

New Horizons opens Indian River Learning Center

LISA RYMER

A new era in mental health dawned on Vero Beach on Nov. 10 when New Horizons opened the Indian River Learning Center, thanks to a transformational grant from Impact 100 and the support of Cardinal Management.

Community leaders, government officials, Chamber ambassadors and friends of New Horizons attended the grand opening, which included a plaque presentation for the ladies of Impact 100 for helping fund the center.

The learning center is centrally located at 937 29th Place and will provide life skills training and job readiness classes to mental health and substance abuse clients of New Horizons. With the help of mental health professionals, peer support specialists and volunteers, the learning center's students will be able to move from homelessness or supervised living to independence — becoming productive members of the community.

"The psycho-social rehabilitation program reduces hospitalizations, arrests and incarcerations in a community," said program manager Heather Roberts. "This program increases quality of life for those who have long struggled with mental illness and/or addiction issues. But, it also decreases the burden on society, which, untreated, these individuals can be."

The learning center can accommodate 300 students a year, about 120 at any given time. Space at the outpatient clinic was limited for this program, with only about 50 students able to participate.

Established in 1958, New Horizons is the largest mental health and substance abuse treatment provider in Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin and Okeechobee counties, with seven facilities serving 13,000 children and adults annually, regardless of their ability to pay.

More than half the clients served by New Horizons are indigent, with no source of income or insurance. All community contributions go to client services.

In addition to outpatient services and the learning center, New Horizons treats the Indian River County jail population for mental health and substance abuse, is involved with mental health court, operates an emergency mobile unit, and has a 104-bed campus in Fort Pierce with two crisis units for children and adults, two group homes, a substance abuse detoxification unit, and a recovery program.

Learn more at NHTCINC.org or call 772-672-8333.



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New Horizons CEO John Romano cuts the ceremonial ribbon at the Indian River Learning Center grand opening.



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Myra Webber, Rebecca Emmons and Karl Steene



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New Horizons program manager Heather Roberts, Chief Clinical Officer Deb Dreher, and board member Pat Austin



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New Horizons CEO John Romano and board member Pat Austin, second from right, with Impact 100 ladies Ellie McCabe, Brenda Cetrulo, Rebecca Emmons, Linda Knoll, Suzanne Bertman, Judy Peschio and Pilar Turner.



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New Horizons CEO John Romano, County Commissioner Joe Flescher, Vero Beach City Councilmember Pilar Turner, County Commissioner Peter O'Bryan, and Lt. Eric Flowers, Sheriff's Public Information Officer



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Barbara Sharp and Elaine Jones, Main Street Vero Beach, are pictured with artwork donated by Dale Sorensen Real Estate. The company donated a dozen oversize prints of local landscape photographs taken by Dale Sorensen Jr.