



## **Grassroots Empowerment Project, Inc Annual Report 2008**

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*Creating Opportunities for People with a Mental Illness to Exercise Power in Their Lives*

### **Mission Statement:**

The purpose of the Grassroots Empowerment Project is to create opportunities and provide support for people with mental illness to exercise power in their lives

### **Value Statements: (We believe...)**

- People with mental illness are valuable and entitled to respect and power as members of the community
- People with mental illness working with each other leads to empowerment and recovery
- A strong GEP facilitates the empowerment of people with mental illness
- Consumer-run organizations can be vehicles for system change by strengthening the voice and the choices of people with mental illness
- People with mental illness can revolutionize the mental health system
- People with mental illness have the right to holistic and humane treatment and/or services, which include choice, respect & dignity

### **Vision Statements: (GEP will...)**

- Be an organization run by people with mental illness
- Be guided by the views of people with mental illness statewide
- Increase the knowledge and skills of people with mental illness to advocate for themselves and to reach their desired potential
- Advocate statewide for people with mental illness in coalition with other organizations
- Be the leader in Wisconsin's mental health consumer movement
- Operate with equal respect for all and according to principles of accountability and fairness
- Have sufficient funds to meet our mission and implement our values
- Assist people with mental illness in the establishment and running of recovery-based non-profit organizations and services
- Develop leadership of people with mental illness within the mental health system
- Promote a positive image of people with mental illness

Grassroots Empowerment Project funds (through the state grant) and supports a network of 10 freestanding non-profit organizations, most of which operate under a drop

in center model (a safe place for consumers to go and receive formal and informal services and supports which furthers their recovery). These organizations are located in Ashland, Rice Lake, Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, La Crosse, Sheboygan, Green Bay, West Bend, Madison and Milwaukee.

In 2008, GEP held contracts with 10 separate and independent non-profit organizations that are at least 51% consumer controlled. The services that each organization provides are designed to bring the vision of hope, resiliency, empowerment and recovery to consumers of mental health services in their local areas. Services include but are not limited to peer support, education and skill development, individual and systems advocacy, outreach to underserved consumers, and building collaborative relationships with other providers of mental health services.

In 2008, GEP funded organizations provided:

- Direct services and supports to 1,828 adults with mental illness
- 16,864 hours of peer support and related activities
- 305 consumer volunteers worked 19,391 hours
- 11,377 Warmline callers received peer support via the telephone

Total number of Technical Assistance contacts with consumer-run organizations= 414 (144- Phone Calls; 172- Emails; 98 Face to Face visits)

Topics: Confidentiality (4), Leadership Development (7), By-law development (10), Program Development (48), Board Development (33), Grievance (8), Fiscal and Grant Writing (36), Conflict Resolution (12), Recovery (13), Advocacy (4), Non-Profit Management (27), Business Plan Development (42), Personnel Policy Development (34), Peer Facilitation (15)

2 Grantee Meetings were held and training topics were: Cultural Competency, Business Plan Development, Grant Writing and a Listening Session on people's experience with trauma in the mental health service system and Trauma Informed Services.

1 Consumer Conference was held and 210 consumers participated. Topics of the conference were: Role of Peer Specialist-Exploring Opportunities, Basic Recovery Principles in Every Day Living, How to Support Peer Specialists in the Workforce, Managing Your Own Recovery, Ethics and Boundaries in Working with Peers, Write Your Own Wellness Recovery Action Plan, Understanding Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Meaningful Participation in Person Centered Planning, Trauma Informed Peer Support, Overcoming Stigma and Building Self Esteem, Using Motivational Interviewing to Enhance Recovery, Recovery in Your Own Voice. Contributions are used to fund scholarships for mental health consumers to attend this conference.

# Grassroots Empowerment Project Annual Report 2008 (cont'd)

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## **Board of Directors:**

Michelle Olson, President; Alyce Knowlton-Jablonski, Vice President  
Maria Hanson, Treasurer; Judie Robson, Secretary  
Benita Walker, Wenona Gardner, Bob Driscoll, Adam Malueg and Sister Ann Catherine Veierstahler

## **Administrative Staff:**

Molly Cisco, Executive Director; Lora Ott, Financial Manager

## **Funds Raised:**

Revenue for 2008 totaled \$610,292

## **Sources of Revenue:**

State of Wisconsin DHFS – 91.9%  
SAMSHA – 1.8%  
Donations – 3.8%  
Consulting Fees – .7%  
Memberships & Other Revenue – 1.8%

## **Funds Used:**

Empowerment Grants – 33.7%  
Educational Conference & Meetings – 9.1%  
Administrative – 9.2%  
Other Program – 48%

Please visit our website at [www.grassrootspower.org](http://www.grassrootspower.org)

*A copy of our audited financial statement for the year ended December 31, 2008 is available upon request.*