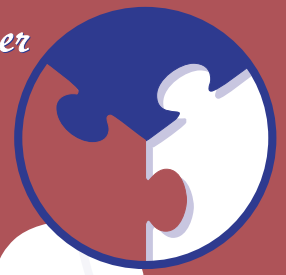


Connections



**SPRING
2008**

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President/CEO

**Youth & Family
Services**

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Director

Crisis Residential Center

Safe Schools/Healthy
Students

In-Home Family
Counseling

Adult Services

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Chemical Dependency
Treatment

Co-Occurring Disorders
Treatment

Financial Services

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Director

Development

Liz Hogan
Director

REUNION

AT THE CRISIS RESIDENTIAL CENTER



Shawna Beese-Bjurstrom is extraordinary. At 34 she's an ICU nurse, published author, wife, mother, radio show host, co-founder of the Spokane based Christian Businesswomen's Network and a sought-after motivational speaker. She earned her BS degree in nursing from Gonzaga University and was awarded a National Institute of Health research internship at Washington State University.

Shawna is a member of the International Honor Society for nurses and has written numerous articles that have been published in several nationally circulated peer-reviewed journals. Her insights on living with clear vision have been quoted alongside the wisdom of Florence Nightingale, Rosalyn Carter, and Former Surgeon General Richard Carmona in *A Daybook for Nurse Leaders and Mentors*.

While pursuing her many and varied interests and raising her 3 year old son, Zachary, Shawna currently works part time in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at Sacred Heart. She has just published her first book, *154 Questions* and will begin hosting her own talk-radio show on KYRS Thin Air Community Radio in mid-June.

How she arrived at being the extraordinary woman she is today is a remarkable story all by itself. Abandoned twice by her biological mother, Shawna was adopted at age 3 by her second set of foster parents. Her adolescent years were turbulent—filled with confusion, depression, anger and a self perceived need to rebel against her world. She struggled in school and dropped out of high school eventually returning to graduate at age 19.

So how did Shawna go from a confused and angry teenager to the happy and accomplished woman she is today? Shawna credits her loving and supportive adoptive family, her personal drive and conviction to be successful and a brief stay at YFA Connections' Crisis Residential Center.

When she was 17 Shawna's parents requested CRC services to help them deal with the conflict they were experiencing. Teresa Wright who was CRC program manager back then and is now YFA's Director of Youth and Family Services remembers Shawna and her adoptive parents, "They received counseling services that helped them improve their communication and conflict resolution skills."

Shawna's stay at the Crisis Residential Center wasn't magic and didn't make life perfect but the experience delivered some valuable lessons that stuck, "The CRC gave me some very basic tools. They were the tools that I used to make foundational changes and they still serve me today." Shawna credits Teresa and the CRC staff with getting right to the heart of things and with helping her identify the areas that were standing in the way of her being happy, healthy and successful. "They identified core issues for me to work on. They made me understand that I had an inherent worth and that I needed to believe in myself."

*Shawna
Beese-Bjurstrom*



REUNION CONT.

For an article about positive outcomes in the Spokesman Review during the recent Our Kids/Our Business campaign, Shawna returned to the Crisis Residential Center for the first time since 1991. "It was such a gift," said Teresa Wright about the reunion. "We seldom get to know how things work out for our kids in the long term. We know they are all bright and have the potential to accomplish their dreams. We're here to give them a little help if they hit a bump in the road along the way."

You can hear Shawna speak at YFA's upcoming benefit luncheon at Providence Auditorium on June 3. See back cover or call 532-2000 ext. 24 for more information.

YFA WISH LIST for the Crisis Residential Center

- Wii
- Karaoke Machine
- Portable Dry Erase Boards
- Writing Journals
- Art Supplies
- Bath and Kitchen Towels
- Hair Brushes
- Toothbrushes
- Boxers (all sizes)
- Socks

YFA CONNECTIONS Adult Treatment Services and Administrative Offices moving to new location



With our lease expiring this summer, YFA Connections' Adult Services Program and administrative offices will move to a new location at 22 S. Thor, one block off Sprague in the vicinity of the Tapio complex. Since it was a large open space before, we were able to design the offices and lobby to our specifications. "Our chemical dependency counselors are especially thrilled about the move. A pleasant reception area with a soothing water feature and brighter offices and group rooms will provide a more welcoming and relaxing atmosphere for people at a time when they are anxious about starting a new chapter in their lives," said Tom Murphy, Director of Adult Services.

"Most treatment facilities including our current location are drab and institutional looking," said CD counselor Stephanie Sherve. "They just add to the frustration and anxiety that clients already feel." CD counselor Kari VanZant concurred adding, "We're so excited about the atmosphere in our new location. It will be serene and so much more welcoming." Said CD counselor Mandy Anderson, "I often invite my clients to come in when they get the urge to relapse and just sit in the lobby. It's safe and now they'll have a beautiful place to sit and reflect on their sobriety."

Look for news about an upcoming open house at our new location.

