

# news

SPRING 2013

## equinox wellness center



"When a teen has a mental health problem, everyone in the family is affected."

### Equinox Wellness Center Opens

#### *Mental health services for teens now available onsite*

Equinox is delighted to announce the opening of the Equinox Wellness Center, which provides treatment services to adolescents (ages 12-18) with serious emotional, mental health, and behavioral problems. Opened January 7, 2013, the Wellness Center fills a gap in the wide array of services Equinox already provides to at-risk and homeless youth.

Adolescent mental illness is difficult to diagnose and historically under-reported. Many young people who could benefit from early intervention do not receive treatment until adulthood. The problem is compounded by the shortage of available services for adolescents in Albany County, with some clients waiting weeks, or even months, for an initial appointment.

The Wellness Center is located in the same building as our youth outreach programs and our chemical dependency counseling center, allowing young clients

to access services for overlapping needs in a familiar and trusted setting.

Wellness Center staff members – including a psychiatrist, social workers, mental health counselors, and nurse practitioner – use a dynamic team approach that includes assessments; individual, group, and family counseling; and medication management if indicated. Additionally, staff is sensitive to the cultural and linguistic needs of each client and their family. Harvey Scherer, MD, is senior psychiatrist. Dr. Scherer's extensive experience includes 38 years of treating children, adolescents, and families in outpatient and residential settings.

At the Equinox Wellness Center, families are actively encouraged to participate in services – when a teen has a mental health problem, everyone in the family is affected. Our comprehensive Family Resources Program is available for all

family members, and staff is able to connect families with other needed community supports.

The Wellness Center is open, by appointment, Monday – Saturday, and an after-hours crisis hotline is available to clients in an emergency. Medicaid and most insurance carriers are accepted. Contact the Equinox Wellness Center at 518.435.9931 ext 237. ●

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## CEO's Message



Dear Friends,

2012 was a busy and exciting year for Equinox, and we are pleased to share highlights in this newsletter. Moving forward, we began 2013 with another milestone: the opening of the Equinox Wellness Center (see article, page 1). The ability to provide this level of mental health services onsite to adolescent clients was a top priority of the merger. It is gratifying to see the successful realization of our vision.

Also in these pages, you will find a list of our 2012 donors. We are deeply grateful for their financial support and for their belief in our mission. Much of what happens at Equinox would not be possible without the generosity of others, and we welcome this opportunity to thank our donors publicly. We also thank the hundreds of Equinox volunteers who gave us the gift of their time throughout the year, as well as the thousands of individuals who joined us at Thanksgiving. (For more information about volunteer opportunities, please contact Stephen Lounello at 518.434.6137, ext. 311; slounello@equinoxinc.org.)

As you may be aware, GreatFinds, our award-winning thrift boutique for women, was closed during the winter months because of a problem with the building's heat. I'm delighted to announce that GreatFinds will be re-opening June 1. Because we have been able to continue accepting clothing donations, there are sure to be many wonderful new "great finds" when we re-open!

Please remember to mark your calendar for May 3, and plan to join us at the annual Equinox Celestial Celebration at the Albany Country Club. This special event is always fun and festive with delicious food, exciting auction items, wonderful music, and a great opportunity to support Equinox. I hope to see you all there!

Sincerely,

*Dorothy S. Cucinelli*

Dorothy S. Cucinelli, PhD  
CEO

## Equinox Beneficiary of \$500,000 Anonymous Gift

An anonymous and very generous donor has given Equinox a \$500,000 gift – the largest single donation in the organization's history.

"We are profoundly grateful," said Dorothy Cucinelli, PhD, CEO. "We are thrilled that our benefactor not only shares our commitment to helping others, but also strongly believes in the effectiveness of our work. This kind and generous gift will result in a lot of good for a lot of people."

The gift was made with no restrictions as to how the funds may be used.

"I look forward to working with the Equinox Board on the exciting task of identifying the best use of the funds. It is inspiring to be the recipient of such generosity," said Dr. Cucinelli. ●

equinox  
CELESTIAL CELEBRATION

REACH  
FOR THE  
STARS

FRIDAY MAY 3, 2013

6:00 PM – 10:00 PM

ALBANY COUNTRY CLUB

Voorheesville, New York

Music by New York Players • Party Attire

\$80 Per Ticket

\$65 Junior Ticket – 35 years and under

All except \$50 of your contribution is tax deductible.

"A Day at the Races" Raffle • Exciting Silent Auction  
Hors D'oeuvres • Buffet Dinner

Desserts Courtesy of "Sweet Friends of Equinox",  
including Anthony's Chocolate Dipped Fruit, Cupcakes by Alicia,  
The Crisp Cannoli, Fluffalicious Bake Shoppe,  
and Krause's Homemade Candy

For more information, please contact  
Stephen Lounello at 518.434.6137, ext.311  
or email: slounello@equinoxinc.org.

# 2012 HIGHLIGHTS

Board Vice-Chair Steve Baboulis, CEO Dorothy Cucinelli and Board Chair Karen Asher celebrate the merger announcement!

## The Merger

The hallmark event of 2012 was our merger with ClearView Center.

