

Leadership Change at New River Valley Free Clinics

January 15, 2008

The Mental Health Association of the New RiverValley and the Free Clinic of the New RiverValley have announced that their Co-Executive Director, Amy Forsyth-Stephens, has resigned from both organizations, effective February 29, 2008. Ms. Forsyth-Stephens has plans to concentrate her work in the area of health care fund development at the national level.

“The loss of Amy from our local non-profit leadership circle will be difficult, personally and professionally,” stated Harriet Dorsey, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Mental Health Association of the New RiverValley. “We so trust and respect her talent and vision. Over the past fourteen years, Amy has taken our small non-profit and turned it into one of the most progressive and prestigious Mental Health Association chapters in our nation. She has been the primary creative force behind our remarkable growth. We are truly fortunate and appreciative to have had her at the helm for as long as we have.”

Zach Slagel, Chair of the Board of the Free Clinic of the New RiverValley, underscores these sentiments. “Over the past two years, Amy has successfully implemented many fantastic changes that have resulted in improved health care services to our area’s most needy individuals. She has doubled our service volume with the addition of a full-time staff nurse practitioner at our Christiansburg facility, opened a strong satellite clinic in GilesCounty, and stabilized our much-needed Dental Program. Her focus on documenting health outcomes of our patients has solidified our place as one of the most progressive and comprehensive free clinics in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Mental Health Association has appointed agency Associate Director, Patrick Halpern, to assume the position of Executive Director after a period of transition. Likewise, the Free Clinic has chosen their second-in-command, Michelle Brauns, to assume the Executive Director job. These internal selections will ensure continuity for patients, staff and community partners.

“I am very pleased that the Boards of both organizations have chosen as my successors two key people who have been instrumental in our successes over the past months. Both are solidly behind our advancement toward increased “interoperability” of the local health care safety net. The transition to new executive leadership should be virtually seamless as a result,” said Forsyth-Stephens. “Leaving a position after fourteen years is not an easy thing to do, but it helps to know that the organizations will be in very capable hands and that momentum will not be sacrificed.”

Contact the Mental Health Association of the New River Valley at 540-951-4990 or the Free Clinic of the New River Valley at 540-381-0820 for more information.