

BUILDING THE
Possibilities



First Step
Addiction Recovery Programs

40th Anniversary

OUR MISSION

First Step prevents and treats alcohol and drug addictions and associated disorders. We foster fully functioning, productive individuals by offering a full array of services in partnership with our community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gerald B. Keane, Esq.	Chair	Peter Abbott
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		Alan Quinby
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		Mary Anne Servian



We will be telling other treatment and recovery agencies across the country, “there’s this place in Florida, they are Best of the Best – you should call them.”

2008 REVIEW BY THE COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION OF REHABILITATION FACILITIES (CARF).



WHAT IS FIRST STEP?

First Step of Sarasota has provided high quality, affordable substance abuse prevention, treatment and recovery programs on Florida’s Gulf Coast for 40 years. We offer a variety of programs including a medically supervised detox, residential and outpatient services of adolescents, adults and families.

Making the decision to commit to a substance abuse treatment and recovery program is difficult. Finding a place that offers compassionate, confidential and professional care is important. At First Step, you or your loved one can learn to love a life of recovery.

Treatment taught me a lot of lessons: life skills, perseverance, determination, and not giving up no matter how bleak things look. You just dust yourself off and get yourself back on track. It does not matter that the odds are against you – you have to want to succeed.



First Step thanks Halfacre Construction Company for support of our 40th Anniversary.



Why Addiction is a Community Disease

A talk with David J. Beesley, MPH and Gerald B. Keane, Esq.

The addiction problem is undermining our culture. At First Step, we attempt to make a better place for our children, for families and for society in general.

So says Gerald B. Keane, Esq., Board Chair at First Step of Sarasota. Keane, along with David J. Beesley, MPH, President and Chief Executive Officer of First Step, sat down to talk frankly about addiction, recovery and how First Step is ahead of the curve in the prevention and treatment of alcohol and drug addictions and associated disorders.

Q. How DOES addiction affect our community?

DAVID: It is a serious situation. Economically, it is very expensive to the community because of the connection between addiction and crime, the courts, the foster care system... I could go on.

(Find more about addiction and crime on page 11)

Emotionally and mentally, I don't think there is anyone who does not have a story to tell about addiction among family, friends or co-workers.

I had a cousin who committed suicide at 19. As the family sat together trying to figure out why she felt she couldn't go to any of us, I decided I wanted to work for a place where people could turn when they are in despair. First Step is such a place. It has a great impact on people's lives. We often say that First Step changes lives and saves families. That may sound trite, but it is true.

(Find a first-person account of recovery on page 10)

Q. What are the most pressing addiction problems here in the tri-county area – Sarasota, Manatee and DeSoto – that you primarily serve?

GERALD: The predominant cause of substance abuse related deaths in our community is prescription drugs. In fact, the number of people seen at First Step addicted to prescription medications increased from two percent a year ago to 20 percent last year.

The abuse of these 'legitimate' substances is more in the mainstream versus illegal or 'street' drugs. But, not only are these drugs highly addictive, they are often taken in combination with alcohol or mixed together which makes them even more dangerous and deadly.

Q. How does First Step of Sarasota help with these very serious problems?

DAVID: This is our main 'business'— the prevention and treatment of alcohol and drug addiction. The key to prevention is educating the community that addiction is a disease. It is not a 'moral condition.'



(From left) Gerald B. Keane, Esq. and David J. Beesley, MPH.

First Step's view of treatment is to address the whole person. That is why we have many outpatient and residential programs. Pathways is our 28-day program. Choices and Crossroads are for convicted felons court-ordered to treatment. Transitions is a halfway house extended residential treatment program, and Seasons is for addicts with mental illness.

GERALD: Plus, we have the Mothers & Infants Program where we treat young women who are at risk for giving birth to addicted babies. Since we began this program, we've celebrated the birth of 213 healthy, drug-free babies.

(Find more about First Step's approach to treatment on page 5)

Q. This is a very exciting time in the history of First Step, can you explain?

DAVID: Yes, at our 40th Anniversary we are launching the beginning of a whole new era. One of our most exciting initiatives is a state-of-the-art facility at the North Washington Boulevard campus that will be a LEED certified green building. It will replace our current facility, which is a 1950's era motel.

(Find more about the new building, including interviews with the architects, starting on page 6)

Q: If you could tell the community just one thing about substance abuse and addition, what would it be?

