

*"DBSA is invaluable.
Excellent resource.
May have saved my life."*



2007 ANNUAL REPORT



DEPRESSION AND BIPOLAR SUPPORT ALLIANCE



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is a distinct privilege and pleasure to have the opportunity to serve this year as President of the Board for DBSA Greater Houston which affords me the opportunity to work with some of the finest and most generous people I have ever encountered. In a few short years, DBSA has become one of the most dynamic charitable organizations in our city and our staff and board are wholly committed to our mission of providing free support groups to aid in the recovery of those who live with depression and/or bipolar disorder. In terms of both size and scope, no other area mental health organization offers this kind of invaluable service to the community as we do at DBSA.



At the beginning of 2008, I am proud to report that DBSA Greater Houston is again on sound financial footing due to the generosity of many donors and our prudent use of the monies that were entrusted to this organization during this past year. Our fundraising goals for 2007 were exceeded by over 25%, which serves as a reminder of just how invaluable DBSA is to our community. Charitable giving to DBSA from private foundations reached an unprecedented level in 2007. The John S. Dunn Research Foundation, Houston Endowment and the Baylor Methodist Community Health Fund were just a few of the area donors who financially invested in the work of our organization. With support from individuals and foundations, and with the leadership of Ed Cappel, we were able to strengthen our existing support groups, and create new support groups for underserved areas of Houston.

In 2007, we continued to implement both our comprehensive strategic and marketing plans. The execution of our strategic plan greatly improved our fund raising capabilities, enhanced our support group model, and increased our recruitment and training of volunteers. Moreover, the marketing plan significantly raised our profile within the community and helped us develop invaluable partnerships with a broad range of mental health and social services providers. We will continue to work on full implementation of both plans in 2008.

It is important that I acknowledge our support group facilitators who so graciously donated their time to our organization in 2007. These special individuals are our most precious resource; therefore, we make available myriad training programs to continually strengthen their facilitative skills.

Through a generous donation from Houston Endowment, we will be able to expand and complete a research project designed to demonstrate the level of effectiveness of our support group model as further discussed in this Annual Report. We believe this evaluation of our services will become the model for other DBSA support group research throughout the nation.

In 2007, we welcomed our newest staff members: Executive Director, Glenn Urbach; Program Coordinator, Jill Ahrens; and Office Manager, Katie Grier. Katie has taken over the job once occupied by Sandy Robertson who in November was promoted to that of Program Director. Glenn, Sandy and Jill all received their Master's Degrees from the University of Houston and each hold the appropriate State of Texas licensure in their respective fields. Katie brings several years of bookkeeping and accounting experience to our organization.


Our main challenge for 2008 is to continue to strengthen our over 50 existing support groups while also increasing participation through the creation of new groups. In this regard, we hope to open support groups that strategically target certain populations such as veterans, seniors, and the indigent who are notably prone to experience depression and/or bipolar disorder. Moreover, we plan to open new groups in geographical areas that specifically target the north-west and southeast corridors of Houston.

Finally, I believe there exists a tremendous need for the mission of DBSA Greater Houston, and we have harnessed the energy of dedicated board members, staff members, facilitators, and volunteers who will not rest until the need is met. The reason for my own involvement is quite simple and a labor of love. I lost someone very close to me to depression several years ago, and if I have anything at all to do with saving one of your loved ones, the payback would be enormous.

Thank you very much,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bolivar C. Andrews". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bolivar C. Andrews



“This is a very professionally-run group full of generous, kind people ready and willing to help one another by virtue of their membership in this unique group.”

