“In many ways DBSA has become the life-saving glue that holds my life together.”

– DBSA Group Participant
PRESIDENT’S REPORT

2008 was a remarkably successful year for DBSA. This Annual Report provides an excellent opportunity for us to assure our many supporters that their contributions of time and money have been used wisely and to explain some of the challenges DBSA intends to address in 2009.

STUDIES

During 2008, DBSA concluded three studies that were organized and conducted specifically for our organization by an independent researcher. These studies will help set the direction for DBSA for the intermediate and perhaps longer term. A Demographic Study revealed that we need to reach out to a broader and more diverse cross-section of the population in the Greater Houston area. We are working diligently toward that goal as you will see in more detail in the Program Achievements section of this Report.

One of the most important steps taken by DBSA in the last several years is the completion of an Outcome Study which was designed, implemented and analyzed to measure the effectiveness of our support groups. The results were beyond gratifying. Among other information, the Outcome Study revealed that 85% of the responding participants reported positive change in their progress toward recovery and 89% reported better quality of life as a direct result of participating in DBSA groups. The conclusions in the Outcome Study are not a surprise to our Board, staff and facilitators. We know that DBSA support groups are structured to provide a compassionate environment of peers who accept and understand each other, and that peer support and comfort are indeed powerful.

The third study conducted for DBSA was an Attendance Study which analyzed attendance patterns of participants in our support groups. During 2009, we plan to explore several avenues that will hopefully improve regular and long-term attendance by support group participants.

DEVELOPMENT

Thanks to the continued, loyal support of foundations and individuals who invested in DBSA and its mission, 2008 was the most successful fundraising year in the history of our organization. Please take time to read the complete list of contributors included in this Report. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to each and every donor and financial supporter of DBSA. Thanks to the supporters listed in this Report, we are now more financially stable than any time in the history of DBSA.

We know that in order for DBSA to sustain itself, grow in an orderly way and expand its services, increased funding will be necessary. Recognizing that we needed professional help to achieve our ongoing funding objectives, we established as a priority in 2008 to add a new Development Director to our staff. It took the entire year to find the right person for our organization, and in December of 2008 we hired Christina Urquhart Wilkerson. Christina brings the energy, excitement and experience for fundraising that our organization needs. To support and assist Christina, we have a dedicated and deeply involved Board and an exceptional Development Committee.

CHALLENGES FOR 2009

The Outcome Study clearly demonstrated to us that the longer and more regularly a person attends DBSA peer support groups, the greater the benefit to the participant. Fortunately, we have many support group participants and facilitators who have regularly attended support group meetings for several years and continue to be active participants. The Attendance Study also shows us that there are a number of people who attend one or a few meetings but do not follow through with long-term participation. Our professional staff and Program Committee are seeking ways to improve attendance through program improvements, facilitator training and participant education to maximize the benefits which can be achieved through consistent attendance.

In addition, we are actively seeking to serve new or special groups such as seniors, individuals on probation, military veterans and more diverse ethnic populations. It will be a challenge simultaneously to accomplish our goals of starting new groups for these individuals needing access to our services, expanding initiatives to serve these additional groups and improving attendance at all groups.

The end of 2008 also marks the beginning of a year with unprecedented financial uncertainty for everyone – including our financial supporters and group participants. We know that many Houstonians are facing difficult financial conditions, have lost a sense of security and face stress and anxiety at higher levels than ever before. It is with this understanding DBSA plans to continue to provide important education, comfort and acceptance to those in need of our services. We remain confident that our individual, trust and foundation supporters will continue to make it possible for us to fulfill our mission. 2008 provided DBSA with a convincing story to tell, and in 2009, we intend to tell it.

Sincerely,

Fred H. Dunlop, 2009 Board President
2008 Board of Directors
Bolivar C. Andrews, President
Fred H. Dunlop, President Elect
Ed Cappel, Past President
Gary Levering, Founding President
Carolyn Light, Secretary
Carleton McHenry, Treasurer

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Ron Bandy
Ben Bergeron
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John Eads
Jim Gasper
Frank Griffin
Cynthia Guill
Maureen Hackett
Evangelina Hammonds, LCSW
Brett Hogan
Tim Horan
Evelyn Jewell
Granville Knight
Flo McGee
Stephanie McGraw
Sandi McHenry
Marcie Mir Tipton, LCSW
Vicki Montague

THE COMMITMENT OF DBSA

Our Mission:
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance Greater Houston (DBSA) sponsors free support groups that assist in the recovery of individuals with depression or bipolar disorder.

Our Vision:
With support groups provided by DBSA, every person with depression or bipolar disorder can enhance their recovery from these treatable illnesses.

Our Goal:
DBSA will be the leading provider of free, well attended, effective support groups throughout the Houston metropolitan area. This support will include collaboration with community resources to enhance the recovery of individuals with depression or bipolar disorder and to incorporate families and friends in the recovery process.

“I wish my family would come and meet others and see that we are not alone in our struggle.”

– DBSA Group Participant
2008 PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2008, DBSA continued to sponsor a broad range of free support groups across the Houston metropolitan area to assist in the recovery of those who were affected by depression or bipolar disorder. Our support groups extended to those of all ages, races or socio-economic status as we know all too well that mental illnesses are non-discriminatory predators. DBSA sponsored support groups continued to offer more than support by helping to provide education, comfort, acceptance and empowerment to many. Most importantly, our support groups provided crucial understanding for those who identify with the challenges of mental illness and experienced the success that can be achieved with the support of others.

