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*OASAS Mission:*

*To improve the lives of New Yorkers by leading a premier system of Prevention, Treatment, Recovery.*

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Arlene González-Sánchez  
Commissioner  
NYS OASAS



Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor

*Dear Friends, I would like to introduce the first OASAS Communicator newsletter, which will be sent out on a weekly basis to highlight the important work happening throughout the state in the addictions field. Millions of New Yorkers are dealing with addiction. It is our job not only to give them hope, but to also let them know that recovery is indeed a possibility.*

**Arlene González-Sánchez, OASAS Commissioner**

**Hope House Welcomes New York State OASAS Commissioner**

In a visit to [Hope House, Inc.](#) on Wednesday, August 2, OASAS Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez toured the Hope House residential facility for youth.

During the tour, the Commissioner expressed delight at having the opportunity to spend time with a few of the residents and their counselor. She quickly established a rapport with the youth and encouraged them to continue their journey of recovery. The youth shared their story and listened attentively as the Commissioner offered words

of support and encouragement.

Hope House Executive Director Kevin Connally said



the Commissioner's visit was validating for the residents and staff and the importance of the program.

Additionally, the Commissioner toured the community residence for women with children. This is also a place where women who are pregnant can go for treatment. In addition to treatment and recovery support, the residents receive training on parenting and child development.

The Commissioner is committed to ensuring a [Gold Standard](#) system of care for all New Yorkers and plans to continue visiting programs across the state to hear first-hand regarding the provider's regional needs and concerns.

**OASAS Commissioner, Assemblyman Cymbrowitz Visit SAFE and Dynamic Youth Community, Inc.**

OASAS Commissioner Sánchez and Assemblyman Cymbrowitz, Chairman of the Assembly's Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Committee, recently visited two OASAS treatment providers located in the 45th Assembly District in Brooklyn.

She visited with the Sephardic Addiction Family Education ([SAFE](#)) Foundation program, meeting with Executive Director Ike Dweck and members of the Board of Directors. The SAFE program provides outpatient services and prevention programming to private schools reaching 3,000 students and the community.

It is also the only program in Brooklyn with a gambling component and treats both the recovering individual and the



significant other, and has specialized services for the Sephardic Jewish community for substance abuse and gambling addiction. The second part of the morning was spent visiting the Dynamic Youth Community, Inc. where the

Commissioner and Assemblyman met with founder and Executive Director William Fusco and Associate Director Karen Carlini.

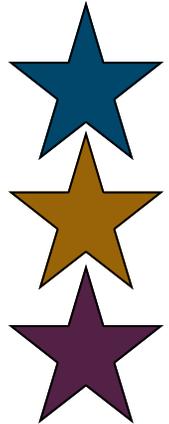
Dynamic Youth is an intensive residential therapeutic community serving 76 adolescents and young adults. They provide a community residence with 16 beds and a Part 822 for adolescent youth services which averages approximately 10,000 visits annually.

The Commissioner gained insight into the services offered in the Brooklyn community at these visits. Each program offers a full continuum of addiction prevention, treatment and recovery services.

## O-STARS

David McDaniels of Brooklyn has been in recovery for 15 years. He currently works as a counselor at the Kingsboro Addiction Treatment Center where he is committed to helping others. David primarily works with individuals who have a criminal justice background.

David was selected as a [Your Story Matters Campaign Spotlight](#) for the 2011 campaign. He was a drug-addicted criminal with 45 misdemeanor convictions and two state sentences. While in prison, David realized he had a drug problem and was persuaded to enter treatment. It was there that he learned about addiction and was introduced to recovery. His recovery began on November 4, 1996. David speaks about his recovery as an extraordinary transformation. He calls it an inside job and he practices positive thoughts that produce positive behaviors and outcomes in his life. He is reborn.



### Governor Cuomo Announces OASAS Commissioner to Serve on Not-For-Profit Task Force

Governor Cuomo [announced](#) on August 4 that Commissioner Sánchez will serve on the Governor's task force to investigate the executive and administrator compensation levels at not-for-profits that receive taxpayer support from the state. Commissioners from the Department of Health (DOH), the Office of Mental Health (OMH), and the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) will also serve on the task force along with Senator Carl L. Marcellino and Assemblyman Steve Englebright, chairmen of the Senate and Assembly Governor Operations Committee. The Department of Financial Services Superintendent Benjamin Lawskey will chair the taskforce. The Governor's task force will determine the protocol and scope of the investigation in order to target the audit to focus on ensuring that state taxpayer dollars meant to help and protect New Yorkers, particularly the poor and indigent, are being used for that purpose and are not being diverted to compensation. It will also provide recommendations for State agency policies and procedures that will ensure that taxpayer dollars are not being diverted to excessive compensation.

### Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez Named Region II Representative on NASADAD Board

In June, 2011, OASAS Commissioner Sánchez was appointed Region II Representative on the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors Board. In this role, she is the Board's Regional Representative for New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD), Inc. is a private, nonprofit educational, scientific and information organization with the basic purpose of fostering and supporting the development of effective and efficient State services to prevent substance abuse, provide treatment for those in need and support recovery. NASADAD, Inc. works for the 50 States and territories, with its board of directors comprised of State directors from throughout the country. To learn more about NASADAD, visit their [website](#).