– A Group Participant

2008 Board of Directors

Bolivar C. Andrews, *President*
Fred Dunlop, *President Elect*
Ed Cappel, *Past President*
Gary Levering, *Founding President*
Carolyn Light, *Secretary*
Carleton McHenry, *Treasurer*

Clyde Buck
Linda Condon
Lois E. Davis
Martin Debrovner
Don Haley
Martha Hanson, Ph.D.
Dick Kilday
Keith Kimmick
Peggy Landrum, Ph.D.
Franna Litton
B.D. McAndrew
Ed McCullough
Wells McGee
Carol Ann Paddock
Will Penland
Jan Redford, Ph.D.
Ronda G. Robinson
Peggy Roe
Bill Rudolf

Lynda Underwood
Richard B. Walters
Ted Weiss
Terrell Wilson
Marie Wise

2008 Advisory Board

Philip Burguières, *Chairman*
Ron Bandy
Ben Bergeron
Jim Braniff
Rev. Linda Christians
John Eads
Jim Gasper
Frank Griffin
Cynthia Guill
Maureen Hackett
Evangelina Hammonds, LCSW
Brett Hogan
Tim Horan
Evelyn Jewell
Granville Knight, Jr.
Flo McGee
Stephanie McGraw
Sandra McHenry
Marcie Mir Tipton, LCSW
Vicki Montague

Robert Paddock
John Pipkin
Brad Raffle
George Shannon
Doug Swanson
Lene Symes, Ph.D., RN
Vivian Wise

Medical Advisors

Susan Backes, M.D.
Matthew Braums, M.D.
John W. Burruss, M.D.
James Lomax, M.D.
Alice Mao, M.D.
Walfrido Sepúlveda, M.D.
Mary Ann Ty, M.D.

Executive Director

Glenn D. Urbach, LMSW

Staff

Sandy Robertson, LPC
Jill Ahrens, LPC
Katie Grier

THE COMMITMENT OF DBSA

Our Mission:

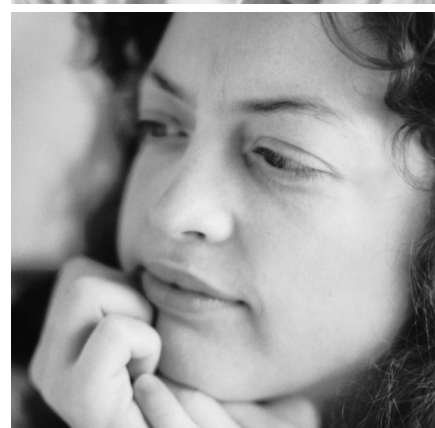
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance Greater Houston (DBSA) sponsors free support groups that assist in the recovery of individuals with depression and bipolar disorder.

Our Vision:

With support groups provided by DBSA Greater Houston, every person with depression and bipolar disorder can enhance their recovery from these treatable illnesses.

Goal Statement:

DBSA Greater Houston will be the leading provider of free, well attended, effective support groups throughout the Houston metropolitan area. This support will include collaboration with community resources to enhance the recovery of individuals with depression and/or bipolar disorder and to incorporate the families in the recovery process.



2007 PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) Greater Houston sponsors a myriad of support groups across the Houston metropolitan area to assist in the recovery of those who live with depression and/or bipolar disorder. What started out as a vision of a few has become a lifeline for many. DBSA Greater Houston support groups offer so much more than support by providing education, comfort, acceptance, and empowerment. Most of all, our support groups provide the understanding of those who know the unique pain that can come with a mood disorder and the triumph that can be achieved with the support of others.

DBSA Greater Houston began 2007 with 36 support groups located at 20 different sites. During the course of the year, an additional 15 groups opened, and we added 6 new locations. By the end of 2007, DBSA Greater Houston was working with 300 to 400 individuals on a weekly basis throughout the Houston metropolitan area. In September, we celebrated the opening of our 50th support group at the John S. Dunn Outreach Center at Christ Church Cathedral in downtown Houston. Considering that in 2003 DBSA Greater Houston sponsored just 5 support groups, the opening of the 50th support group is a true testament to the immense need in the community for the unique type of services offered by our organization.