- On January 1, 2012, Dorothy Cucinelli was appointed CEO of Equinox Inc. by the boards of both organizations. Merger activities began, including the creation of the new logo and website.
- A new Equinox Board – composed of board members from both Equinox and ClearView – was established and began to meet regularly.
- After months of hard work and eager anticipation, the merger was signed on June 27, 2012. ●



## Recovery Services

- In January 2012, Equinox introduced Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS), a short-term treatment approach to helping individuals with serious mental illness overcome obstacles that keep them from achieving a major life goal, such as independent housing or employment.
- All case managers in the Intensive Case Management and Supportive Case Management Programs began a statewide Health Home training to better prepare themselves for their changing role with the Albany/Rensselaer Health Home. ●

## Residential Services

- Equinox House for Youth and the Transitional Living Program were described by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services as "model programs."
- Adult residential facilities received significant improvements in 2012. The Apartment Program and Recovery Residence had major renovations to the buildings and grounds; and renovations at Holt House included new furniture and upgraded carpeting and flooring.

## 2012 Statistics

### *Chemical Dependency Services*

Chemical Dependency Counseling services to **608 adolescents and adults**

### *Domestic Violence Services*

Shelter and support to **150 adults and 88 children** in our Domestic Violence Shelter Services to **703 individuals** through Domestic Violence Outreach Services to **1,379 callers** to our Domestic Violence Hotline

### *Mental Health Services*

Outpatient Mental Health Clinical services to **667 adults**  
Mental Health Case Management to **273 adults**  
Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) to **177 adults**  
Housing and care to **135 adults** through the Apartment Program, Cohoes Residence, Holt House, and Recovery Residence  
Support to **398 individuals** through our Family Resources Program

### *Youth Services*

Housing and care to **146 teens** (age 13-17) at the Equinox House for Youth  
Housing and care to **45 young people (age 18-21) and 10 babies** in the Transitional Living Programs  
Service to **1,754 young people** through our Youth Outreach and Mentoring Programs

### *Thanksgiving*

And in 2012, a new record: **Thanksgiving dinner for 10,000** lonely, homebound, or homeless individuals in our community!



# 2012 HIGHLIGHTS, continued

- Cohoes Residence received a Tier 1 certification – the highest a program can receive – from the NYS Office of Mental Health.

## Domestic Violence Services

- Equinox partnered with Hudson Valley Community College's Workforce Development Institute in March to provide training to survivors of domestic violence who want to start their own business. The program was funded by a \$100,000 grant from Verizon Wireless to help domestic violence survivors take a significant step toward self-sufficiency and financial stability. ●

## Youth Services

- Staff and teens from Youth Outreach Services (YOC), the Transitional Living Program (TLP), and the Equinox House for Youth (EHY) were involved in the design, construction, planting, tending, and harvesting of a community garden planted behind the EHY. The garden was dedicated in

made possible by a generous grant from the Hearst Foundation.

- "Operation Rapport" was established to give members of the Albany Police Department (APD) and Equinox youth an opportunity to get to know each other through positive and trust-building interactions. Created by APD Officer Brian Hawley, Operation Rapport brings neighborhood police officers to the YOC daily to interact with youth through athletics, discussions, and other pro-social activities.
- Equinox, along with Parsons and Trinity Alliance, joined the APD and the Albany County Probation Department to form a Juvenile Justice Mobile Response Team (JJMRT). Launched by the City of Albany, the JJMRT was formed to make recommendations for treatment and appropriate placement, including alternatives to jail, for youth detained by Albany Police. ●

*"I never thought I'd be able to have a business on my own."*

– Entrepreneurial program participant, baker, and domestic violence survivor



Equinox youth and APD Officer Brian Hawley (center) took part in the Central Avenue Beautification Project.



The well-tended Equinox garden



memory of Sarah Lambeth Blabey Rossi and features sculptures created by Equinox youth.

- With the participation of YOC youth and staff, the Central Avenue Beautification Project was a huge success – leaves were raked, streets were cleaned, and beautiful flowers were planted! The project was a collaboration among Equinox, the Central Avenue Business Improvement District, College of Saint Rose, Constantine Farms, Trustco Bank, and Townsend Park Homes.
- YOC launched a website ([equinoxoutreach.org](http://equinoxoutreach.org)) aimed at teens, providers, and parents. The website offers information about YOC programs, services, and events.
- Twenty-seven young people in the New Pathways mentoring program took part in "Photovoice," a project designed to address misconceptions about inner-city youth. With guidance from Times Union photographers and editors, participants expressed their identity in photos and words. An exhibit at Equinox was attended by more than 100 people, and was

## GreatFinds

- GreatFinds, Equinox's award-winning thrift boutique for women, received large donations from the NYS Labor Department, J. Jill, Elissa Halloran, The Closet Shop, and the annual professional women clothing drive held by Women's Employment and Resource Center. Volunteer groups included College of Saint Rose students, Boston College Alumni, and GE employees. ●

## Thanksgiving



- In 2012, more than 3,600 volunteers prepared, served, and delivered 10,000 Thanksgiving dinners – a new record! ●

# 2012 OUR GENEROUS DONORS

## \$25,000 & above

The Ann Allen Cetrimo Family Fund  
First Niagara Bank Foundation  
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## \$10,000-\$24,999

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**THE VALUE OF DONATING TIME**

In 2012, volunteers and interns donated a total of 11,476 hours to support Equinox programs and events. The Thanksgiving Dinner event added another 20,570 hours in estimated volunteer time. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the estimated dollar value of volunteer time in 2011 was \$21.79 per hour.

**Estimated Dollar Value of Volunteer Hours in 2012:**

**\$250,062** – Equinox Programs and Events

**+ \$448,220** – Thanksgiving Community Dinner

**\$698,282** – TOTAL Value of Volunteer Support

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