DAVID: In this community, the rapid increase in the number of people who are addicted is approaching the level of a public health crisis. The disease needs to be confronted aggressively. First Step is committed to continuing its work. However, we will be more successful when the community rises up against addiction and shares in the responsibility of addressing the problem.

First Step thanks Michael's On East for support of our 40th Anniversary.



Being vocal about addiction is important because there are literally thousands of Americans in recovery today and hardly anyone knows it.

– BOB PIPER, VICE PRESIDENT OF FIRST STEP'S RESIDENTIAL CENTER

BODY, MIND, SPIRIT

Addiction & Treatment

– The First Step Way

Emerging research on addiction, plus new medication developed specifically to help addicts gets Dr. David Panting, First Step of Sarasota's Medical Director, excited about the possibilities of recovery for his patients.

Panting is in charge of client medical intake. He designs and implements the treatment plan for their recovery, while taking into consideration the medical and psychiatric causes of illness.

Once someone enters the world of First Step, their treatment is overseen by licensed professionals Robert Piper, Vice President, Residential Services, Phillip J. "P.J." Brooks, Vice President of Outpatient and Youth Services, or Marlene P. Minzey, Vice President, Special Services.

These dedicated professionals combine more than 60 years experience in addictions counseling, therapy and treatment. They are on a personal and professional mission to educate and rehabilitate drug addicts, alcoholics and the community at large.

The team says that it takes a continuum of care to help clients be successful. They explain that First Step creates a web of protection, education and alliance that is unlike any other for people who suffer with addiction. Elements of this include:

- Collaboration with other social services organizations that add necessary components to the treatment of addiction – like nutritional counseling and educational opportunities.
- Communication – letting the community know that addiction is a disease, with the same classification as asthma, diabetes and hypertension.

- Emphasis on the importance of prevention and education. First Step has outreach programs that address adults and elders, kids and teens, at-risk HIV populations and more.

"The historic approach to treatment was to deal with the physical side of addiction. We strive to be whole client-focused and to work on multiple levels," Brooks adds.

Despite the challenges of their jobs, these professionals agree that recovery is a beautiful thing and watching it grow helps with their own job satisfaction. "The evolution is remarkable. When you see someone who gets it, there isn't a doubt – they glow," says Brooks. "I've seen hardened criminals turn their lives around."



What is Addiction?

Here is how Bob Piper, Vice President of First Step's Residential Center explains addiction:

"There are three groups of people. The first is lifetime abstainers – they don't, and perhaps never did, desire drugs or alcohol. The second is the 'normal' American who has an experimental relationship with drugs and alcohol. In their younger and stupider days, they may have even gone overboard with it. In their adult years, they may use drugs or alcohol for a social or enhancing experience.

"The third group is the addict," he continues. "His connection with drugs and alcohol is not enhancing; it's destructive. Despite all of the negative consequences, the addict continues to abuse. He has a fatal, progressive disease. We cross the line from drug abuse to drug addiction when using drugs stops being a choice and becomes a necessity – when it controls every move and choice we make."

First Step thanks Grapevine Communications for support of our 40th Anniversary.



Our Residential Center, located on North Washington Boulevard in Sarasota, is a 13,000 square-foot facility for men and women involved in one of four intensive treatment programs. Occupying what was once a 1950s era roadside motel, the Residential Center is known for its comfortable, non-institutional environment – credited by both clients and staff as critical to the recovery process.

Building the Possibilities: The Campaign for First Step will build a new Residential Center in collaboration with government, community leaders, corporate and individual donors. The result will be a model program focused equally on an individual's addiction treatment, sustained recovery and successful return to the community.

