



Depression and Bipolar  
Support Alliance

# 2009 ANNUAL REPORT

## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

For many nonprofit organizations—and for a wide cross-section of people across the country—2009 was a difficult year. The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance certainly faced numerous challenges as we worked toward the vital mission “to improve the lives of people living with mood disorders.” On the one hand, hopeful developments such as the passage of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 set the scene for better treatment and greater understanding of mental illnesses, yet the uncertainties of a problematic economy and an evolving overall health care environment left many unanswered questions...and unmet needs.

DBSA continued its vital work to meet the complex needs of people living with depression and bipolar disorder through

- educational brochures and the websites DBSAAlliance.org, DBSAIianza.org, and FacingUs.org
- a network of 15 state organizations, 454 chapters, and 948 support groups across the nation
- ongoing training and consulting work with healthcare systems including VA facilities
- public information campaigns like the Blueprint for Hope and FacingUs programs

During the course of 2009, DBSA incurred a decrease in net assets and ended the year with a significant deficit. This led to some crucial staff and programmatic cuts in early 2010. The cuts, while difficult, will allow DBSA to emerge stronger and more stable.

And despite such financial difficulty, DBSA still served nearly 5,000,000 people in 2009. DBSA’s continued operation ensures that people living with depression and bipolar disorder maintain a platform for expecting, and demanding, the treatment and quality lives they deserve. DBSA could not have met the challenges of 2009 without the dedication and support of our chapters and their participants; our Board and other volunteers; our tireless staff; and generous donors across the country who made gifts and grants to DBSA in 2009. We thank these partners for their belief in the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance.

Sincerely,

Christy B. Beckmann  
2010 Chair-Elect  
DBSA Board of Directors

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## HOW DBSA MET THE MISSION OF IMPROVING LIVES IN 2009

The mission of the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) is to provide hope, help, and support to improve the lives of people living with mood disorders. DBSA pursues and accomplishes this mission through peer-based, recovery-oriented, empowering services and resources when people want them, where they want them, and how they want to receive them.

### DBSA CHAPTERS AND SUPPORT GROUPS

DBSA was founded with a fundamental belief in the power of the lived experience of a mood disorder to help others navigate their journeys to recovery. This belief is exemplified by DBSA’s national network of chapters, which served approximately 70,000 people in 2009. DBSA had 454 chapters, 948 support groups, and 15 state organizations at the close of the year. 69 new chapters were started in 2009. Several highlights for the year include

- DBSA 2009 Chapter Leadership Forum, featuring best practice workshops and networking opportunities for 127 chapter leaders, and exceeding the expectations of over 90% of attendees
- Delivery of “Pathways to Recovery” training in Denver, Colorado, at which 29 chapter leaders were trained to offer Pathways courses in their communities
- “Blueprint for Hope” community events featuring Paige Hemmis of ABC’s *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*
- Creation of three new Chapter Quality Teleconferences covering the topics: “effectively evaluating support groups,” “publicizing to grow attendance,” and “creating chapter bylaws”
- Launch of monthly Facilitator Connection Chats that bring together facilitators from DBSA’s in-person and on-line support groups to talk about how to improve the groups’ work
- Development of a new “DBSA Chapter Professional Advisors: An Important Role in the Success of Chapters” brochure to assist chapters in finding and engaging professional advisors
- Launch of Online Facilitator Training program, which is available free of charge and includes an online video library of chapter responses to typical questions that a chapter facilitator might have

### DBSA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING AND WELLNESS TOOLS

One of DBSA’s principal objectives is to create and distribute user-friendly, scientifically vetted information that helps people better understand depression and bipolar disorder. In addition to educational information, DBSA also creates tools like the new Wellness Tracker that empower people living with mood disorders to facilitate their own recovery plans from a whole-health perspective. DBSA reached nearly 5,000,000 people in 2009 with such information and tools, provided online at DBSAAlliance.org, DBSAIianza.org, and FacingUs.org; in print through numerous brochures and publications; and by phone through DBSA’s toll-free information and referral line. Several highlights for the year include

