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News for Immediate Release

COLEMAN COLLABORATES WITH REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS TO ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AT COLLEGES

KENT, Ohio (February 10, 2009) – “Almost half of college-age adults suffer from mental-health disorders, including addictions, but less than one in four are seeking treatment,” according to new research out of Columbia University (Blanco et. Al.) Similarly, according to a recent survey done on healthyminds.org, “nearly half of all college students report feeling so depressed that they had trouble functioning, and 15 percent meet the criteria for clinical depression. Untreated depression can lead to suicide, which is the second leading cause of death of college students. It is important for college-age students to seek care so they can have a healthy mind and lead a healthy life.”

A planning group of four Mental Health & Recovery Boards: Portage, Summit, Stark and Trumbull Lifelines; representatives from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and key members from the Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation and Coleman Professional Services met in response to the alarming statistics in the Summer of 2007 to brainstorm ideas to address these important mental health issues by raising awareness and reducing stigma. They wanted to develop a grass roots approach to address colleges and universities in their region of Northeast Ohio to help educate students on the facts regarding behavioral health and mental illness in a manner they could best relate.

In March of 2008, Coleman Professional Services was awarded a \$96,000 grant from the Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation of Hudson, Ohio in an initiative to implement a regional mental health awareness campaign. Their hope was to utilize collaborative efforts with the original planning group and area colleges to develop a repeatable awareness model that would encourage more students to openly discuss the common issues facing their campus communities relating to mental illness and understand the resources to help their friends and family.

Coleman contracted with the University of Akron’s Institute for Health and Social Policy to coordinate a series of ten focus groups to garner information from college students to measure levels of current attitudes and awareness of mental health issues. The Institute will also complete a program evaluation in the spring after implementation to determine the efficacy of the program.

Ms. Meghan Urbon was selected as the Program Coordinator from Coleman Professional Services to work with Programming Developer of the project, Professor Dr. Jason McGlothlin of Kent State University, to construct the most effective awareness campaign by utilizing the data collected from the focus groups. The programming, formally titled “State of U”, will be implemented in five colleges and universities throughout Northeast Ohio: Kent State University (Main Campus) Mount Union College, Hiram College, The University of Akron and Youngstown State University.

“We are very grateful to have the support and efforts of the key mental health stakeholders in our region, NAMI, and all of the colleges. This initiative is being driven by our region’s ability to collaborate effectively, pull together our resources and the overall willingness to create a giant support system to address these important mental health issues facing college students,” Urbon said.

The Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation was founded in 2001 in Hudson, Ohio, as a private grant-making foundation. The Foundation works to pursue the interests of Margaret Clark Morgan, longtime resident of Hudson and active community member. Our primary focus of support is the mental health field, with secondary interest in the education and arts fields. Our mission is to improve mental health practices in Northeast Ohio through effective investment in progressive organizations and innovative initiatives that raises the standards of prevention, treatment and recovery. For more information on the Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation, please visit <http://www.mcmfdn.org/>.

Coleman Professional Services is a nationally recognized not-for-profit provider of behavioral health and rehabilitation programs that improve the lives of individuals, families and businesses in Northeast Ohio. For more information, visit www.coleman-professional.com or contact Meghan Urbon at (330) 676-6926 or meghan.urbon@coleman-professional.com.

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