As in years past, DBSA Greater Houston continued to sponsor two types of *free* support groups in 2007 – open and closed. Open groups are available to anyone needing support as they cope with depression and/or bipolar disorder. DBSA Greater Houston open support groups welcome not just those who are diagnosed with depression and/or bipolar disorder but also family, friends, and any individuals seeking a better understanding of these mood disorders. All DBSA Greater Houston open support groups are led by trained volunteer facilitators, many of whom began their journey with our organization in the darkness of depression and/or bipolar disorder. All volunteer facilitators are managed and guided by DBSA Greater Houston's licensed professional staff. The staff also helps recruit, interview, and train all new volunteer facilitators to ensure that those entrusted with helping others are of the highest caliber and possess the appropriate facilitator tools needed to succeed. In 2007, DBSA Greater Houston started open support groups in Clear Lake, Spring, and The Woodlands. We intend to expand the available support groups in 2008 and future years.

Who attended a DBSA Greater Houston support group in this past year? Based on participant forms completed by some of last year's participants, below is a snapshot of those who attended one of our open support groups in 2007:

- 64% were female and 36% male
- 79% of attendees were individuals diagnosed with a mood disorder and 21% were family members
- 85% of attendees were Caucasian, 8% were Hispanic, 4% African-American, 1% Asian and 2% were Other
- 58% of attendees reported having depression and 62% reported a diagnosis of bipolar disorder
- 88% of attendees were regularly taking medications, 83% were under the care of a psychiatrist and 65% sought out the services of a professional therapist

DBSA Greater Houston also sponsors closed support groups. These groups are only open to residents or members of the location in which the meetings occur. The locations of these closed groups represent a carefully developed partnership between DBSA Greater Houston and other organizations in the community. The participants in these groups tend to require a higher level of care, and therefore, they are facilitated by licensed mental health professionals. At the end of 2007, DBSA Greater Houston sponsored closed groups at Covenant House, the Discover Program for Women, The Gathering Place, and the Jester Unit at the Texas Department of Corrections.

In 2007, DBSA Greater Houston also launched its Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) program. Three of our most exceptional volunteer facilitators, Dyene Galantini, Jim Rice, and Todd Simmons attended the nationally acclaimed Georgia Certified Peer Specialist training course. These three individuals gained the training and certification to carry out specific tasks that do not require professional licensure. This has been a great assistance to our entire program staff.

This past year DBSA Greater Houston embarked on one of its most ambitious endeavors, a comprehensive research study designed to specifically measure the efficacy of DBSA Greater Houston's support group model. For years, we have witnessed the transformative powers of our support groups to fundamentally change lives. It was decided to quantifiably measure what DBSA Greater Houston has believed since its inception – support groups work.

The research study encompasses several smaller studies including an Outcome Measures Study designed to measure the ability of DBSA Greater Houston's support groups to tangibly improve the lives of attendees. In addition to that study, DBSA Greater Houston conducted a Group Participant Study to help identify exactly who attends a DBSA Greater Houston sponsored support group. Heading up our study in 2007 was Dr. Ralph Culler, Director of the Evaluation Research Fellowship Program at the University of Texas' Hogg Foundation for Mental Health. Dr. Culler's work was greatly enhanced by our dedicated staff and members of our Program Committee, four of whom hold doctorates in the field of mental health. Reports from these studies will be published in 2008 and will help enhance our support group model as well as lay the groundwork for ongoing quality improvement activities for years to come.

The year 2007 can be summed up in two words – tremendous growth. In 2007, DBSA Greater Houston grew its reach in the community and in the diversification of its funding sources. Most importantly, DBSA Greater Houston grew its ability to continue to provide the immeasurable support for those who live in the darkness of depression or in the shadows of bipolar disorder. It was the support of our wonderful staff, dedicated board and generous contributors that defined DBSA Greater Houston's accomplishments in 2007, and it is this support that will carry us into 2008 and beyond.