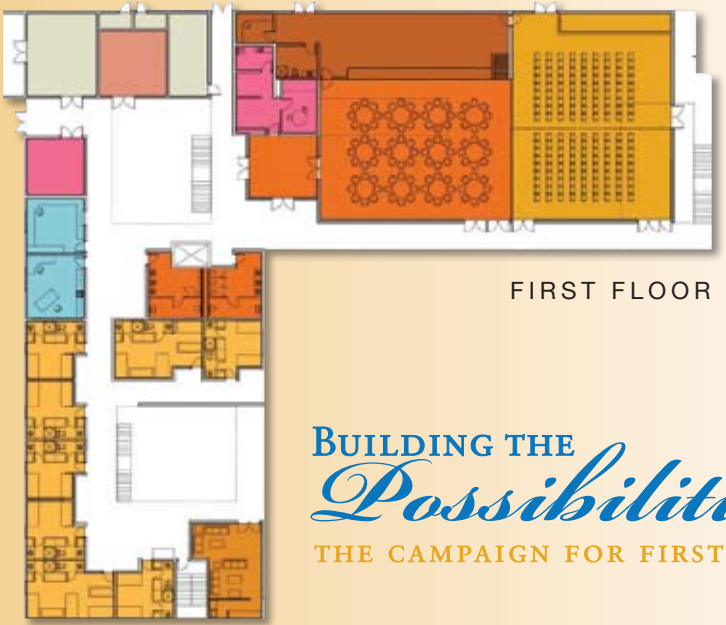
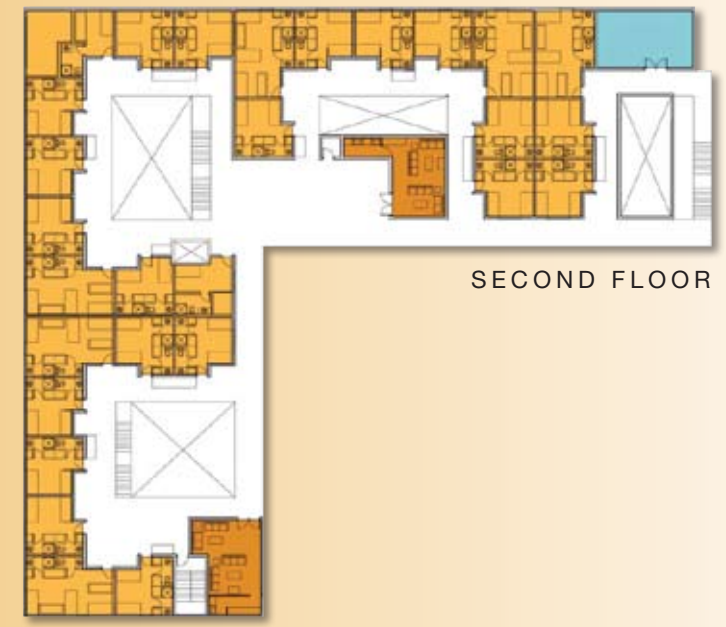
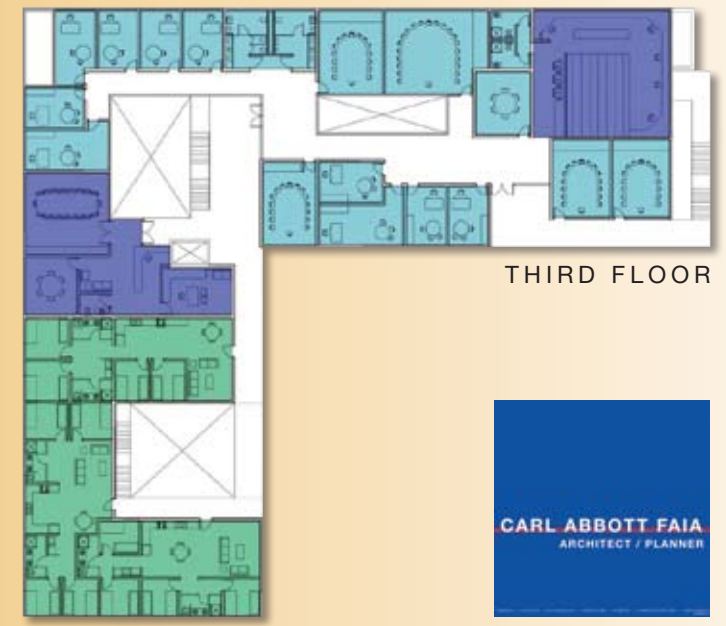
The project will be built in phases, beginning in 2009. With an estimated price tag of \$8 million, the 35,000 square foot first phase will increase the Center's treatment capacity from 75 to 90, include transitional housing, wellness and recreational facilities, a gathering space, kitchen and dining facilities, as well as contemplative and garden areas. According to the US Green Building Council, First Step's new Residential Center will be the first LEED-certified addiction recovery center in the nation.

First Step owns the property adjacent to its existing Residential Center and the site will be the home of the project's first phase. When construction is done and phase one is ready for occupancy, the existing motel facility will be demolished and subsequent phases will begin in that location. They will include additional capacity for individuals seeking treatment, administrative offices and commercial space intended to enhance First Step's ability to generate revenue to support its programs.



