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Art MATTERS

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Creative approach

Artists in recovery celebrate 2nd annual Studio 35 Day

By Mercury Staff

Blank canvases became bold works of art, voices and instruments harmonized, and indoor gardens blossomed as Fellowship Health Resources celebrated its 2nd Annual Studio 35 Day. In all of the seven states and nine regions where FHR provides services, staff and people served gathered to celebrate creative expression as a powerful tool in recovery.

"Today is all about embracing creativity. Studio 35 Day allows the FHR community to celebrate coming together and utilizing the arts as a form of self-expression," explained Caroline Gates, Studio 35 artistic leader.

Studio 35, an innovative program of FHR, is an agency-wide therapeutic arts approach that provides individuals recovering from mental illness and addictive disorders a valuable extension to traditional therapy. Through implementing arts in the form of visual art, music, dance, horticulture, and writing, among other arts, Studio 35 enables persons served, staff, and community members to explore self-expression and creativity.

This year's theme, Enhance Your Region, enabled all of FHR's nine regions to hold activities that would further enrich their artistic programs and spaces. Events that took place ranged from the creation of stunning murals to learning how to line dance.

In Phoenixville, staff and residents gathered to celebrate art through a variety of artistic activities, including painting, dancing, and music. Consumers were invited to bring their own music and instruments to join in on a "jam session" with an open microphone. In addition, line dancing lessons were held, where staff and consumers joined in to learn the steps to several songs. The day was complete when everyone contributed to a creative mural to be hung in the space.

The FHR community in Pennsylvania agreed that the day was all about using art as a means for inspiration and self-expression. Made evident by the good spirit and smiling faces, FHR Community Liaison Marianne Horan, explained, "It was a great way to mark the day and remember that the road to recovery is shared by all."

Pictures and stories shared agency-wide were proof of the day's success in support of FHR's mission. "Helping individuals to express themselves through creativity is not something that is a supplement to a service



Submitted photos
Above and at left are some of the artworks
created at Studio 35 Day.

CEO Joe Driobek said in awe.

"Oftentimes, an idea catches a little steam and then just sort of fizzles out. This is not the case with Studio 35. We know that recovery is real, and that this program can help you get there."

To learn more about the services and community initiatives of FHR, and to get involved with the exciting new programs being offered by Studio 35, visit www.fellowshiphr.org or contact Studio 35 Artistic Leader Caroline Gates at 401-642-4431.

FHR (Fellowship Health Resources, Inc.), headquartered in Lincoln, R.I., is a nonprofit agency providing both clinical and supportive services to persons with mental illness, co-occurring disorders, and other life challenges. Since opening its first program in 1975, FHR has helped thousands of people each year start new lives of dignity and purpose. FHR currently serves individuals in 74 programs in the states of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, Delaware, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina.

we provide, it's part of the core. Studio 35 changes lives, and that's what makes celebrating today so important." FHR President and