

Cares
Address for White City
October 3, 2003

My name is Elizabeth Dye. I am the president of AFGF Local 1089 and a full time employee.

I am proud and privileged to represent the employees of Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinic. Not only are these employees my friends and co-workers, I challenge you to find a more dedicated group of people. Believe it or not of the 440 White City, Oregon employees there are only 153 who are not veterans.

These people do their utmost for veterans with the highest quality of care they can provide. Their extreme dedication and excellence in quality has repeatedly been recognized at the national level as evidenced by the Hammer Award, two Carey Quality awards, and dual accreditation in Behavioral Health by the Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission and JCAHO. Our facility was the first V.A. facility to be accredited in behavioral health under CARF.

While providing this high level of care and without an increase in staff we have increased by 11% the number of uniques and come in second only to Manila in cost efficiency for fiscal year 2003.

With partnership and encouragement from our administration, we, the front line employees have been allowed the freedom to develop several new cornerstone programs enhancing existing Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Vocational programs. Experiential Learning and Day Treatment provide longer-term biopsychosocial interventions for those failing short term care and are incapable of independent living in the community. In partnership with the National Cemetery System our employees have developed and implemented a specialized turf management program which allows graduates of our program to be placed nation wide. It is common

to have visitors from local, state, and national organizations to view these original programs and their implementation.

We have developed and implemented a functioning dedicated case management system which provides each resident with a dedicated case manager who develops and oversees a personalized treatment plan with continued contact following residential treatment.

We have developed, installed, and applied the first electronic patient record system in the entire V.A. system.

By their extreme effort these employees have transformed, from a domiciliary (an old soldiers home) to a top notch, one of a kind, rehabilitation center of renown throughout the nation.

Preparing for this presentation I solicited input from a number of frontline workers and to a person their response was, “who will care for our patients?” It is these same employees who have empowered me to speak on their behalf to plead that we not be restructured or down sized. Its loss would be a tragedy to the men and women who still reside under the bridges. Or to those who live in a blur of addiction, or with multiple medical problems. Cut off from their family and friends they have few resources and can only turn to their nation whom they have so bravely served for assistance.

I pray that the dedication and creativeness of these employees be allowed to continue here, intact, for as long as there is a need.

Thank you