

Jefferson Health Behavioral Health Services is honored and very grateful to have been selected by the Jet Start Foundation as the recipient of its fund raising efforts. Jefferson Health formally Kennedy Health has a long history of providing quality mental health and substance abuse services dating back to 1983 when we opened our adult inpatient unit. Over the past 29 years we have added inpatient child and adolescent mental health services and a full continuum of outpatient mental health and substance abuse services with programming that spans the age range from five years to sixty-five years and beyond. We offer both inpatient and outpatient behavioral health services at our Cherry Hill campus and Outpatient behavioral health services at our Washington Township campus.

By now you are all well aware of the 'one-woman dynamo' known as Donna Bennett. We have gotten to know Donna and have witnessed her passion for advocating on behalf of individuals struggling with behavioral health issues and for their families as well. As professionals who work with patients who struggle every day with the challenges that arise from mental illness, chemical dependence and for many a combination of both of these factors, Donna was truly an inspiration for all of us here at Jefferson. We feel we have found a kindred spirit and someone who we would be proud to work with.

We recently met with Donna and the conversation quickly focused on the work that Jefferson does on our inpatient unit as well as our outpatient programming. We discussed a "Comfort Room" project that we have been looking to start. The Comfort Room is a room that will be located on the inpatient unit that will provide a nurturing environment where patients will work with staff to develop 'self-regulation skills'. These skills, once learned and reinforced in the Comfort Room, can be used by the patient prior to getting agitated or upset, allowing them to remain in control of their emotions and thus their behavior. The room will be designed to support the patient with special lighting and furniture in addition to the special supplies and treatment modalities that will be available in the room. Research published in academic literature has supported the use of this type of modality, identifying a decrease in acting-out behavior in treatment facilities where it is being utilized and has been shown to reduce the overall occurrence of seclusion and restraint. These skills not only benefit the child while

in treatment, but can also be easily translated to their home and school environment once shared with family and friends.

Following a tour, Donna also shared her interest in being involved in beautification projects on the units and in our outdoor courtyard, using funds generated by the Jet Start Foundation. We, at Jefferson Health formally Kennedy Health truly feel blessed to be involved with Donna and the Foundation and look forward to developing a long-standing relationship, working together on behalf of those we serve.