



## **Mental Health Center of Denver Partners with Cactus to Raise Awareness about Recovery from Mental Illness**

DENVER (October 3, 2011)...Coinciding with National Mental Illness Awareness Week, which kicks off on October 3, the Mental Health Center of Denver is launching a bold new brand awareness campaign created by Cactus, a Denver-based full-service brand communications agency. The campaign is a first for the state's largest mental health center and it aims to not only better introduce the Mental Health Center of Denver but also to help change the general public's perception of mental illness.

The campaign features bold, bright colors – not at all like the muted and careful palette normally associated with mental illness. Most significantly, the entire campaign is built around the word “Recovery.” The Mental Health Center of Denver was among the first in the nation to base its model on recovery and is a national leader in its techniques and success rates at helping individuals recover from a mental illness. But despite impressive advances and achievements, the prevailing perception is that there is no recovery for those who've experienced a mental illness.

“While we certainly want to elevate people's awareness of the Mental Health Center of Denver, our primary objective is to change the conversation around mental illness to one of hope and educate the public that recovery can and does indeed happen,” said Dr. Carl Clark, CEO of the Mental Health Center of Denver. “In fact, 70% percent of the people we serve go on to recover and lead healthier, happier lives.”

Cactus has been a longtime partner for the Mental Health Center of Denver and has contributed a significant amount of pro bono work to get the campaign off the ground.

“Our creative team was very moved by the personal stories of recovery they heard, “ said Norm Shearer, Creative Director and Partner at Cactus. “When an individual recovers from mental illness they recover much more than their mental health. They recover their lives, relationships, careers, and more. Thus “Recovering \_\_\_\_\_” will appear in all of the materials to capture the essence of this individual experience. We want to capture the individual nature of each person's experience in order to bring a human element to the campaign.”

When Cactus started developing the campaign, they knew the organization was very complex. Their goal was to shine light on the important work the Mental Health Center of Denver does and raise mental health literacy in the Denver Metro area.

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The campaign will include:

- Billboards in very prominent visible locations to people going in/out of downtown
- Digital billboards with rotating messages
- 16th Street Mall buses
- A painted building at 15th & Champa St
- Print advertisements
- Online advertisements
- Banner ads on [www.mhcd.org](http://www.mhcd.org) that match the campaign
- Sponsorship of Colorado Public Radio ads/programs
- Banners on the Mental Health Center of Denver buildings
- Posters in businesses and the Mental Health Center of Denver facilities
- Mental Health Center of Denver trucks wrapped in campaign materials
- T-shirts for staff
- Public relations, social media, and internal communications

“We are thrilled beyond belief with the simple yet powerful way Cactus communicated our mission,” noted Dr. Clark. “It so boldly pushes the perception of mental illness in an enlightening way.”

The Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD) is known nationally for its successful groundbreaking approach to mental health treatment. At MHCD, those living with a mental illness are involved in shaping their own recovery and given the chance to regain control of their lives.

The Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD) is a private, not-for-profit, 501 (c) (3), community mental health center, providing treatment and prevention services to the residents of the City and County of Denver since its founding in 1989. MHCD believes that people can, and do, recover from mental illness and that treatment works and improves the lives of people of all ages. Through more than 35 community sites, mental health providers in 18 Denver public schools, collaborations with community partners and home-based outreach, MHCD provides a comprehensive, innovative and accessible array of mental health and substance abuse services to over 15,000 children, families and adults annually.

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