You were recommended as a potential candidate for a SAMHSA Committee that is in need of a Human Resource Specialist.  SAMHSA is a System of Care grant that was awarded to Champaign County October 2009.  Since October 2009, there have been several committees formed and an Interim Governing Body.

Juli Kartel and I are co-chairs for the Contracts, Personnel Policy Committee.  Here is a list of the some of the committee’s responsibilities:

* Review CCMHBs policies and procedures- see what additional things /policies we want to include - create recommendations to bring back to the governing team
* Work on a draft of our system's employment values policies- include what values we want reflected in our system's employment practices. (These rules should even/might even be applied to agencies that subcontract with the Access Initiative). Some of the values we might want to include in our policies are: diversity, flexibility, to be family friendly - ( I can anticipate that we'll need legal input to help us create MOU's with partnering agencies that encourage them (or require them) to adopt these values...
* And most importantly/immediately we need the committee to identify our overall core competencies for all of our SOC's employees. (You might want to divide this into competencies for the administrative team, for supervisors, and then for front line staff - or you might decide to keep them all together).

This would be approximately a 3 or 4 month commitment, meeting at least 2 hours bi-weekly and communicating via email fairly regularly.  Our goal is to be able to reimburse all committee participants for their time and mileage.

I would greatly appreciate if you could respond within the next day or two, with your interest in serving on this committee.

**The statement below was in response to asking me for more details about the program and CCMHB part.**

CCMHB is the Champaign County Mental Health Board which may become the fiscal agent for the Initiative.  They were a big part of writing the SAMHSA grant, more than once. This is how they originally fit into the process:

With the support of the Champaign County Mental Health Board (CCMHB), the local funding body, and McHenry County Family CARE, a 2005 CMHI site with whom was consulted, Project ACCESS developed a pilot program to serve youth at the county juvenile detention center (JDC) who have mental health needs. This JDC Pilot Project has enabled us to create, test, and refine system-wide procedures, forms, and structures. The current proposal, which will be referred to as the **ACCESS Initiative**, involves a partnership between Project ACCESS and IDHS/DMH to expand the JDC Pilot Project to serve youth with serious emotional disturbance (SED) county-wide. This expansion will have a particular emphasis upon youth with SED involved in (or at risk for involvement in) the juvenile justice system and African American youth, who are disproportionately represented in the county’s child-serving systems.

Here is an overview of the current Champaign County System of Care Initiative:

**WHAT IS THE ACCESS INITIATIVE?**

GOAL: The ACCESS Initiative is a project funded by the Department of Health and Human Services. The goal of the project is to create a systems of care in Champaign County, Illinois, with full participation from local youth, families, and community members.

SYSTEM OF CARE: A system of care is not a program but a different way of helping youth and families. It is a coordinated network of community-based services and supports that work together to meet the needs of children and youth with serious mental health needs - and their families. **Families and youth work in partnership with public and private organizations to design mental health services and supports that are effective, that build on the strengths of individuals, and that address each person's cultural and linguistic needs.** A system of care helps children, youth and families function better at home, in school, in the community and throughout life. ([http://systemsofcare.samhsa.gov](http://systemsofcare.samhsa.gov/))

TARGET: The ACCESS Initiative targets youth aged 10-17 with serious mental health concerns who are *at risk for* - or involved in - the juvenile justice system or involved in multiple (more than one) child-serving system. The ACCESS Initiative will help any youth with these needs while giving special attention to the needs of African American youth in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems – because African American youth are over-represented in these systems.

PLAN: The ACCESS Initiative will completely transform how youth and families are served in Champaign County, while also providing individualized wraparound services to 200 high risk youth and their families per year and prevention services to 100 families per year.

CHANGES: The ACCESS Initiative will help to: create new services that follow best practices, change the way services are funded so money will “follow the child” instead of “following the program”, improve the cultural and linguistic competence of local providers and leaders, and create a “care coordination” system where each youth/family will work with a Wraparound Team or Family Advocate. The Project will also work to educate the community about mental health and hopes to have an accessible office and meeting space in a public health facility.

HISTORY: The ACCESS Initiative began in 2002 with the goal of having more coordinated mental health services. The project has consistently involved youth, families, and community members who represent the targeted population. The project has also included many youth serving agencies, juvenile justice leaders, the education system, child welfare system, and the county’s Mental Health Board.

FAMILY DRIVEN AND YOUTH GUIDED: Family and youth will continue to be active partners in all aspects of the ACCESS Initiative, including governance, treatment decisions, service provision, administration and evaluation.

The ACCESS Initiative, which involves the voice of youth, families and relevant stakeholders throughout the process, has the following goals at the center of the SOC transformation:

**a)** **to expand the community and system capacity** to address the needs of the targeted population, through the expansion of **accessible, culturally and linguistically competent**, **effective treatments**, and through the expanded use of natural and existing community supports;

**b)** **to transform the county’s Social service infrastructure,** both fiscally and in terms of philosophy,so that services for each youth follow an individualized, family and youth driven plan which best fits the culture and values of the family, and so that this infrastructure is sustainable over time;

**c)** **to serve as a replicable model and catalyst for SOC expansion**, regionally and statewide, as part of the state’s efforts to expand SOC in Illinois and to reduce the stigma for mental health services for youth and families.

We are currently in the process of hiring the Administrative Team, which consist of the Project Director, Technical Assistant Coordinator, Youth Coordinator, Social Marketing Coordinator, Lead Family Contact Coordinator, and the Cultural and Linguistic Competence (CLC) Coordinator.  There are approximately 40 positions that will be created and filled to manage the System of Care (SOC) that will be imbedded in various agencies throughout Champaign County.  The physical location of the Administrative Team has not been decided and may be located offsite, but they will be under the employment of the Champaign County Mental Health Board.

The Governance Body and the various committees will refine and finalize all procedures and policies within the Champaign County ACCESS Initiative System of Care.  The Governance Body and all committees include family and youth as full participants.

You can go to the United States Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)- SAMHSA Systems of Care website to get further details about Systems of Care. <http://systemsofcare.samhsa.gov/>

There are also mini orientations given twice a month that everyone in the community and all agency personnel are encouraged to attend.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.