LEGEND FLOOR PLANS
FIRST STEP OF SARASOTA

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  Dining Room |  Mechanical Room |  Tech Station |
|  Campus Gathering Space, Includes 50 Person Group Room |  Clinical Services |  Housekeeping |
|  Kitchen & Associated Offices + Storage |  Medical Records/Residential Administration |  Residential Client Room |
| |  Affordable Rental Housing |  Residential Common Room |



BUILDING THE Possibilities
THE CAMPAIGN FOR FIRST STEP

Building The Possibilities Into the Building

First Step stands at the threshold of a new era and Architects Carl Abbott, FAIA and Julian Norman-Webb, RIBA of Carl Abbott Architect / Planner have designed a facility that will take the organization forward. The main design dynamic? To foster a healing atmosphere that encourages interaction with the natural environment.



Carl Abbott, FAIA

Here, the architects talk about the design process.

Q. How did you get involved with the First Step project?

CARL: We answered the RFP and were selected. I think we had a lot in common. First Step's view of



Julian Norman-Webb, RIBA

recovery is to address the whole person and our firm's view of architecture is also holistic. It was a good match. Some of First Step's main criteria were to not have an institutional feel and to maximize contact with the natural environment. That fits in so well with what we do here.

Q. What are the plans for the new building and complex?

JULIAN: On a practical level we will break ground on Phase 1 in 2009. The viewpoint is wellness based. There is not an institutional feel. The walking paths, courtyards and courts are an integral part of the design – to bring people back in contact with their environment.

CARL: When the building is finished

people will say, 'what a wonderful place to be,' not 'what a nice building.'

Q. I understand this is a LEED building. What does that mean?

JULIAN: LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. It is a cross-industry standard for sustainable "green" building. We think there is a nice poetic tie-in. First Step is for persons who have a problem, to learn to rehabilitate themselves. The same idea is true for LEED buildings. It is the same path – to sustainability and healing.

Q. So you feel the building will help foster recovery?

CARL: Nature is a healer. And we have designed the structure to support and enrich the lives of those who inhabit the building.

Major Priorities and Naming Opportunities

Building the Possibilities: The Campaign for First Step offers our friends and donors a variety of naming opportunities, including the most significant ones listed below. We will be pleased to help you identify a recognition opportunity that is appropriate to your interests and level of support. All donors will be listed on a prominently placed Donor Wall.

The Campus

\$2,500,000

The Residential Center will be the sum of many parts. As with the Betty Ford Center, upon completion, First Step will be known as one of the country's premier facilities. The campus will proudly bear the name of the project's most generous benefactor.

Clinical and Counseling Center

\$1,500,000

The center of the recovery effort, the facility's third floor will house the counseling rooms, clinical staff offices and meeting rooms.

Four Residential Houses

\$500,000 each

Designed to perpetuate the homelike environment of the existing facility, four distinct residential houses, each with room for 15-18 individuals, will include multiple bedrooms and baths plus a shared common room.

Campus Gathering Space

\$350,000

The heart of the community, the 160 seat multi-purpose space, will provide room for all-campus programs and activities designed to promote rehabilitation and an environment of care.

Dining Room and Kitchen

\$300,000

The state-of-the-art kitchen will provide the community's meals and the dining room will serve as a place of fellowship.

Central Plaza

\$250,000

At the hub of the Residential Center, the Central Plaza will bridge the facility's interior and exterior spaces.

Retreat

\$250,000

Recognizing the importance of contemplative space to the healing process, the Retreat will provide a quiet place for meditation and spiritual renewal.

Serenity Garden

\$150,000

Enhanced with native landscaping, the Serenity Garden will provide a lush outdoor environment for clinicians, clients and family members to meet.

First Step thanks Carl Abbott Architect/Planner for support of our 40th Anniversary.



Now, in its 40th year, First Step is on the verge of an important and well-thought-out expansion project that is expected to meet the needs of the community well into the future.

—DONNA WOLSKI, VICE PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT AT FIRST STEP.

WHY NOW?

40 Years of Community Service

With people lining up at First Step's door, the organization is committed to its goal of building a new, expanded residential treatment center.

There is never a perfect time to begin a capital campaign and many people would say that now is one of the worst, acknowledges Donna Wolski, Vice President of Development at First Step. The confidence that First Step shows by pushing forward underscores the urgency and makes the case for support much more compelling.