### Commissioner Hears from Youth About Their Experience at Outreach

Commissioner Sánchez recently visited the Outreach Project, an adolescent residential therapeutic community that provides substance abuse treatment for youth ages 12-17, and had the opportunity to speak with youths about their experience in treatment. Upon arriving at the program, the Commissioner met with Outreach Project President Kathy Riddle for an overview of the program and then was provided a tour of the facility. Commissioner Sánchez felt this visit was very important as this facility has been experiencing a great demand for adolescent services, especially by those who are dually diagnosed. She praised Outreach for being recognized as one of the ["Best Companies to Work For in New York"](#) two years in a row.



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### Commissioner Speaks of the Importance of Veterans' Services



Commissioner Sánchez spoke at a Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) Veterans' Services Roundtable hosted by Phoenix House for Veterans on January 19. She indicated that veterans' services are a priority and OASAS is committed to New York's veterans and their families so that they may have access to the specialized addiction and mental health services now available. The Commissioner joined David Mineta, Deputy Director of Demand Reduction at ONDCP, to hear from veterans regarding needs and concerns for themselves and their families, particularly related to their needs upon return from deployment. Following the roundtable discussion, Commissioner Sánchez soon visited the Samaritan Village Veterans Program in March where President of Samaritan Village Tino Hernandez provided an overview of the comprehensive services offered to homeless male veterans at the program. Commissioner Sánchez acknowledged the fine reputation of the program and was thoroughly impressed with the quality of patient care. She was touched by the gracious hospitality from everyone. Commissioner Sánchez especially appreciated receiving, on behalf of OASAS, the Vietnam flag and the certificate which acknowledged *Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day*.

### Commissioner Travels to Creedmoor, C.K. Post and McPike Addiction Treatment Centers

Commissioner Sánchez had the opportunity to visit three of the [12 OASAS Addiction Treatment Centers \(ATCs\)](#) between February and March. Her first visit was to the [Creedmoor Addiction Treatment Center \(CATC\)](#) in Queens, New York where she toured the facility and met with the staff and patients. Some of the services offered at Creedmoor include acupuncture five times per week, pharmacotherapy and a full range of group and individual recovery services. Creedmoor is also a certified training center for teaching auricular acupuncture, and an overdose prevention training site. The ATC also treats a high numbers of homeless patients and those with dual diagnosis and criminal justice issues. The Commissioner's next visit was to the [McPike ATC](#) located in Utica, New York where she was provided a tour of the facility, met with staff and patients, and then met with the management team. One of the major objectives for the Commissioner has been to visit an ATC that specializes in the treatment of patients who suffer from the co-occurring disorders of a substance abuse disorder and a mental health disorder. Her final visit was to the [Charles K. Post ATC](#), located in West Brentwood, New York. The Commissioner also had the pleasure of meeting with the leadership team, special assignment staff and a group of patients. She also had an enjoyable lunch. Commissioner Sánchez appreciated the ATC's hospitality and found these visits to be informative and invaluable. She looks forward to visiting each of the ATCs in the near future as they are dedicated and work hard to saving lives each and every day.

#### Commissioner Speaks at Regional Annual Legislative Breakfast in Rochester

At the March 18 Annual Legislative Breakfast of the Consortium of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services of the Finger Lakes, Commissioner Sánchez addressed an audience of approximately 150 local, state and national leaders urging them to remain steadfast in their commitment to bring about the best possible behavioral health care for New Yorkers in need of services. Other keynote speakers included NYS Assemblyman Steven Cymbrowitz and Senior Attorney and Vice President of the Legal Action Center Anita Marton. Commissioner Sánchez was the first OASAS Commissioner to attend this annual breakfast.

#### New York State Recovery Fine Arts Festival: Call for Artwork NOW Open

The *8th Annual New York State Recovery Fine Arts Festival* showcases the achievements of individuals in recovery through artistic expression. The call for artwork is now open. Artwork submitted for the Festival will be displayed on the Concourse of the Empire State Plaza in Albany. Judges will select *Best in Show* from 10 categories. Stay tuned for more details. Please direct questions to [admin@for-ny.org](mailto:admin@for-ny.org).



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

#### Want to Share Your Story of Recovery? Become a "Your Story Matters Spotlight!"

OASAS is planning for a September launch of the fourth year of the customer-driven [Your Story Matters Campaign](#). We are in search of [12 individuals](#) who would like to serve as Campaign Spotlights from September 2011 through August 2012. Campaign Spotlights must be willing to share their stories throughout the year in recovery-related press releases and at various OASAS events, recovery forums and Commissioner speaking engagements. If you or someone you know, are interested in being considered as a 2011-2012 *Your Story Matters* Campaign Spotlight, please contact the OASAS Communications Bureau at [stories@oasas.ny.gov](mailto:stories@oasas.ny.gov) by **August 19, 2011**. Your story could be another person's hope!

For questions or comments about this newsletter, please contact:

Jannette Rondo, OASAS Communications Director at: [communicator@oasas.ny.gov](mailto:communicator@oasas.ny.gov)