FACILITATORS

Our success in 2007 was greatly attributed to the efforts and dedication of our wonderful array of support group facilitators. Many of these individuals donated the two greatest gifts any organization could ever ask of someone; one’s labor and one’s love. It is with tremendous gratitude that we honor these amazing men and women:

Patricia Andrews	Dyene Galantini	Gary Levering	Ann Simpson
Debbie Arnold, LCSW	Aaron Gerstler	David Maxwell	Jennifer Slaughter, LCSW
Douglas Bednorz	Penni Gerstler	Stephanie McGraw	James Springer
Roger Bleier	Jonathan Guthrie	Hans Meyer, LMSW	Ken Sumner
Katrina Brauer	Julie Guthrie	Cindy Moore	Pat Sumner
Mary Ann Brauer	Brent Hancharyk	Crystal Morrison, LPC	Sharon Throckmorton, LPC
Nola Brody	Martha Hanson	James Mulkey	Erin Trainor, LCSW
Christopher Brown, LCSW	Phil Hanson	Teddy Noble, LPC, LCDC	Dick Walters
Cody Chambers	Donna Hoffman	Walt Parmer	Lance Watkins
Amy Coffelt	Sarah Hyde	Kim Pate	Cheryl Weiss
Linda Condon	Karen Jerger	Marilyn Patterson	Steven Weiss
Bobbie Culbertson	Rosemary Kallinen	Angela Raley, LPC Intern	Ted Weiss
Lois Davis	Tom Kennedy, LPC	Jim Rice	
Mary Ann Descant, LPC	Neal Krenzke	Bill Rudolf	
Denise Estrin, LCSW	Mary Kuskowski, LPC	Todd Simmons	

**DBSA Greater Houston
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
2007 Financial Information**

INCOME STATEMENT 2007

	Jan – Dec 07
Income	
Contributions	
Corporate	\$ 1,295.00
Foundations	284,600.00
Individual	235,413.00
Total Contributions	521,308.00
Interest on Accounts	16,988.00
Other Revenue	11,363.00
Total Income	<u>\$ 549,659.00</u>

	Jan – Dec 07
Expense	
Personnel	
Payroll Expenses	\$ 242,943.00
Contract Professional Facilitators	49,435.00
Other Contract Labor	18,990.00
Rent and Facilities	26,628.00
Marketing, Printing, and Postage	22,999.00
Insurance	11,936.00
Office Equipment	11,436.00
Volunteer Support	4,551.00
Education and Training	3,932.00
Other Expenses	10,274.00
Total Expense	<u>403,124.00</u>
Surplus	<u><u>\$ 146,535.00</u></u>

DBSA GREATER HOUSTON 2007 DONORS

We are truly grateful to the following donors whose gifts and pledges support our programs.

\$10,000 and above

Albert and Margaret Alkek Foundation
Baylor Methodist Community Health Fund
The Brown Foundation, Inc.
Burguieres Family Foundation
Minnie and Ed Cappel
John S. Dunn Research Foundation
Mary and John Eads
The Ellwood Foundation
Jo Ann and Gary Levering
Jack H. and William M. Light
Charitable Trust
Ruth Jones MacDonald Charitable Trust
Flo and Bill McGee
The Rockwell Fund, Inc.
The Simmons Foundation, Inc.
Suzi and Doug Swanson
The Trammell Foundation

\$5,000 – \$9,999

Eli Lilly and Company
Wells McGee and The Florence and
William K. McGee Jr. Family Foundation
Cecille and George Shannon
St. Martin's Episcopal Church –
Outreach Program
Lynda and David Underwood

\$2,000 – \$4,999

Mrs. Nancy C. Allen
Marilyn and Bolivar Andrews
Maggie and Mike Castleman
Linda and Don Condon
Harriet and Joe Foster
Robert R. Franklin M.D.
Eric Gleacher Foundation
Good Earth Foundation
Cynthia and Ben Guill
Kiwanis Foundation of Houston
Gaye and Ed McCullough
Sheila and Steven Miller
John and Bobbie Nau/
Silver Eagle Distributors, L.P.
Carol Ann and Bob Paddock
Barbara and John Patton
Susan and Will Penland
Kathy and John Pipkin
Barbara and Corbin J. Robertson, Jr.
Bill Rudolf
The Stuart Charitable Foundation
William and Marie Wise
Family Foundation