"I know that the competition for donations is fierce. I believe the local philanthropic community will categorize projects into 'have to have' versus 'nice to have,'" she says, adding that First Step's project definitely falls in the category of "have to have."

"I hope that our friends in the community will recognize that First Step clients face multiple challenges – each can disrupt families and the community and lead to other issues – job losses, financial instability, domestic violence, child abuse and homelessness, to name just a few. Addiction strikes individuals across all economic levels, ages and ethnicities. Helping us to help our clients overcome addiction is a way to address a variety of human service needs," she adds.

The good news is that First Step is ALMOST THERE!



I believe treatment should be available for anyone who wants it. We lose so many people every week due to addiction – more than many other diseases people face. So many accidents, injuries and deaths could be prevented if we could have just gotten that person into treatment one day sooner.

"Our Phase One development plan has an \$8 million goal and we have \$6.2 million already committed," says Wolski. However, some of this money is time sensitive.

Phase One, scheduled to break ground in 2009, will expand First Step's treatment capacity by more than 15 percent. Phase Two, which will begin immediately after existing programs are moved into the completed first phase, is expected to increase overall capacity by nearly 60 percent.

"Charitable dollars invested in this project now will give back to the community for years to come," she concludes.

I have owned 17 companies and employed many alcoholics and drug addicts. I've seen the positive impact when they get recovery, and the devastation when they are not able to recover.

—STEVE ALEXANDER, OWNER OF BUSINESS CONSULTING FIRM, ABBEX INC. AND A FORMER BOARD MEMBER OF FIRST STEP.

CIRCLE OF HOPE

Endowing the Future

First Step's work is all about change – a change in behavior, a change in friends, a change of place, a change in what people think about themselves and their relationships with others.

First Step itself is always changing – for the better, as former First Step Board Member and local businessman, Steve Alexander can attest. "I have seen First Step implement new programs and new facilities—all where the most impact can be made to achieve its mission."

That is why Alexander helped create the Circle of Hope giving opportunity. The Circle of Hope honors individuals who have made a legacy gift to First Step in their estate plans or have named First Step as a beneficiary of a will, trust, retirement plan or insurance plan.

"We have a premier treatment program right here in Sarasota. But, many people don't even know we exist," says Alexander. "I would ask people to help us help our community by giving – whether it is through the Circle of Hope, or any other way they can," he adds.

For information on supporting First Step, please call Donna Wolski, at 941-552-2476.

First Step thanks W.G. Mills Inc. for support of our 40th Anniversary.



Work Hard // Build Right®

BY THE NUMBERS

8,620

Drug-related deaths in the state of Florida in 2007.

244

Drug-related deaths in Sarasota, Manatee and DeSoto Counties in 2007.

213

Babies born NOT addicted thanks to First Step's Mothers & Infants program.

\$250,000

Average health care dollars saved with the birth of each substance-free baby.

100

People sent to treatment at First Step each month instead of jail.

75%

Those who end up in trouble with the law in Sarasota because of drugs or alcohol.

70%

Referrals to First Step as a result of court-related proceedings or pressure, including probation, arrest and child custody.

60%

Children in the foster care system whose parents are addicts.

40%

Addicts who will need multiple attempts at treatment before they are successful.

30%

Addicts who will die from the disease.

\$7

Tax dollars saved for each \$1 invested in addiction treatment.

Through my work with First Step, I see the hope. Rather than close a cell door on someone with an addiction, First Step offers the door of hope. A sense of self worth and hope is restored through recovery.

– FORMER CITY COMMISSIONER MARY ANNE SERVIAN

Addiction: A Family Disease

They say addiction is a family disease. Whether that means that it runs in the family, or that when an addict is off and running, the whole family is affected, or both – doesn't really matter. When it occurs in your family, what matters is recovery.

When the disease ran amok through her family, former City Commissioner Mary Anne Servian knew where to turn – First Step of Sarasota.

"I grew up with alcoholism in my family. Later in life, my family coped with my son's drug addiction. The first-hand exposure has made me acutely aware of how serious this problem is," says Servian, who has served on First Step's Board of Directors for many years.

Servian's son, Michael H., says that going to treatment at First Step really did help him change his life.

It was just about three years ago when he was arrested, sent to jail and then entered Pathways, First Step's 28-day treatment program. Before that, his addiction was rampant. "I was addicted to crack cocaine. Everything went to the drugs. I had a good job. I had a career – I was an auto mechanic and made a lot of money and the drugs consumed my whole life. Then, I couldn't get a job and I started stealing until I was arrested," he explains.

