



News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DAVID LAWRENCE CENTER TO HOST ANNUAL RECOVERY MONTH AWARDS CEREMONY SEPTEMBER 24TH

Naples, Fl – The David Lawrence Center, Collier County’s only comprehensive, not-for-profit mental health and substance abuse treatment facility serving children, adults and families, is joining the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and other voices of recovery from across the nation to honor the **24th Annual National Recovery Month observance** held every September. This year’s national theme, “Join the Voices for Recovery: Together on Pathways to Wellness,” highlights that people are not alone on the journey to achieve life-changing wellness – family, friends, and community members can support individuals throughout the entire recovery process. The theme also emphasizes that there are many paths to wellness, including professional treatment, medical care, self-help, and group support, and that each person embarks on his or her own unique path.

David Lawrence Center will honor the observance by celebrating individuals and organizations in our community for their outstanding contributions to support those in recovery at the **Annual Recovery Month Awards Ceremony “Celebrating Voices of Recovery”**. The event will be held on **Tuesday, September 24th, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. at the New Hope Community Center located at 7676 Davis Boulevard** in Naples.

The following honorees are being honored this year:

Drug Free Collier is being honored as an invaluable prevention partner for their dedication in making the County a safe, healthy and drug-free community for our youth. The coalition of concerned citizens advocates policy change, and recently implemented the ordinance against the sale and possession of synthetic marijuana and bath salts in Collier County. They also work directly with teens at several schools through the C.O.R.E. club to alter social norms about juvenile alcohol and drug use. They partner with David Lawrence Center to provide community outreach education programs that bring awareness of a variety of topics including

underage drinking and substance abuse issues and trends to parents, students, teachers and concerned citizens.

Frank Palowitz is an active David Lawrence Center Alumni Association member who has achieved over eleven years of sobriety. He has passionately dedicated his community involvement to helping others find recovery. He chairs recovery meetings and coordinates Alumni involvement in a variety of capacities in community-based and onsite 12-step meetings at the David Lawrence Center. Palowitz is also the Alumni Association liaison to the Collier County Drug Court. On top of his dedicated weekly schedule, Frank regularly sponsors men in the recovery community inspiring them towards life-changing wellness.

Lieutenant George Welch's professional and volunteer leadership roles make him an invaluable recovery partner. He is currently assigned to the Prevention Services Bureau, Community Outreach Division of the Collier County Sheriff's Office. Through his involvement in prevention and community outreach, he serves as the Coordinator of the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) where he has trained 650 criminal justice professionals how to react appropriately to emergency situations involving mental illness. Welch's dedication to the mental health field expands to his posts as an active board member for David Lawrence Center and the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Collier County.

Naples Equestrian Challenge is being recognized as a non-profit treatment partner whose mission is to improve the lives of children and adults with special needs through therapeutic riding and other equine-related programs. Through a new innovative partnership with the David Lawrence Center, Naples Equestrian Challenge is helping our clients achieve what is possible by subsidizing services that assist individuals in recovery from substance abuse and children with behavioral health needs through the powerful experience of equine-facilitated psychotherapy.

The evening includes dinner sponsored by St. Matthew's House and the David Lawrence Center Alumni Association, and entertainment by representatives from the Collier County Public Schools C.O.R.E. Society. Recovery community partners Drug Free Collier, Naples Equestrian Challenge, Collier County Sheriff's Office, St. Matthew's House, Hazelden, NAMI, Catholic Charities of Collier County, The Shelter for Abused Women and Children, and Bala Vinyasa Yoga will host educational tables during the reception.

More than 300 individuals in the recovery community and those who support it attended last year's annual event. The event is free, but reservations are requested by contacting Emily Naranjo at (239) 263-4013 ext. 2200 or at emilyn@dlcmhc.com.

About Recovery Month

Recovery Month promotes the societal benefits of prevention, treatment, and recovery for mental and substance use disorders, celebrates people in recovery, lauds the contributions of treatment and service providers, and promotes the message that recovery in all its forms is possible. *Recovery Month* spreads the positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health, that prevention works, treatment is effective and people can and do recover.

About David Lawrence Center

David Lawrence Center is the Southwest Florida-based, not-for-profit leading provider of behavioral health solutions dedicated to inspiring and creating life-changing wellness for every individual. The Center provides innovative, comprehensive inpatient, outpatient, residential and community based prevention and treatment services for the one in four local children and adults who experience mental health, emotional, psychological and substance abuse challenges. David Lawrence Center has eight locations in Collier County and touches the lives of more than 30,000 people each year. For more information about David Lawrence Center call 239-455-8500 or visit www.DavidLawrenceCenter.org.

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