\$1,000 – \$1,999

Friends of DBSA (2)
Stanford and Joan Alexander Foundation
Jana and Scott Arnoldy
Missy and Ron Bandy
Mr. and Mrs. John Bitner
Marsha and Jim Braniff
Sharrie and Clyde Buck
Cam and Rod Canion
Vicki and J.M. Clepper
DBSA National
Jackie and Fred Dunlop
Cyndi and Steve Ford
Frank Family Fund
Ann and Jimmy Gibbs
Fran and Welden Granger
Ann and Bob Gregory
Martha and Phil Hanson
Janis and Randy Henry

Marnie and Lee Hogan
Diana and Tim Horan
Peggy Ingram
Evelyn and Bob Jewell
Mr. and Mrs. Raleigh W. Johnson, Jr.
Lois Levering
The Joseph and Ida Liskin Foundation Inc.
Franna and Ted Litton
Marek Family Foundation
B.D. and Mac McAndrew
Mr. and Mrs. Frederick R. McCord
Mr. and Mrs. Charles T. McCord III
Sandra and Adams McHenry, Jr.
McNeill Charitable Foundation on behalf
of Frank Griffin and Jan McNeill
Janice Dougall Melcher
Preston Moore
Mary Pate and Neal Myers
Mr. and Mrs. John M. Piecuch
Peggy and Bill Roe
Sandy and Leonard Rosenberg
Karol and William Scarbrough
Marc and Jeri Shapiro Family Foundation
Katherine and John Stanton
Jim Tomforde
Ann G. Trammell
Nancy and Charles Walters
Richard B. Walters
Meg and Dick Weekley

\$500 – \$999

Friends of DBSA (3)
Jeb Bashaw/James E. Bashaw & Co.
Anne and Currie Bechtol
Mr. L.D. Blackwell
Bowen, Miclette & Britt, Inc.
Janie and Gareth Cook
Terry and Mike Dalton
Marcy and Robert Duncan
Mr. Roger Fritcher
David Gibbs
Hackett Family Foundation
Joanie and Don Haley
Kelly and Curtis Kayem
Dianne and Dick Kilday
Carol and Keith Kimmick
Barbara and Charles C. Kraft
Janie and Jim Lee
Sharon and Frank Lorenzo
Tom and Nonnie Matthews Charitable Gift
Fund on behalf of Tom and
Nonnie Matthews II
Ralph O'Connor
Nancy Porteous-Thomas
Daisy and Bill Quayle
Sara and Fred Robertson
Matthew Rotan
Molly and Claude Scarbrough III
Olinda and John Simon
Martha and Frank Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Syler
Vivian Wise

Up to \$499

Friends of DBSA (13)
Marjory Alexander
Doris and Larry Bernard
Judy and Mike Bollman
Robert Bowers
Mandi Bryant
Sue and Tom Burrow
Betty and Rick Carrell

