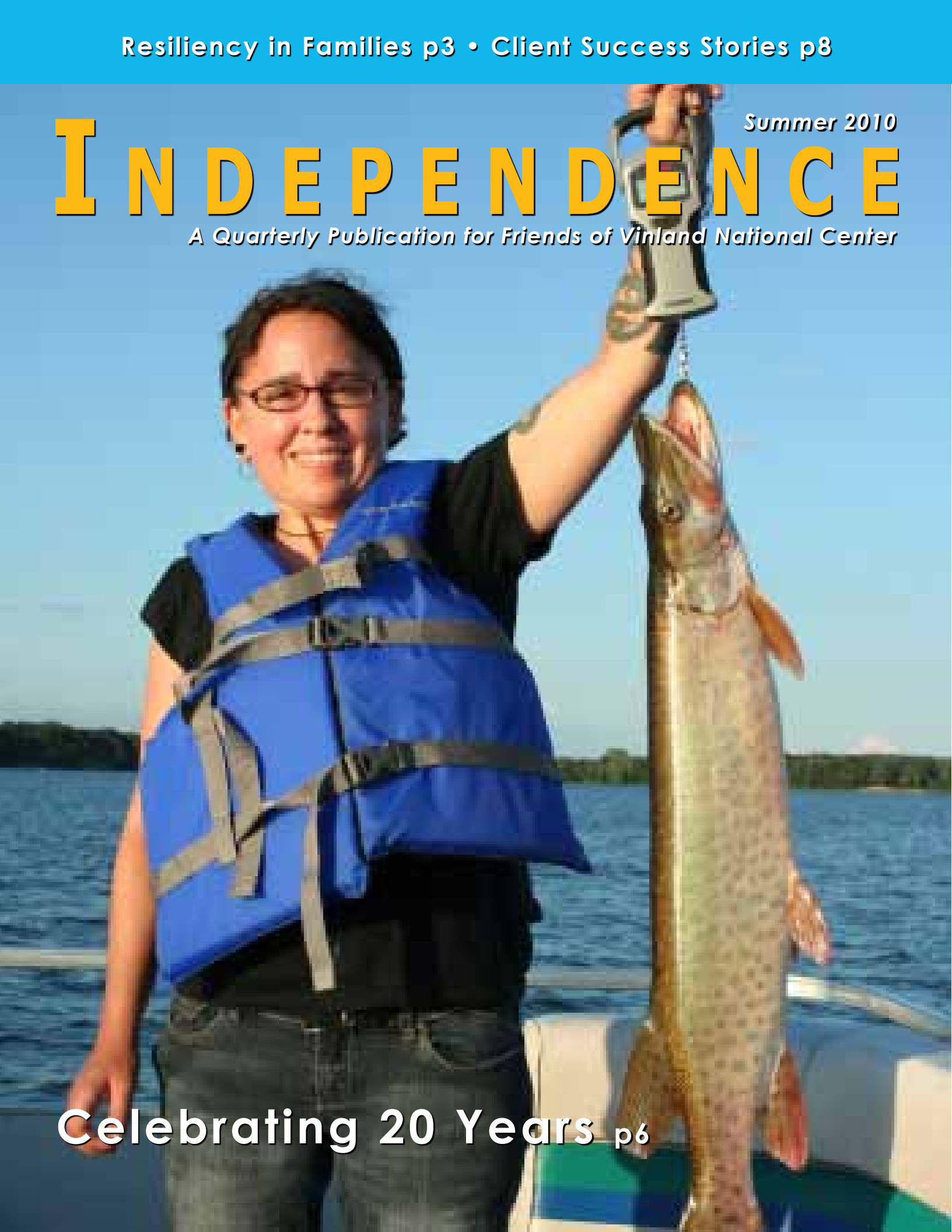


Summer 2010

# INDEPENDENCE

*A Quarterly Publication for Friends of Vinland National Center*

**Celebrating 20 Years** p6



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# Distinguished Guests

## Letter from Vinland's Executive Director

Recently we welcomed some visitors to Vinland who were involved with the organization from the very beginning. On July 29, we hosted former Vice President Walter Mondale, former Minnesota Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe, longtime Vinland Board Members David Preus and Tor Dahl, and University of Minnesota Professor Paul Quie.

