Fayetteville  
Vietnam Veterans of America #704

Walmart of Camillus  
Walmart of Cicero  
David Ward  
Wegmans of East Syracuse  
Zotos International

## IN MEMORIAM / IN HONOR

Cathy Becker  
*in honor of Fred Atkins*  
Russell & Irene Benson  
*in honor of Edward Laiza*

Maria Hyland  
*in memory of Onorato Badalamenti*  
Raymond & Joyce Williams  
*in honor of Fred Atkins*



**Support Unity House and help us fulfill our mission.** Making a gift is easy and means so much to the consumers we care for. You may mail your check, made payable to Unity House, at any time or in the self-addressed envelope found in this annual report. Your unrestricted gift to The Fund for Unity House directly supports our annual fund campaign and allows us to apply it where Unity House needs it most. Thank you for your continued support!

[www.unityhouse.com](http://www.unityhouse.com)



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**HIGHLIGHTS OF 2010**

Month	Event
January	Agency becomes smoke-free
February	Kick-off 2010-12 Strategic Plan
March	\$4250 Women's Fund grant awarded
April	New board president Cheryl McDowell
May	Ribbon-cutting at Catherwood Road
June	Darlene Podolak named Girl Scout Woman of Distinction
July	Fingerlakes Recycling Center fundraiser
August	UH participates in Auburn's Great Race
September	\$1645 Cayuga Community Fund grant awarded
October	Skaneateles IRA opens
November	Jessica Janssen named to 40 Under Forty
December	\$4100 Key Bank grant received