Susan Christian
Community Health Charities
Lana and Chip Cureton
Lois Davis
Sallie and Ted Davis
Margaret Davison
Neva and John Dawson
Carol and George Dehan
Elisa and Peter Dreghorn
Robert Dueck
Ann and Jeff Dykes
Roberta and Terry Ellis
Mary Ferguson
Kathleen Gallentine, M.D.
Georgia and Jim Gasper
Janita and Garney Griggs
Diane and Jim Hall
Evangeline Hammonds, LCSW, CTS
Chris Harvell
Sara and Phil Hawk
Joan and Coleman Hightower
The Hill Family
Shelby and Ward Jones
Twyla Jones
Annette and Mel Klein
Lucy and Lin Lamme
Peggy Landrum and Steve Wales
Maurine Lee
Mrs. William C. Liedtke, Jr.
Nancy and Jim Lomax
Jean H. Marvin
Leigh Masterson
Janet and Louis McCarter
Beth McGreevy
Marguerite E. McHard
Carleton McHenry
Vicki and Jim Montague
Cindy and Johnny Moore
Cynthia and Robert Nelson, Jr.
Pat and Dee Osborne
Betty and Bob Palmquist
Edith and Walt Parmer
Marilyn and Tom Patterson
Susan and Charles Pavlica
Mollie and Malcolm Pettigrew
RBC Dain Rauscher
Jan and David Redford
Ronda Robinson
Kathleen and Dick Rogers
Claudia and Stephen Rosen
Wayne Schneider
Ann and Howard Schramm
Nanci and Bob Seawell
Dr. Walfrido Sepulveda
Sue and Larry Sikes
Mark Silverstone
Margaret and Robert Simmons
Ann Simpson
Joann Smith
Jackie and Ray St. Germain
St. Luke's United Methodist Church
Mr. and Mrs. William O. Strange
Virginia and Clayton Trier
Truth 1 Chemicals
Margie and William Warren
Dorothy and Hall Webb
Elizabeth and Chip Webster
Ann and Ted Weiss
Terrell Wilson
Margaret and Jerry Wolfe
Janis Worthen

In Honor of

Marilyn and Bolivar C. Andrews

A Friend of DBSA
James E. Bashaw & Co.
Linda and Mack Denison
Frank Family Fund
Dr. and Mrs. Carlos R. Hamilton, Jr.
Gwen and Bert Smith
Ann G. Trammell

James J. Braniff III

Bobbie and John Nau and
Silver Eagle Distributors, L.P.

Philip Burguieres

Nancy and Jack Dinerstein

Ed Cappel

Minnie Cappel
Janis and Randy Henry
Barbara and Charles C. Kraft
Jo Ann and Gary Levering
Ralph O'Connor
Susan and Will Penland
Daisy and Bill Quayle
Molly and Claude Scarbrough III
Karol and William Scarbrough

Minnie Cappel

Marcia and Fred Blackard

Liz and Bobby Dewar

Sandra and Adams McHenry, Jr.

Rev Kip Gilts, Rev Barbara Robberson, & James Knapp

Janie and Gareth Cook

Maureen Hackett

Marc and Jeri Shapiro Family
Foundation

Martha Hanson

Jennifer and Glenn Urbach

Lynette and Mike Hutar

A Friend of DBSA

Nancy and George Jewell

Patsy Cravens

Mr. and Mrs. David H. Knapp

Ann G. Trammell

Granville "Fella" Knight, Jr.

Linda and Mack Denison

Jo Ann and Gary Levering

A Friend of DBSA
Pam and John Barineau
Sally and Joe Bridges
Minnie and Ed Cappel
Terry and Mike Dalton
Linda and Mack Denison
Ruth Ann and Ken Dusek
Elizabeth and John Elder
Georgia and Jim Gasper
Penny and Parker Gregg
Joanie and Don Haley
Janis and Randy Henry
Kelly and Curtis Kayem
Allan G. King and Janice Levering
LeAnn Levering and Brad Plant
Lois Levering
Janice Dougall Melcher
Ralph O'Connor
Susan and Will Penland
Marti and Dave Peterson
Joan and Butch Pratkan
Sandy and Leonard Rosenberg
DonNell and Tom Rushing
Cynthia and John Scofield
Thomas Simmons, Jr.
Jamil Simon
Martha and Frank Smith
Suzi and Doug Swanson
Ann G. Trammell
Lynda and David Underwood
Judge and Mrs. Ewing Werlein, Jr.
Clark K. Williams
Betsy and Jim Winn

Franna and Ted Litton

Cynthia and John Scofield

W.J. McAnelly, Jr.