Vinland National Center was founded in 1976 as the Bicentennial gift from the Kingdom of Norway to the United States. The Norwegian gift was later matched by funds from the U.S. Federal Government and from the State of Minnesota. At that time, Mondale was a U.S. senator, Dahl was a Professor at the University of Minnesota, Quie's brother Al Quie was a U.S. congressman, and Moe was a Minnesota senator. All played a role in bringing Vinland to Minnesota.

The group toured Vinland's facilities and met many of our staff members and clients. The group was able to attend part of a client's graduation ceremony and hear how his life has changed as a result of coming to Vinland. A former client (and new staff member), Dain shared his experience of addiction, treatment and recovery. You can read Dain's story on page five.

We were truly honored to have these distinguished guests at Vinland and once again thank them for their involvement and vision.



Mary Roehl  
Executive Director



*From left to right: Vinland General Counsel Karin Holt, Vinland Associate Director Duane Reynolds, former Minnesota Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe, Prof. Tor Dahl, Dr. David Preus, Vinland Board Chair Jerry Seck, former Vice President Walter Mondale, Vinland Executive Director Mary Roehl, Dr. Paul Quie, and Vinland Consultant Shawn Leighton.*

# Resiliency in Families

## Ability to Overcome Challenges Addressed by Family Program

By Rick Krueger, MA, LADC

Resiliency is a family's ability to cope with stress and not only survive, but thrive. All families experience stress. Stress can occur naturally through life events such as the birth of a child, aging or leaving home. Unexpected stress can occur with the death of a loved one, serious illness or loss of a job. Families can positively respond to stress through a variety of ways such as humor, physical activity and traditions.

The study of resiliency focuses on why things go right, even though the odds say they should go wrong. Initially, resiliency research focused on the individual's level of resilience when confronted by challenging or threatening events. The study has expanded to include the resiliency of families and communities.

Resiliency theory explores the interplay of risk, vulnerability and protective factors. These factors have been defined as:

- Risk factors increase the chance of an undesirable outcome affecting a person.
- Vulnerability renders a person more susceptible to a threat.
- Protective factors moderate the effects of risk.

A family-resilience approach builds on these developments to strengthen a family's capacity to master adversity. Three types of approaches have been identified in relation to the promotion of resilience:

- Risk-focused methods with the aim to reduce or prevent risks.
- Asset-focused methods that improve adaptive functioning to counteract adversity.
- Process-focused approaches aim to protect, activate or restore fundamental adaptation systems to support positive development.

Vinland's family program uses all three of these approaches to allow families to strengthen their



Family program participants enjoy organized outdoor activities such as pontoon rides.

resiliency across their physical, intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual areas of family functioning. Vinland's family program consists of three parts:

- Monthly family renewal events focus on building traditions and family rituals and finding leisure activities that can be continued in the community after treatment.
- Bi-weekly family lecture series provides information on building communication skills, an understanding of family systems, and information on brain injuries, chemical dependency and mental health issues and the interaction of these co-occurring disorders.
- Weekly parenting program covers the importance of lowering risks and increasing protective factors in children. Participants learn the importance of reducing stress and self-care for the child-care provider. •

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# News Around Vinland

## Lodge Residents Enjoy Day at St. Paul Ballpark

LivingWorks lodge residents enjoyed a day at a St. Paul Saints' baseball game this summer. The trip was made possible by a grant from The MENTOR Network Charitable Foundation to support recreation activities for lodge residents.

Developing an interest in sober leisure activities is an important component in sustained recovery from substance abuse. Recreation activities assist lodge residents in their efforts to find constructive use of their free time, learn effective ways to solve problems, handle stressful situations without the use of drugs or alcohol, and learn to socialize while sober.

