

HEALTH CARE HEROES

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CATEGORY

COMMUNITY OUTREACH ORGANIZATION

TRIANGLE RESIDENTIAL OPTIONS FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSERS

Triangle Residential Options for Substance Abusers is focused on the goal of teaching substance abusers how to live free of their addictions.

The Durham nonprofit provides a two-year residential substance abuse treatment program free of charge. Residents range in age from 18 to over 60. Most have struggled with addiction to drugs or alcohol for more than 10 years. Close to 70 percent have a criminal record, and about half come to TROSA as an alternative to immediate incarceration.

The program provides vocational training, education, mental health services, peer counseling, leadership training, housing and follow-up care.

Founded in 1994, TROSA is now the largest residential therapeutic community in North Carolina. Over those years, TROSA has grown from a startup budget of \$18,000 and nine clients to serving more than 400 clients daily with a budget of more than \$8 million.

TROSA accepts substance abusers on one condition: They must have a strong desire to change their lives. It is one of three licensed therapeutic communities in North Carolina and the only one located in the Triangle. In recent years, the program has served more than 100 people from the Triangle area annually.

The two-year length of the program sets TROSA apart from many other treatment options available in the community. TROSA works with addiction experts to integrate evidence-based practices into the program. It currently provides services to dual-diagnosed individuals who are struggling with mental illness such as depression or bipolar disorder as well as addiction. A range of specialized services are offered, including Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, anger management, and parenting, among others. In 2004, the organization added an on-site medical clinic at its James Street campus to coordinate health care services for residents.

TROSA's residents interact with members of the community on a daily basis through the vocational training businesses that TROSA operates, which include a frame shop, a moving company and a landscaping business.

In 2001, TROSA President and CEO Kevin McDonald won the Leadership for a Changing World Award given by the Ford Foundation.

TROSA is focusing efforts on developing a more integrated campus that would help move the organization toward its goal of becoming a model long-term therapeutic community.

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

MARCH 30, 2007

2007



McDonald