A Friend of DBSA

Mrs. William K. McGee

A Friend of DBSA
Ann G. Trammell

Sarah and Scott Nelson

A Friend of DBSA

Jan and David Redford

Sharon and Bob Lietzow

The Rotan Family

Matthew Rotan

Bill Rudolf

Kathleen Chisholm & Michael Quinlan
Joanie and Don Haley

Mr. and Mrs. Scott Sturges

Ann G. Trammell

Mrs. Carolyn Trammell

Ann G. Trammell

Tuesday Night Chapelwood Group

Susan and Charles Pavlica

Mr. and Mrs. David M. Underwood

Mrs. J. Fox Benton, Jr.
Ann G. Trammell

Jeremy & Carolyn Woodard

Joy L. Woodard

In Memory of

Mary Andrews

James E. Bashaw & Co.
Sue Henderson McMurrey

Joseph Evans Attwell

Jo Ann and Gary Levering

Gertrude Barnes

Cynthia and John Scofield

Matthew Wren Cook

A Friend of DBSA
Libby and James Adams
Robert Bachman
Mr. and Mrs. E.C. Barfield
Katie and Jeremy Bencken
Laura and Mark Biering
Dorel and John Carter
Linda and Don Condon
Alexandra and Joseph Dilg
Chalon Fontaine and Pete Seale
Kay Gilliam
Martha and Phil Hanson
Ruth Heffron and John Vernelson
Peggy Ingram
Bill Joor and Rose Ann Medlin
Jo Ann and Gary Levering
Rhonda and Ron Mizeur
Suzanne and John Overstreet
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Reasoner
Judy and Wayne Smith
Jackie and Ray St. Germain
Faculty & Staff Assoc. of School of
Social Work at University
of Texas Austin
Jennifer and Glenn Urbach
William Weiland
Cindy and Dan Wilford

Chase Meredith Conover

Judy and Ned Earle

Trey Horan

Diana and Tim Horan
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Wilkens, III

Robert Alden Jewell

A Friend of DBSA
Patsy Cravens
Evelyn and Bob Jewell
Elise and Tony Massoth
Mr. William Mark Young

Condo Martinez

Jan and David Redford
Jackie and Ray St. Germain

Max

Wayne Schneider

Mark Champan Powell

Marilyn and Bolivar Andrews
Anne and Currie Bechtol

Laurie and James Boldrick
Barbara and William Boylston
Boone and John Bullington
Minnie and Ed Cappel
Margot and John Cater
Mr. and Mrs. Marion Clay
Susan and John Cook
Emily and Holcombe Crosswell
Julie and Markley Crosswell, III
Terry and Mike Dalton
Linda and Mack Denison
Tami and Pat Dyer
Judy and Ned Earle
Linda Finger
Ann and Bob Gregory
Betty Hellman
Cindy and Jim Hinton
Marilyn and John Holstead
Paula Jarrett
Evelyn and Bob Jewell
Susan and Thomas Keefe
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas R. Kelsey
Elaine and Fella Knight, Jr.
Susan and Jack Lee
Jennie and Philip Leman
Jo Ann and Gary Levering
Carolyn and David Light
Nancy and Jim Lomax
Sue, Gary, and Judd Lowe
Antoinette Maywald
Sandra and Adams McHenry, Jr.
Sue Henderson McMurrey
Nancy Powell Moore
Patricia O'Donnell
Carol Ann and Bob Paddock
Julie and Mike Padon
Susan and Will Penland
Michael Rose
Fran Sampson
Schwartz, Page, & Harding, L.L.P.
Sue and Larry Sikes
Patsy and Bob Speed
Virginia Oxford Thompson
Dr. and Mrs. William Thorsell
Ann G. Trammell
Susan Vandagriff
Mr. and Mrs. U.R. Weems
Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Weil, Jr.
Carolyn and Bryan Wimberly