Since LivingWorks received the grant in October 2009, there have been no relapses among residents. •

➔ *View more photos of the residents' trip to the baseball game on Vinland's Facebook page.*



## Save the Date for the Next Give to the Max Day on GiveMN

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, November 16, 2010 – Give to the Max Day! Last year more than 80,000 donors raised more than \$14 million for Minnesota non-profits.

Give to the Max Day is a one-day gift matching program. Donations made through GiveMN.org on November 16, 2010 will be partially matched by a variety of foundation grants. In addition, GiveMN partners are paying the transaction costs for gifts made to Minnesota nonprofits through GiveMN on Give to the Max Day. These generous funds allow 100 percent of your gift to go straight to Vinland!

Vinland will be sending you more information about how you can support the organization on Give to the Max Day. •

Support Vinland Center  
Give to the Max Day  
November 16, 2010

giveMN.org  
Click. Contribute. Change Your World.

## Former Client Is New Vinland Staff Member

Dain was a client in Vinland's residential chemical health program more than two years ago. He credits his experience at Vinland with helping turn his life around.

While driving home from a bar in 2008, Dain was in a serious car accident. He was thrown through the windshield of his car, then hit his head on the steering wheel and rear window as the car flipped. His injuries resulted in a traumatic brain injury. Police later told Dain that the accident should have been fatal.

The accident was a wake-up call for Dain that he needed to make important changes in his life. He made the decision to get help for his addiction and was admitted into Vinland's chemical health program a little more than a month after the car accident.

While at Vinland, Dain was very involved in the outdoor activities Vinland offers to its clients. Fishing in particular made a huge impact on him. Dain had enjoyed fishing when he was younger, but he had stopped because of his addiction. His love of fishing was reignited during his stay at Vinland.

Since his graduation, Dain's family has donated money each spring for the purchase of new fishing equipment so other people can have a similar outdoor experience.

I wanted to work with the clients to show them it can be done. I like getting to know the clients one-on-one and hearing their stories.

~ Dain  
Vinland Graduate & Employee



"It was nice that Vinland had all the fishing equipment available for people to use; no one had to bring their own stuff," Dain said.

Dain often returned to Vinland to speak with current clients and share his story of recovery. It was his dream to work at Vinland.

"I remember what Vinland did for me," Dain said. "I wanted to work with the clients to show them it can be done. I like getting to know the clients one-on-one and hearing their stories."

Dain was hired as a human services technician this summer and has been involved with the outdoor recreation activities.

"I enjoy seeing the smiles on people's faces when we're out fishing. While they're here, they can put things going on in their lives behind them."

In addition to working at Vinland, Dain also works for a retail store. His long-term goal is to become an alcohol and drug counselor.

➔ *Read more about Dain's story of addiction and recovery in the Spring 2009 issue of Independence, available online at [VinlandCenter.org/AboutUs](http://VinlandCenter.org/AboutUs).*

# Celebratin

Vinland's chemical health program is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The program began in 1990 after Vinland recognized a need for specialized services for individuals with disabilities. The program has steadily grown for the past 20 years and has established itself as the premier program.



Vinland offers chemical health clients the opportunity to participate in recreation activities such as fishing in an effort to spark an interest in sober leisure activities.

# g 20 Years

**W**hen Vinland began offering chemical health services for adults with brain injuries in 1990, no other organization was providing a similar type of specialized service. Thanks to advancements in medical technology during the 1980's, survival rates for traumatic brain injury (TBI) patients had more than doubled. Services were evolving and expanding in scope to meet the growing demands of this population.

Research at the time showed alcohol and drug use was involved with roughly fifty percent of traumatic brain injury accidents, and of those cases fifty percent of the people involved had a previous history of substance abuse. The need for a specialized chemical health program was there.

## **Innovative Program**

Many people living with a brain injury have difficulty with memory, controlling impulsive behavior, focusing and concentration. Those are all skills important in traditional chemical dependency treatment programs, which is why many TBI survivors are unsuccessful in those types of programs.

