

# BRIDGES of AMERICA

*A Life Changing Therapeutic Community*

## Voices of Smart Justice

### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

We worked very hard to get quite a bit accomplished during the 2012 legislative session.

As reported in the *Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association's* Legislative Summary, "the Smart Justice initiative generated considerable debate in committees on both sides.

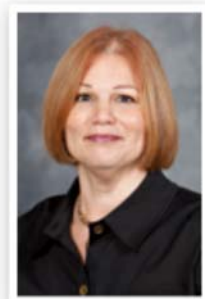
Proposed bills included expansion of diversion and misdemeanor probation options for drug offenders, creating community reentry options, allowing re-evaluation of sentences for certain drug offenders, clarifying the intent for school-based zero tolerance policies, and shifting the juvenile justice focus and resources to earlier interventions."

For the full FADAA Legislative Session Review, including budgets, bills, and priorities for next session, click [here](#).

The new Jacksonville Bridge will be complete in the next couple of months and we look forward to opening our 400-bed treatment center in Duval County. Check out our Facebook page for [pictures](#) of the progress!

I would like to personally thank my staff for their commitment and dedication through this time of transition. We have had to make several adjustments in response to the budget cuts, but we remain positive and continue to live out our mission.

Thank you for believing that people can change.



### UPCOMING GRADUATIONS

#### Orlando Bridge

Thursday, May 17th  
7PM - 9PM

#### Bradenton Bridge

Thursday, May 24th  
11AM - 2PM

#### Auburndale Bridge

Thursday, May 24th  
7PM - 9PM

#### Orlando Bridge Transition Center

Friday, June 1st  
10:30AM - 1PM

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### EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

*Lei Costantino Brown*

President and CEO

## EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT

### Orlando Bridge Culinary Arts Graduates



Graduates pictured with ACF Certified Chef & Instructor Michael Schnitzer (L) and Facility Director Raul Banasco (R)

Bridges of America offers the American Culinary Federation (ACF) *Culinary Skills Fundamentals Program* at the Bradenton, Broward, and Orlando facilities. This program is a minimum of six months and requires 1,000 hours of educational and hands-on training that includes 30 hours of ServSafe sanitation safety.

Apprentices work under the guidance of an ACF Certified Chef to complete training on *Sanitation and Safety, Tools and Equipment, Knife Skills, Cold Kitchen (Pantry), and Hot Kitchen*. Upon passing the test, apprentices receive a Certificate of Completion from ACF and ServSafe that will enable them to secure higher-paying jobs in the Culinary Arts field. These men will be honored at the Orlando Bridge Transition Center Graduation on June 1st.



We would like to recognize an outstanding employee at the Broward County Bridge who epitomizes the team spirit with a "Can Do" attitude. LaTonya DeShazior started as an Operations Tech with BOA a little over a year ago. She moved into the role as assistant to the Employment Specialist, and now she is working as an Employment Specialist full time. She not only does her job effectively but she jumps in to help others, and always with a smile on her face, which is contagious. In March when BOA lost beds and had to downsize staff, Ms. DeShazior was asked to take on additional duties as the Office Assistant. She has taken on the role with a smile and a great attitude, and hasn't missed a beat in her primary role. Bridges of America salutes you, Ms. DeShazior, for your exceptional service!

## PROGRAM PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT

### The Turning Point Bridge



Congratulations to Mr. Hamilton, who has made superb progress since arriving at the Turning Point Bridge in July 2011. His employer hired him as a dishwasher and in eight short months he has moved through the ranks as a Cook and a Supervisor, and he is now a Manager! The employer has already offered to pay Hamilton's moving expenses and first month's rent in order for him to live in close proximity to his job upon release.

Assistant Facility Director Barbara Leveton and her staff presented Mr. Hamilton with a Letter of Commendation to acknowledging his accomplishments and role as a positive influence on the Turning Point Bridge Community.

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## Texas Christian University Training

On April 17th and 18th Bridges of America hosted Texas Christian University's Institute of Behavioral Research for a Mapping-Enhanced Counseling Training. Attendees included representatives from Bridges of America and the Florida Department of Corrections.

The two-day training introduced counselors and treatment specialists to the core skills and clinical applications of TCU Mapping-Enhanced Counseling and demonstrated its relevance in cognitively focused HIV-Prevention programs for substance abusing criminal justice populations. Mapping is a simple, visual representation system that has been shown to foster improvements in core treatment areas such as focus and memory, problem solving, communication, engagement, participation, and counselor-client rapport.

Special thanks to Dr. Don Dansereau, Dr. Wayne Lehman, Dr. Grace Rowan-Szal, and Norma Bartholomew, MA, LPC, for graciously providing the free training. It was a wonderful learning experience and our clinical staff is in the process of implementing what they learned.

Click [here](#) for more information or to download free materials from TCU's Institute of Behavioral Research.

## Lori Costantino-Brown Nominated for the Orlando Business Journal's "Women Who Mean Business" Award

## 2012 Women Who Mean Business Nominees

[www.bridgesofamerica.com](http://www.bridgesofamerica.com)

Bridges of America is a nonprofit organization founded in 1972 with the mission of changing criminal behavior through a practical, comprehensive approach that includes intensive substance-abuse counseling, parenting classes and work-release programs. Bridges' core value is a belief that people can change.

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