William Parmer Redford

Missy and Ron Bandy
Suzy and Roy Box, Jr.
Sharrie and Clyde Buck
Kristi Burke
Don Cantrell
Ione J. Clark
Maudeen Frazier Eccles
Martha Gamblin
Ann and Bob Gregory
Jo Ann and Gary Levering
Sharon and Bob Lietzow
Franna and Ted Litton
Jan and David Redford
Sandy and Jeff Robertson
Stephanie Smither
Wells Fargo Wealth
Management Group

Margaret Dickson Rogers

Minnie and Ed Cappel

Anna Shannon

Peggy and Bill Roe

Dan Shilliday

Sally and David Harvin

Norma Brooks Walters

Richard B. Walters

Nan Williams

Marilyn and Bolivar Andrews

Faybelle Werner

Dr. and Mrs. John E. Werner

In Kind Donors

Minnie and Ed Cappel
Carol and Keith Kimmick
Lynda and David Underwood



3800 Buffalo Speedway
Suite 300
Houston, Texas 77098
(713) 600-1131
FAX (713) 600-1137
Email: info@dbсахouston.org
www.dbсахouston.org

THE STORY OF ONE, THE STORY OF MANY

A mental illness such as depression or bipolar disorder can afflict anyone at anytime. These diseases of the mind impact us all, but conquering them is a real possibility for many. Here is one such story of despair and eventual triumph through the power of a DBSA support group. This is Todd's story:

In the years before my diagnosis, I couldn't recognize the early indications of my illness for what they really were. In fact, I had created an erroneous belief system that what I was experiencing was simply part of life. I attributed my mood to what I believed were my own shortcomings. I believed that I was lazy or bored, disinterested or tired or any other suggestion that disguised my depression for what it really was.

The reality was that a gathering melancholy had already made real advances into every aspect of my life. Like many others before me, the only way I came to see my illness clearly for the first time was when I had a severe depressive crash which threw me down into a spiral of despair that I could no longer ignore. I found myself sobbing and weeping at home or sitting in my bathtub alone and trying to understand what was happening to me. I felt so isolated and alone; I just couldn't make sense of the overwhelming sense of sadness that had now come to dominate my entire being.

I would subsequently lose my job, my income and my way in life. I would perceive the worthlessness of my hard-earned education, and my hope for a successful career seemed like a distant dream. The only things I had to look forward to were increasingly debilitating attacks of depression and paralyzing bouts of anxiety. I felt humiliated in the presence of family and friends who didn't know why I couldn't just feel better, or pick myself up by sheer will.

Before long, I would come to see my illness as a thief who delighted in stealing every good thing in my life. I decided that this thief would no longer steal my joy and happiness. I am indebted to the friends and family who gradually understood my illness and became some of my best supporters. I am grateful to the mental health professionals who helped me chart a new course forward. And I am especially thankful for DBSA Greater Houston – people I consider my closest allies in overcoming our shared illness.

This wonderful organization has made an immeasurable difference in my life. Without sharing my story and hearing the similar stories of others, I would never have seen how I had become trapped between the recurring impact of my illness and the self-defeating resignation I felt about my own future. It was only after attending DBSA sponsored support groups that I could manage the symptoms of my illness and that I could perceive a life beyond my own doubts and fears.

DBSA has not only helped me recover from my disease but has helped me achieve a better life and more importantly has allowed me to become a better person. My own recovery would not have been possible without the compassionate peers I found right here in this organization. Without DBSA Greater Houston, I might have gone on living a desperate life defined and limited by the cruelty of my disorder. Instead, this organization has given me a richer life full of hope and possibility and not limited by the once despair and desperation that I had come to define myself as a person.

The DBSA support group model allows for life-changing connections with people in desperate need of recovery. There are people in our community who don't yet know that we exist, and who don't know that their lives can be better in the company of peers who have been there and who understand the impact of depression or bipolar disorder on one's life. Our story is our best gift, our greatest accomplishment, and our ongoing mission. And I am honored and glad to share my story with you.