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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**EAST HOUSE/RIT ENRICHMENT PROGRAM KICKS-OFF**

“I’m looking forward to taking classes and beginning the program. The Enrichment Program will help take me where I want to go,” states Robert, an East House client who will have the opportunity to take classes during a two-week Enrichment Program at RIT. East House and the Rochester Institute of Technology are once again collaborating to offer 40 individuals recovering from mental illness and/or chemical dependency an opportunity to experience college life on the RIT campus. Classes will be taught by community volunteers, from June 1-11th, with a formal graduation ceremony planned on June 11th. Enrichment 2009 is sponsored by M & T Bank.

Clients choose from classes such as computer skills, public speaking, photography, art and more. This unique program, now in its thirteenth year, has been very successful in encouraging East House clients to pursue education to achieve independence and self-sufficiency. After attending the program, many have gone back to school to obtain their GED or have enrolled in local colleges to earn a degree. This program has proven to inspire many clients to better their lives, as is often expressed during the graduation ceremony.

M & T Bank has sponsored the 2009 program with a gift \$5,000. In addition to the time and space donated by instructors and RIT, financial support has also been received from the Fred & Floy Willmott Foundation, the Rochester Female Charitable Society and Wegmans Food Market. This program is funded wholly by donations.

A kick-off reception and registration meeting was held on May 20<sup>th</sup> at the Third Presbyterian Church. A car wash was also held by East House Career Services Program and the clients enrolled in this year’s program. The car wash, held at the Lac De Ville Administrative office on May 22nd, raised \$1,050 for the program.

East House is a private, non-profit rehabilitation agency. Founded in 1966, East House provides residential, rehabilitation and support services to individuals recovering from mental illness and/or chemical dependency. East House serves more than 1,000 clients and their families each year and is funded by New York State, Monroe County, United Way, client fees and donations.

*For more information, contact Anne Mc Kenna at 256-3800, ext. 213.*



*Robert, pictured above with Career Services Counselor, Jill Persson, is looking forward to Enrichment.*