Vinland developed a chemical dependency treatment program that could accommodate TBI survivors' barriers to success and increase their chance for long-term sobriety. The new program placed an emphasis on positive reinforcement and low confrontation as a more appropriate way to interact with people living with brain injuries.

The new program proved beneficial not just for adults living with brain injuries, but people living with other types of disabilities such as learning disabilities and mental illnesses. Twenty years later, Vinland remains one of only a few treatment centers that provides chemical health services tailored for adults with cognitive disabilities.

## **Expanding Services**

The chemical health program started out as a residential program with 10 beds at Vinland's main campus. Demand for the program grew steadily, and Vinland expanded capacity to meet demand. Today the residential portion of the program has 41 beds.


Construction on the women's wing was completed in 2001. The women's wing has provided a separate space that allows Vinland to provide treatment services tailored for women.

In 2005 Vinland began offering chemical health services to clients of Courage Center Golden Valley's Transitional Rehabilitation and Pain Management Programs. The following year Vinland began offering outpatient chemical health services at Courage Center Golden Valley. This location has allowed Vinland to serve clients with varying levels of chemical dependency issues who need the convenience of a metro location so they can fulfill their work, family and life obligations.

## **Whole-Person Approach**

Vinland is dedicated to treating the whole person — mind, body and spirit. Vinland utilizes an interdisciplinary team of professionals, realizing there were many barriers to remaining sober and leading a full and rewarding life. The interdisciplinary team includes chemical health counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, fitness and wellness staff, vocational counselors, nurses, and human services technicians.

## **Complementary Care**

Vinland provides a variety of complementary care services to all of its participants. The therapeutic exercise program is the largest and provides each participant with a personalized fitness program designed under the supervision of a fitness and 

wellness manager. Vinland's fitness staff works closely with each participant to encourage a life-long interest in physical fitness.

Vinland also offers psychology and psychiatry services, family programming, traumatic brain injury groups, mindfulness-based stress reduction, recreation activities, and basic computer training.

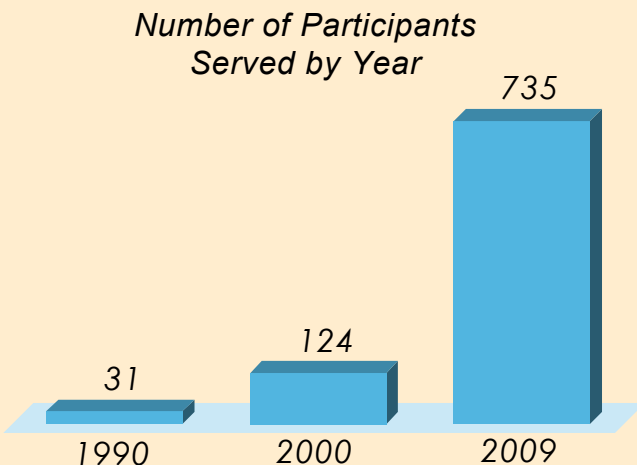
### Future of the Program

Demand for the chemical health program increases every year. Currently the growth of the program is hindered by space constraints. Vinland has plans for a building expansion project that will increase capacity from 41 beds to 100 beds. The expansion will also provide a new fitness center, more group meeting spaces, new dining and kitchen facility, and new common areas.

For more information about the expansion project, visit [VinlandCenter.org/CampusExpansion](http://VinlandCenter.org/CampusExpansion). •

### Program Growth At-A-Glance

Vinland's chemical health program started out with 10 licensed beds in 1990. Today the program has 41 beds for residential services, offers outpatient services at Courage Center Golden Valley, and provides contracted services to clients in Courage Center's Transitional Rehabilitation and Pain Management Programs (Golden Valley).



# Client Success

## Kerry

“I used meth for 33 years. I was involved in a bike club and meth was part of the culture.”

