

## The Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) News

The BHU hopes you are enjoying the longer days and the beautiful spring weather. As of April 2016, the BHU remains fully operational with three Behavioral Health Response Teams (BHRTs), one in each of the Bureau's Precincts, and the Service Coordination Team. The Bureau now has 103 Enhanced Crisis Intervention Team (ECIT) officers.

### U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL PRAISES PORTLAND POLICE



U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch visited Portland, one of six cities on her Community Policing Tour, to highlight the city's progress with community policing. One of her local stops was Central Precinct where she attended roll call and praised the Behavioral Health Unit, saying it was quickly becoming the national model for other agencies to follow.

Lynch recognized that the city negotiated a settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice stemming from a federal investigation that alleged Portland police used excessive force against people with mental illness. It calls for a series of changes to police policy, training and oversight. The Behavioral Health Unit was created to help improve officer interactions with people who suffer from mental illness.

Lynch said she believes it's important to come in the midst of the work. "We don't want to wait until the end to tell you where Portland is doing well," Lynch said.

### ECIT OFFICER ASSISTS A MAN IN CRISIS

Central Precinct responded to a call of a man threatening to set himself on fire. ECIT Officer Michael Hall arrived and began engaging the individual in conversation. He was holding lighter fluid and a lighter, continually stating he was not afraid to die. The individual threatened to set himself on fire if officers got too close. As other officers arrived the man would yell at them, but Officer Hall was able to get him to focus on their conversation.

The distressed person told Officer Hall he was in a bad place and repeated he was not afraid to die. Officer Hall continued talking to him for several minutes and was eventually able to convince him to set the lighter fluid and lighter down. The man was safely taken into custody and transported to a local hospital for a mental health evaluation.

## PIZZA PARTY AT NORTHSTAR



*"On behalf of the NorthStar Clubhouse Members and Staff and the NorthStar Advisory Board I would like to extend our thanks for sharing your time and joining our Pizza Party at the Clubhouse. I also want to thank you for your contribution of salad and drinks for the event as well."*

Members of the BHU and ECIT officers from East Precinct attended a pizza party at the NorthStar Clubhouse.

NorthStar is a community-based peer organization that believes in recovery from mental illness and provides opportunity for social and vocational skills, employment, and education.

Just recently the members of NorthStar clubhouse in Portland finished it's kitchen. They invited members from the Portland Police to join them for pizza made by the members in their new kitchen.

This social event allowed officers and members time together to gain a better understanding of each other and to build a better relationship between the police and members of the community who have mental illness.

For more information on NorthStar please visit: <http://www.northstarclubhouse.org>

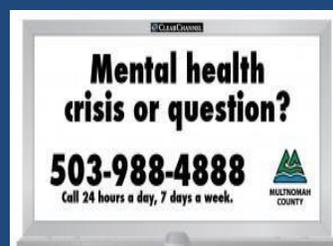
## WORKING TOGETHER TO BRING A SAFE SOLUTION

Portland Police responded to Union Pacific Railroads on the call of a trespasser damaging railroad property. They encountered a man who was high on methamphetamine and had been awake for over 26 hours. He climbed into an empty open bed rail car and refused to come out.

While trying to negotiate with him he would alternate between calm and irrational, often picking up rocks or metal to threaten officers. Numerous resources were used in an effort to bring a safe resolution. ECIT officers and Project Respond were both on scene. The Multnomah County Crisis Line, the Crisis Negotiation Team, and the Special Emergency Reaction Team were all consulted.

During the course of four hours, negotiation and planning continued. The man injected more methamphetamine and continued to threaten officers with sharp metal objects he found in the rail car. Eventually a plan was made to allow officers to more safely enter the car and take the man into custody. Neither the individual nor the officers were injured during the custody. The man was then transported to a local hospital.

Numerous people from patrol, specialty units, and our partner agencies worked together in order to bring this call safely to a close.



## PUBLIC SAFETY/MENTAL HEALTH COLLABORATION CONFERENCE



*Conference Panel Members*

In February, the BHU was invited to present at the first annual Public Safety/Mental Health Collaboration Conference sponsored by the Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association.

The conference was held in Portland and involved professionals from around Oregon with a focus on providing a forum for law enforcement and mental health professionals to strengthen collaborative efforts and to share best practices in mental health and public safety. Lt. Tashia Hager and BHRT, Officer Shaye Samora and Clinician Dinah Brooks, teamed up with Jay Auslander from Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare to present on Portland's crisis response model.

The panel discussion highlighted the partnership between the Portland Police Bureau and Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare. The panel discussed the importance of a collaborative response when someone is in crisis as well as during follow up to ensure individuals are connected to appropriate community resources. The conference also provided information on innovative programs such as Specialty/Diversion Courts, Peer Support Services, and Youth Mental Health.

## UPDATE ON SUPPORTIVE TRANSITION AND STABILIZATION PROGRAM

The Supportive Transitions & Stabilization (STS) Program is excited to share our first update since opening our doors on December 12, 2015. We have served 14 clients, many whom have high acute mental health and co-occurring disorders, minimal basic living skills, and have been experiencing homelessness and poverty, all of which are huge barriers to successful living.

The STS staff foster connections to specific services to address the needs of each individual served, as well as to ensure a long term housing and treatment plan upon discharge. We are building community relationships with partnering mental health agencies such as Folk Time, North Star, NAMI, and Cascadia. This program is meeting its goals of assisting in the stabilization process and helping to bridge the need for supportive, mental health housing. – Melissa Bishop, STS Program Supervisor.



*Officer Sean Christian, STS Program Supervisor Melissa Bishop, and STS Case Manager Dalando Vance*

## MEET ONE OF THE STS EMPLOYEES!



**DALANDO VANCE**

### **STS ASSISTANT CASE MANAGER**

I LOVE my job at Supportive Transitions and Stabilization (STS) program! The staff I get to work with are amazing, professional, and have “service before self” attitudes. I feel it is the kind of environment the STS clients’ benefit from most. It’s truly a pleasure to watch my colleagues work with our clients.

I have been clean and sober since May 26, 2013 and as I approach another milestone, I reflect on the day I was finally ready to take steps towards change. I was “arrescued” -aka- arrested by the Portland Police, who undoubtedly helped save my life. I was cold, wet, in pain, confused, and scared for my life – all due to the selfish choices I was making. Most of all I remember the Service Coordination Team (SCT) offering help. I thank God! While I was incarcerated for 90 days, I worked with Transition Projects-Clark Center to secure a bed after I was released on formal probation, knowing I couldn’t make changes if I was still living on the street.

While at the Clark Center, I started to attend life-skill classes they offered in order to learn something new, keep busy, and stay out of trouble. One day my Case Manager asked me to meet with her after group. She handed me an eligibility letter for the Service Coordination Team, offering transitional housing through Central City Concern Housing Rapid Response (HRR). I moved into HRR housing, started drug and alcohol treatment with Volunteers of America Day Treatment, and did service work in the community. I completed treatment, graduated the SCT program at City Hall, and obtained employment with Clean and Safe. Since then, I have moved into permanent housing and worked as an Assistant Case Manager for HRR; the same program I graduated from. I loved it so much; I applied for a permanent position with the Supportive Transitions and Stabilization (STS) program. I’m honored to say that I’ve been here since the program’s beginning. I truly appreciate all the experience I’ve accumulated and enjoy every moment of the program’s growth and development.

I was so excited about getting the SCT eligibility letter; I still keep it to this day as a reminder of where my journey has taken me, ultimately leading me to work for STS. So I say thanks to all the STS funders. – Dalando Vance, STS Assistant Case Manager.