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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 25, 2009

**EMBERWOOD CENTER AND HARRISON CENTER FOR THE ARTS
TO HOST *MYTHS OF ADDICTION* ART GALLERY SHOW**

EmberWood Center, an addiction treatment and prevention facility, is going out on a proverbial limb to host a commissioned art show, *Myths of Addiction*, in conjunction with the Harrison Center for the Arts (1505 North Delaware Ave.). The opening reception will be from 6 to 10 PM at the Harrison Center on Friday, September 4, 2009, as part of the First Friday Art Walk. The show will continue through the entire month of September, which is National Recovery month.

Vincent G. Failla, EmberWood Center President, said,

Our main purpose in doing this event is to dispel the myths that feed into the stigma surrounding substance use disorders, more commonly known as addiction. So many people do not realize that addiction is a disease of the body, mind and spirit, and requires treatment like any chronic progressive disease; some of those same myths surround treatment and recovery. Instead of trying to talk to people about this, which is often ineffective, we decided to use art to raise awareness.

Failla said it is estimated that substance addiction affects one in every four individuals, whether personally or via a family member, friend or co-worker, and it crosses all socioeconomic groups. He continued,

Without treatment, this chronic, progressive disease destroys lives and families, so it is critically important to dispel the myth that addiction is a moral weakness and garner support for treatment.

Joanna Taft, Executive Director of the Harrison Center for the Arts, said,

We are very excited to partner with Emberwood Center in creating a social services-meets-Indy-arts-community experience that will spur public conversation around the subject of addiction.

EmberWood Center engaged the services of the Harrison Center to produce the show.

There will be a mix of affordable, collectible art for sale by both commissioned and non-commissioned artists. In Gallery 2, the commissioned artists include: Elyce Elder, Mark Alan Miller, Kipp Normand, Mike Mayer and Austin Dickson.

A number of local artists will display at a silent auction on the lower level, known as "The Underground." A big draw in the silent auction will be Chicago artists Jason Messinger and Alan Emerson Hicks. Messinger is a well-established artist, sculptor and writer whose work is in public, corporate, and private collections across the United States and Europe. He also curates art shows of local artists, and writes essays, poetry, fantasy fiction. Hicks is a conceptual artist working in the media of plastic found object, fiber and time.

Native American artist, author, and storyteller -- Linda Silvas, of Sequim, Wash., -- also will display in the Underground. Silvas wrote a children's book, *Mama Bear, Baby Bear*, about the all-too-common scenario in the Native community of grandparents, relatives and organizations being charged with the protection and upbringing of children whose parents have become substance-addicted. Silvas donated a handmade drum with a depiction of the characters for the silent auction, as well as an autographed copy of the book.

Other features of *Myths of Addiction* include an outside firepit, complete with a live fire and individuals who will be sitting in a circle telling stories; but instead of ghost stories, they will be sharing stories of recovery and hope. "Mythologists" will stroll the galleries handing out cards with over 200 myths about drugs, alcohol, treatment and recovery. In the Gymnasium, Failla will host a game show, "Know Your Dope," which presents alcohol and drug education in an audience-participation format. Rotating with the game show will be bicycle polo-playing performance artists whose riding will demonstrate the *cycles* of addiction.

The Harrison Center will hold another show simultaneously called *Myths of Medicine*, to promote a book by authors Rachel Vreeman and Aaron Carroll, entitled *Don't Swallow Your Gum: Myths, Half-truths, and Outright Lies About Your Body and Health*.

According to Failla, *Myths of Addiction* is unique in that it is bringing together people active in recovery, family members of people struggling with addiction, and addiction treatment and prevention professionals with the general public. Not everyone in the show or attending it has substance addiction issues, but those who do can either share their journey or protect their anonymity.

Traditionally a service provider of the near eastside of Indianapolis, EmberWood Center recently underwent a rebranding and name change, from Community Addiction Services of Indiana, or CASI. It now seeks to reach a wider range of Hoosiers about the stigma and lack of understanding surrounding addiction. The organization has provided community-based treatment and prevention services for over 30 years, serving adolescents, adults and families.