

This article was written and posted online by Ann-Marie Katzer, MSW for the Hartford Courant in a special series to 'put a face on social work' for the month of May. Ann-Marie chose to feature Celeste out of hundreds of applicants. May 2010.



The Face of Social Work: Celeste Emelia Mattingly, LCSW written by Ann-Marie Katzer, MSW

While social workers are integral parts of all communities, the general public's understanding of who they are, the contributions they make and services they provide is still limited. Since its inception, the social work profession has worked to improve life for millions every day. Social workers operate from values that recognize each person as relevant to society and believe that, when needed, society should help each person achieve his or her fullest potential. Social workers work in many capacities, including but not limited to: counseling, case management, providing children & family services, mental health services, advocacy, administration, policy and community organization. *National Social Workers Month of March* celebration honors social workers all over the nation. Connecticut is proud to participate in this celebration by honoring the social workers in our state who work hard every day to serve our residents

Celeste Mattingly has been in private practice since 1999. Her practice is in West Hartford, CT and she currently resides in the same town. She has her MSW from Springfield College and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She interned at State's Merritt Treatment Center and Hartford Hospital's Institute of Living and her post graduate work consisted of working in programs both in St. Francis and Natchaug Psychiatric Hospitals.

Since 1999 Celeste has been serving the Greater Hartford areas insured and uninsured adult mentally-ill and substance abuse populations. She has always provided a sliding scale, thus helping many well into any dissolution of their insurance benefits, and "there have been many" she exclaimed. She believes that continuing to serve the insured, in spite of low paying contracts and the increasing cost of maintaining good help with billing, is in true keeping with the nature of social work. She remains committed to the middle-to-lower class who need to use their insurance for help with their mental health.

Celeste states that "the basic credo of social work; treating the whole person, body, mind and spirit is the most gratifying about her work in this field". She went on to say "this holistic approach to helping people offers us infinite opportunities to creatively grow and change" and that "treating the whole person allows us to evolve as helpers and as helping organizations. No other discipline can change hats so readily; clinicians, policy-makers, administrators, authors, theorists and now branching out as energy healers; social workers have the best of all worlds".

Celeste has trademarked "*Celestial Psychology*"-an eclectic combination of standard psychiatric care and state-of-the-art Holistic Therapies and this spring she will launch a series of workshops based on treating the whole person- body, mind and spirit. Lastly, Celeste stated "None of this would have been possible without the training, experience and overreaching nature of social work".