In 1995 Kerry was leaving a bar when he was hit on the head with a baseball bat. The injury resulted in a traumatic brain injury. While being treated for his injuries in a veteran's hospital, he was diagnosed with an additional brain injury. Years of chemical exposure while working as an auto body refiner had caused permanent damage to his brain.

“The VA tried for 10 or 15 years to get me to go to Vinland Center but I resisted. I don't know why; I guess I just wasn't ready.”

Kerry estimates he went to 15 treatment centers before finally agreeing to come to Vinland, but he said treatment at Vinland was different because he felt treated as an individual.

“Vinland was able to address issues other than just chemical dependency. They worked with me on my brain injuries and PTSD issues. I was treated as a whole person.”

Kerry credits fitness as a big part of his recovery. When asked what stands out to him the most about his stay at Vinland, he talked about the therapeutic exercise program.

“My accomplishments in the fitness center carried over into other parts of my life. It was about treating the whole person – the mind and the body. A big part of my recovery is staying healthy physically.”

Kerry moved into a half-way house following his treatment at Vinland and plans to continue receiving services at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.

“This is the first time in my life I've had any quality recovery,” Kerry said. “Before I always wanted too much too soon. Now I'm moving along kind of slow and it doesn't bother me.”

# Stories: Two of Vinland's Chemical Health Graduates Share Their Stories of Success in Recovery

## Colette

"I did want to quit but I couldn't do it on my own."

In 1988 Colette was on vacation with her husband when she was rushed to the hospital for a ruptured brain aneurysm. She was left with a significant brain injury. She spent the next several months in physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy.

Colette eventually returned to her everyday life, which included going to work and raising three children. However, she continued to struggle with her brain injury. She was easily overwhelmed at work and frequently changed jobs. She applied for Social Security benefits but was denied. Her frustrations eventually led to depression.

"I drank before my brain injury, but my drinking really escalated five years ago as a result of my depression," Colette said.

Colette's depression went untreated because she did not realize she needed help. Her desperation reached a climax three years ago when she tried to commit suicide.

"I started therapy right after that happened. I stayed sober for six months, but then I went to a wedding and the drinking started all over again," she said.

Colette did want to quit drinking and tried a treatment center near her hometown, but she did not

Vinland had the focus on whole-body healing - physical, emotional, mental. I think that is really important.

~ Colette  
Vinland Graduate

like the lock-down setting. Her husband researched other treatment centers online and showed Colette Vinland's website.

"Vinland had the focus on whole-body healing - physical, emotional, mental," Colette said. "I think that is really important."

At Vinland, Colette dove into her recovery program. She was in the fitness center everyday at 8 a.m. She went to groups and really opened herself up to the ideas about addiction and recovery the case managers presented to her.

After graduating from Vinland, Colette found a job within a week. She is working part-time in a fitness center located in her hometown.

"I get to help people by using the positive attitude that was portrayed to me at Vinland," she said. "My job gets me up in the morning. It gives me a purpose."

## Donations Make A Difference

Complementary services made a big impact on Kerry and Colette. Your donations helps fund these services.

Complementary services include:

- Therapeutic exercise
- Basic computer training
- Outdoor recreation

Learn more about how your donation makes a difference. Visit [www.VinlandCenter.org/Giving](http://www.VinlandCenter.org/Giving).



Canoeing at main campus



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## About Vinland National Center

Vinland National Center is a non-profit organization that enables individuals with multiple disabilities to live productive and fulfilling lives through a whole-person approach that addresses the mind, body and spirit. Vinland's programs include behavioral health services with a focus on substance abuse for people with cognitive disabilities, vocational services and supportive housing.



## Donate Online

### *Make a difference!*

Go online to learn how your donation can make a difference. Even a small donation can make a profound difference in someone's life.

### *Secure online donations*

Vinland offers a secure online donation form for your convenience.

### *Questions?*

Please call 763.479.4545 to speak with someone about how you would like to support Vinland participants.

[www.vinlandcenter.org/giving](http://www.vinlandcenter.org/giving)