After careful observation by First Step's clinical staff, Michael was diagnosed as bipolar and entered the Seasons program for dual-diagnosed addicts. He did his court-ordered time there – staying for two years.

Michael credits First Step and also his own willingness to work at recovery as keys to his success. "I took advantage of the opportunity. I did what they told me, I stayed out of trouble. I listened to the staff. It was difficult. They made me look at myself, they don't let anyone slide," he explains.

As part of his treatment, Michael was prepared for re-entry to the workforce, leaving the center every day to work at Habitat for Humanity. "I didn't have all my freedom but I was able to interact with the normal world again and learn how to be a productive member of society within a protected environment."

Almost a year after treatment, Michael is again working in his career field. He is engaged to be married, he pays his bills and gets to do the things he enjoys. Best of all, he has a good relationship with his family again.

His mother agrees. "My son has been clean and sober for nearly three years. First Step gave him the tools to recovery and gave my son back to me," she says.



First Step thanks Sun Hydraulics for their support of our 40th Anniversary.



FIRST STEP & LAW ENFORCEMENT

– FROM DOWNWARD SLIDE TO RECOVERY ELEVATOR

Crime Stoppers

Addiction and crime go together; there is no getting around it. As Sarasota Police Chief Peter Abbott describes it, “when people really lose their way with substance abuse, they delve into criminal activities. First, they steal from family and folks, then, they move to other crimes. It is a downward spiral that usually ends up with them in our hands.”

Anecdotally, Abbott says in Sarasota about 75 percent of those who end up in trouble with the law, “have some link to narcotics or substance abuse.”



For Abbott, First Step is a “great place to turn to for help. It provides a structured environment where there are rules. Sometimes, just following rules is tough for people who are addicted. Surrounded by professionals on the medical, mental health and addictions side, they get a 360-degree approach to dealing with their problems. And, the staff is very caring,” he says.

First Step of Sarasota is an agent of change that helps transform a downward slide into a positive direction.

Chief Abbott urges the community to be proactive when it comes to addiction. “If you know someone with a substance abuse problem, don’t be an ostrich. Try to get them help before they ruin their lives. Don’t be afraid to be the bad guy. If you don’t intervene the police eventually will.”

*Substance abuse and alcoholism just devastates anybody.
It ruins lives and steals opportunities.*

– SARASOTA POLICE CHIEF PETER ABBOTT

FIRST STEP SERVICES

- Adult Detoxification
- Adolescent & Adult Outpatient Counseling
- Anger Alternatives Programming
- Assessment & Referrals
- Case Management
- Co-occurring Diseases Program
- Court-Mandated Offender Programs
- Crisis Stabilization & Counseling
- Drug Court
- DUI & Drug Services
- Early Intervention
- Family Reunification Services & Support
- G.E.D. Preparation
- Halfway House
- Individual & Group Therapy
- Marchman Act Referrals
- Parenting Classes
- Education & Prevention Programs
- Psychological Counseling
- Residential Treatment & Recovery Programs
- Senior Outreach
- Transition Planning
- Workforce Readiness

First Step thanks Welch Family Foundation for support of our 40th Anniversary.

Welch Family
Foundation



DIRECTORY

www.fsos.org
Main: 941-366-5333
800-266-6866

Administrative Offices
1970 Main Street, 5th Floor
Sarasota 34236

**Special Services Center &
Addictions Receiving Facility**
1726 18th Street
Sarasota 34234

Residential Center
4613 N. Washington Boulevard
Sarasota 34234

Outpatient Offices
1750 17th Street, Suite J-2
Sarasota 34234

2210 S. Tamiami Trail, Suite 10
Venice 34293

819 N. Mills Avenue, Suite E
Arcadia 34266

6497 Parkland Drive, Suite P
Sarasota, FL 34243

Family Services Center
1750 17th Street, Suite K-2
Sarasota 34234

Court Services
2075 Main Street, Suite 2
Sarasota 34237

EVENTS

Caring Hearts Luncheon
February 17, 2009
at Michael's On East

5th Annual Golf Classic
April 27, 2009 at Stoneybrook
Golf and Country Club

*Contact Kelly French
at 941-552-2065 for more
information, sponsorship
and guest opportunities.*

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