- Launch of DBSA Wellness Tracker, an innovative online resource for tracking moods, symptoms, influencing factors, and physical health statistics
- Launch of four online peer specialist continuing education courses for Magellan Health Services
- Continued enhancements to our information rich websites, FacingUs.org, DBSAAlliance.org, and DBSAIianza.org, which combined garnered over 20 million hits in 2009
- Launch of “Tapping Your Creative Flow” in the Creativity Center on FacingUs.org, a self-paced tutorial on integrating creative outlets to enhance wellness.
- Creation of “Mediation, Treatment, and Working with Professionals” video program, produced in partnership with the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP)
- Launch of Facing Us Video Contest, an initiative to encourage peers to share their recovery stories as a means to motivate and inspire others on their journeys towards wellness
- Update of “Treatment and Technologies” brochure outlining non-pharmacological treatment options
- DBSA 2009 National Conference: Peer Connections, featuring inspirational and educational presentations for over 400 registrants and garnering an approval rating of over 96%

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## DBSA TRAINING AND CONSULTING

DBSA provides training and consultation in order to ensure recovery-focused, whole-health approaches to treatment of serious mental illnesses. DBSA envisions a mental health system that focuses on people's strengths and personal goals as fundamental to the process of recovery. DBSA works hard to ensure that people living with depression and bipolar disorder are able to be heard—and to work—within all areas of mental health service delivery systems. DBSA is nationally recognized as a premier provider of Peer Specialist training and certification. Several highlights of the year include

- Delivery of Veteran Peer Specialist Training in collaboration with Central Texas VA facilities, John J. Pershing VA Medical Center, and VISN 22 VA Desert Pacific Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC)
- DBSA national Peer Specialist training courses in Chicago, Illinois; Indianapolis, Indiana; and St. Louis, Missouri
- Delivery of training and consultation services to the Texas Department of State Health Services to establish the state's Peer Specialist training and certification system and prepare an initial group of consumers as the first State-trained Peer Specialists, in collaboration with Appalachian Consulting Group and Recovery Innovations
- Lead role in training Chicago-area Veterans and creating Veteran peer support opportunities for the Illinois Veteran Peer Support Project, in collaboration with Vet Net and funded by the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs
- Delivery of Peer Support Whole Health specialty training in Arizona in partnership with OptumHealth and Appalachian Consulting Group
- Expansion of online Peer Specialist webinar learning opportunities at DBSAAlliance.org approved for continuing education credits
- Co-sponsorship of the first "Pillars of Peer Support" Summit at the Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia, bringing together representatives from states utilizing Peer Support Services to share best practices and craft recommendations for expanding use of these Medicaid-funded services
- Co-investigators on "Patient Centered Interventions for Mood Disorders," an NIMH research grant examining the impact of peer coaches on use of online recovery tools and activities
- Advocacy for enhanced Veterans' mental health services as a member of the Consumer Liaisons Council to the Department of Veterans Affairs' Committee on Care of Veterans with Serious Mental Illnesses

## DBSA ADVOCACY

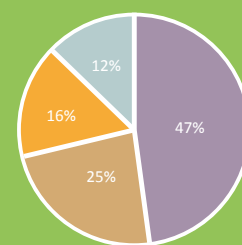
DBSA is, at its heart, focused on each individual's opportunity, responsibility, and power as an advocate. One of DBSA's foremost objectives is to ensure that people with depression and bipolar disorder have consistent and meaningful representation in determining those legislative and policy issues that affect their lives. DBSA also ensures that such advocacy is enhanced by accurate, frequent media representation. Several highlights for the year include

- Campaign through the Legislative Action Center around Mother's Day in support of the Melanie Stokes Postpartum Depression Act in both the House and Senate. More than 3,500 letters were sent in support of the legislation
- Public comments to US Department of Transportation (DOT) on behalf of psychiatric service animals
- Public comments to the FDA regarding the safety and reclassification of ECT
- DBSA joined the Campaign for Mental Health Reform (CMHR) on the following issues:
  - Affordable Health Care for America Act
  - Community Mental Health Services Improvement Act
  - Increased recovery plan funding for the mental health block grant
  - Medicaid transformation
  - Mental health disparities among underserved communities and populations
- DBSA joined the Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG) for the following issues:
  - Affordable Health Care for America Act
  - Child Healthcare Crisis Relief Act
  - Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act
  - Mental Illness Chronic Care Improvement Act
  - Network of Health-Advancing National Centers of Excellence for Depression Act
  - Preventing of Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act
  - Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC)
- Stories on *Psych Central*, *Mental Health Weekly*, *Health News Digest Online*, and others, resulted in nearly 20 million media impressions