INLAND NORTHWEST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FUNDS TECHNOLOGY AT YFA



Like so many community agencies, YFA has handled technology with a typical nonprofit "make do with less" attitude. When hand-me-down computers are offered, we've gladly accepted and put them to good use for years and years. After all, they're way better than typewriters. If one computer's operating system doesn't communicate with another, we know how to print and hand carry. It's good exercise. And our counselors have gotten used to lining up to use the one computer with the consistent internet connection. **BUT NO MORE!**

Earlier this year, YFA was granted funding from the Inland Northwest Community Foundation to upgrade the computer software and hardware used by our Adult Services program. As we move into our new building, our chemical dependency counselors will begin using brand new internet enabled and networked computers. Not only will the computers allow better case management services through direct internet access to other community services and to win211.org but the network and central scheduling software will speed up client access to treatment and cut down on endless games of telephone tag as clients try to make or change appointments—especially tough on clients without telephone service. We are thrilled to be moving out of low-tech land and into the 21st century.

2008

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CHASE YOUTH AWARDS HONORS

Camille Paras, Shannon Hansen and Students 2 Students, Camille's leadership group at Lewis & Clark



YFA therapist Camille Paras facilitates a leadership group at Lewis & Clark High School called *Students 2 Students* that was honored with a *Chase Youth Award* in the teen division *Courage* category during the March 28 Chase Youth Awards ceremony.

Developed with funding from the *Safe Schools/Healthy Students* grant and *Youth n' Action* to enable a student driven focus on important issues like drugs, violence, mental health and physical safety, *Students 2 Students* has created a forum at LC where all students are welcomed to voice their thoughts and feelings about things that happen and issues they face at school, at home and in the community.



Shannon Hansen

"Given the confidence that their voices will be heard, students can talk about issues and offer support to each other when they are having difficult times in their lives whether it's peer conflict, social concerns, family discord or academic stress," said Camille. "Student discussions develop when students feel courageous enough to voice their opinions and this can lead to positive changes and the development of leadership skills." She said, "Leadership is also learned by listening to others and possessing the willingness to hear opinions while being open to different solutions."

Camille Paras and fellow YFA therapist Shannon Hansen, who is also out-stationed at Lewis and Clark through the *Safe Schools* grant, were both nominated individually by students for a Chase Leadership Award in the Adult Division. "YFA is honored by the nominations of our therapists, Camille and Shannon and thrilled that Camille's LC leadership group, *Students 2 Students* won the Chase Youth Courage Award," said YFA CEO Cathy Doran.



Camille Paras

YFA WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBER RON WEAKS



YFA is governed by a dedicated group of volunteer board members who donate their time, talent, and resources to ensure the agency's long tradition of service continues to benefit the Spokane community. We happily welcome new member, Ron Weak's.

Ron brings a long history of community service to YFA having served the boards of Habitat for Humanity and Alternatives to Violence both of Loveland, Co. as well as the City Council of Loveland. Ron moved to Spokane in 2006 to head up Materials Management at Providence Health Care. YFA is honored to welcome Ron to the board.....and he makes a fantastic southwestern stew!

YFA SAYS THANK YOU TO A REMARKABLE GROUP of therapists who provided mental health services in area public schools through federal *Safe Schools/Healthy Students* initiative



Funded by the *Safe Schools/Healthy Students* federal initiative in collaboration with Spokane Public Schools and ESD 101, YFA Connections has out-stationed 14 Masters level therapists in 42 local public schools in 6 area school districts for the past 2+ years. The *Safe Schools/Healthy Students* initiative was an unprecedented effort by the federal government to promote healthy childhood development and address school violence, alcohol and drug abuse through community collaborations in almost every state. Evaluations are underway now at the federal level. Although it may take a year or longer before the results are released, we know that our therapists had a critical impact at a very grassroots level.

Working within the schools, YFA therapists provided many thousands of hours of mental health education, assessment and intervention services directly to hundreds of students and their families. These were students and families who might otherwise not have accessed any mental health services at all. Our therapists also provided consultation and support to teachers and other school personnel.

Sadly, at the end of this school year, the program ends. Like most federal initiatives, *Safe Schools/Healthy Students* was funded for a limited period of time only. YFA is extremely proud of the services that were provided to the Cheney, Medical Lake, Deer Park, Nine Mile and Riverside School Districts as well as Spokane Public School District 81 and salutes this dedicated group of mental health therapists: Wendy Acosta, Rodger Bardwell, Diane Critchlow, Heather Dazell, Seth Ellenz, Shannon Hansen, Katie Jessop, Tony Kliment, Megan Krampitz, Camille Paras, Erin Wolf Reyburn, Michele Riordan, Teresa Smith and Suzie Toews.

We will miss working with all of them and we know the schools, students and families they were committed to will miss them as well.



Safe Schools
Healthy Students



901 E. Second Ave. Ste. 100
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509.532.2000

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Please join us for a Benefit Luncheon

**Tuesday June 3, 2008
at 11:45 a.m.**

Providence Auditorium
On the campus of Sacred Heart Medical Center

Keynote Speaker:
Shawna Beese-Bjurstrom
MC: Comedian Dan Cummins

Tickets: \$25.00

For more information, please call 532-2000 ext. 24
Proceeds benefit the youth, adults and families served by YFA Connections