

## **The Kent Center Hosts Outdoor Open House in Celebration of May is Mental Health Month**

May 14, 2015 – The Kent Center (TKC), a provider of community-based outpatient mental health, substance abuse, educational, housing, and primary care services, will host an Outdoor Open House to celebrate May is Mental Health Month. The Open House will take place Wednesday, May 20th from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM at 2756 Post Road in Warwick.

“The Kent Center has provided behavioral health services to Kent County residents for almost 40 years,” stated David S. Lauterbach, ACSW, President and CEO of The Kent Center. “With one in every four people today living with mental illness, we are opening our doors to shed light on the available programs for individuals who are coping with anxiety, depression, PTSD, substance abuse, and other emotional difficulties. I encourage anyone who struggles with – or loves someone with – emotional difficulties to come to our Open House to gain understanding of issues that impact all of us.”

The Open House will be held in The Kent Center’s front parking lot, is free, and is open to the public. Attendees will be given the opportunity to receive free blood pressure checks and mental health checklists. They can speak with representatives from The Kent Center’s diverse programs, including Emergency Services and Intake, the Court Clinic Program, Counseling Services, Youth and Family Services, The Eleanor Briggs School, Housing and Residential Services, and Primary Care Partners.

Guests will also have the chance to meet Kathleen Shalvey’s Therapy Dogs “Hunter” and “Forest”. A longtime advocate of the wellbeing of animals and humans, and a Professional Pet Assisted Therapist from Windwalker in Warwick, Shalvey will answer questions about the benefits of pet assisted therapy when it is effectively integrated into health care, rehabilitation, social services, and education.

Parents can explore the benefits of art therapy for children and learn about The Eleanor Briggs School, a certified special education program for grades K-12 that provides an effective alternative to residential placement for troubled children and youth. Arts and crafts and take-home projects will be provided to any children who attend.

Representatives from the YMCA of Greater Providence will be on site to share success stories of TKC Clients who now serve as “Ambassadors of the Y”. This partnership has led to significant changes in participants’ health, including weight loss, decreased cholesterol levels, and increased morale and self-esteem.

Paintings and handmade jewelry created by Hillsgrove House’s Creative Occupational Unit will be available for purchase. Rhode Island’s first Clubhouse, Hillsgrove House provides a restorative environment for adults who seek a socially fulfilling and vocationally productive lifestyle through a supportive community in a clubhouse environment and through a work ordered day. All proceeds from art sales will directly support its Club’s programs.

The event will be catered by The Deli Delicious!, a caterer/deli that creates specialty foods and Middle Eastern cuisine in Cranston, Rhode Island. The deli currently employs one of The Kent Center's Clubhouse Members through Hillsgrove House's Transitional Employment Program.