## 2009 FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

*How Each Dollar was Spent*

DBSA experienced a shortfall in 2009 due to the economic downturn and changing philanthropic practices among some key DBSA partners. DBSA nevertheless maintained its work in service of the mission "to improve the lives of people living with mood disorders," with 72 cents of every dollar supporting mission-based programs and services.



DBSA's Board and staff are committed to stabilizing the organization's financial situation and made necessary cuts in 2010 to ensure continuance. An independent accounting firm audited DBSA's financial statements, and they found us to comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.



## 2009 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### Balance Sheet

#### ASSETS

	2009	2008
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	227,969	386,201
Certificate of deposit		31,632
Investments	48,218	95,079
Contributions receivable	50,000	225,000
Accounts receivable	51,541	170,898
Prepaid expenses		4,221
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>377,728</b>	<b>913,031</b>
<b>Property and Equipment, net</b>	<b>68,917</b>	<b>89,575</b>
<b>Noncurrent Assets</b>		
Investments	84,495	79,869
Deposits	9,161	9,161
<b>Total Noncurrent Assets</b>	<b>93,656</b>	<b>89,030</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>540,301</b>	<b>1,091,636</b>

#### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	396,440	323,015
Accrued liabilities - payroll, vacation, rent	87,117	69,981
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>483,557</b>	<b>392,996</b>
<b>Noncurrent Liabilities - accrued rent</b>	<b>6,269</b>	<b>12,749</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>489,826</b>	<b>405,745</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Unrestricted	(679,261)	(184,203)
Temporarily restricted	729,736	870,094
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>50,475</b>	<b>685,891</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>540,301</b>	<b>1,091,636</b>

### Statement of Activities

<b>Revenues, Gains, and Other Support</b>		
Contributions	1,538,311	2,092,370
Other	420,714	1,054,774
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,959,025</b>	<b>3,147,144</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Program services	1,866,322	2,318,373
Supporting services		
Management and general	418,063	331,313
Fundraising	310,056	293,587
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,594,441</b>	<b>2,943,273</b>
Change in net assets	(635,416)	203,871
<b>Net Assets</b>		
Beginning of year	685,891	482,020
End of year	50,475	685,891

# THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING DBSA

DBSA thanks the following individuals, foundations, corporations, and government entities for their generous support of our mission and programming in 2009.

## Leadership Circle \$150,000 - 499,999

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Wyeth Pharmaceuticals

## Founders Club \$10,000 - 149,999

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These listings reflect donations of \$150 and greater received between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. We apologize for errors or omissions and would appreciate hearing from you with any corrections. Please contact the Development Department at (312) 988-1161.



Rebecca's Dream is a foundation established by a loving family in honor of Rebecca Lynn Cutler, a vibrant, talented, and successful young Chicago woman who lost her life to bipolar disorder. The foundation's mission is to foster awareness and compassionate understanding of depression and bipolar disorder as real diseases that affect real people like Rebecca and her family. In 2009, DBSA and Rebecca's Dream collaborated on the fourth annual Rebecca's Dream Gala.

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- ✂ **Phoenix Society Members**  
Membership in this special group recognizes leadership investments of \$500 or more to Rebecca's Dream.

DBSA depends upon public support to achieve its vital mission to empower and educate consumers—to save lives. Those who understand the vital importance of DBSA's mission—consumers in or on their way towards recovery, loved ones of those who live with mental illness, and the general public—give generously to ensure DBSA's mission of hope, help, and support can thrive.

**Thank you to all our special donors; because of you, no one has to face mood disorders alone.**