We began 2008 with 42 support groups located at 22 different sites. Throughout the year we continued support group expansion as the call for our services was needed more than ever in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike and the financial turmoil during the last quarter of the year. During 2008, an additional 13 groups were added and 6 new locations were opened to serve the public at large. By the end of the 2008, DBSA was working with hundreds of diagnosed individuals, family members and friends on a weekly basis throughout Houston and its sister cities with 55 groups at 28 locations.

We continued to focus on expanding services to meet new populations and geographic areas in the Greater Houston area. In November, we celebrated the opening of our 55th support group dedicated to serving the brave men and women of our armed forces at the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Two of the additional groups were specifically for adolescents and their parents: one in Friendswood at the Friendswood United Methodist Church and the other is inside Loop 610 at St. Luke’s United Methodist Church. The groups that opened in the cities of Baytown and Cypress expanded our services to every geographical quadrant in a four county area. To further serve both the disadvantaged and the chronically mentally ill, a new group opened in Midtown at St. Joseph’s Club House. Finally, in an effort to ensure that we adequately serve the fastest growing population in Houston, a support group dedicated to Spanish-speaking adults was opened in Houston’s East End at El Centro de Corazon.

To illustrate the phenomenal growth of DBSA support groups over the past five years, consider the following maps:

The expanded reach of our support group services is the direct result of the unwavering dedication of our board, the hard work of our staff and the kind generosity of our many donors. We will continue in 2009 with what was started in 2004, to help those who live with these difficult, yet treatable, mental illnesses to have more fulfilling and promising lives.
**DBSA Greater Houston**

**2008 Financial Information**

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</table>

**FACILITATORS**

DBSA’s success in 2008 was greatly attributed to the efforts and dedication of our wonderful array of support group facilitators. Many of these individuals donated the two greatest gifts any organization could ever hope to receive — one’s labor and one’s love. It is with tremendous gratitude that we honor these amazing men and women:

- Belinda Alman
- Linda Condon
- Neal Krenzke
- Jim Rice
- Rex Alman
- Bobbie Culberson
- Mary Kuskowski
- Bill Rudolf
- Carmen Anderson
- Lois Davis
- Danny Lemon
- Marianna Shelton
- Patricia Andrews
- Julia Douglass-Meadows
- Gary Levering
- Todd Simmons
- Debbie Arnold
- Dyene Galantini
- Kisha Lorio
- Ann Simpson
- Cindy Bartz
- Aaron Gerstler
- Rhonda Loving
- Ken Sumner
- Douglas Bednorz
- Penni Gerstler
- David A. Maxwell
- Pat Sumner
- Roger Bleier
- Leonetta Green
- Stephanie McGraw
- Sharon Throckmorton
- Katrina Brauer
- Thomas Haessly
- Hans Meyer
- Corrin Torrence
- Mary Ann Brauer
- Brent Hancharyk
- Cindy Moore
- Erin Trainor
- Nola Brody
- Martha Hanson
- Crystal Morrison
- Matt Trigg
- Christopher Brown
- Phil Hanson
- James Mulkey
- Faye Walker
- Patrick Brown
- Lee Ann Hilbrich
- Theora Noble
- Dick Walters
- Cody Chambers
- Donna Hoffman
- Walt Palmer
- Lance Watkins
- Sarah Clark
- Sarah Hyde
- Kim Pate
- Cheryl Weiss
- Jennipher Cole
- Karen Jerger
- Marilyn Patterson
- Steven Weiss
- Becky Cortese
- Rosemary Kallinen
- Branden Peters
- Ted Weiss
- Matt Cortese
- Thomas Kennedy
- Angela Raley
- Darcy White
We are truly grateful to the following donors who generously supported our organization in 2008.

$10,000 and above
Albert and Margaret Alkek Foundation
Baylor Methodist Community Health Fund
The Brown Foundation, Inc.
The Gordon and Mary Cain Foundation
John S. Dunn Research Foundation
The Ellwood Foundation
The Fondren Foundation
Houston Endowment Inc.
JoAnn and Gary Levering
Jack H. and William M. Light
Charitable Foundation
M. D. Anderson Foundation
Ruth Jones MacDonald Charitable Trust
Ralph H. & Ruth J. McCullough Foundation
The Meadows Foundation
Rockwell Fund, Inc.
The Simmons Foundation, Inc.
Suzi and Doug Swanson

$5,000 – $9,999
Burguieres Family Foundation
Kiwanis Foundation of Houston
The Lyons Foundation
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Well McGee & The Florence and William K. McGee, Jr. Family Foundation
Cecille and George Shannon
St. Martin’s Episcopal Church – Outreach Program
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The Vaughn Foundation
William and Marie Wise Family Foundation/Vivian Wise

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Marilyn and Bolivar Andrews
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Good Earth Foundation
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John and Bobbie Nau & Silver Eagle Distributors, LP
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Kathy and John Pipkin
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$1,000 – $1,999
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Linda and Martin Debrovner
Charles W. Duncan, Jr.

Mary and John Eads
Robert R. Franklin, M.D.
Fran and Weldon Granger
Ann C. Gregory
McNeill Charitable Foundation on behalf of Mr. Frank Griffin and Ms. Janet L. McNeill
Martha and Phil Hanson
Peggy Ingram
Carol and Keith Kimmick
Franna and Ted Litton
Rita and John Madden
B.D. and Mac McAndrew
Mr. and Mrs. Frederick R. McCord
Sandra and Adams McHenry
Eugenia and Ward McNeilly
Barbara and John Patton
Susan and Will Penland
Barbara and Corbin J. Robertson, Jr.
Marc and Jeri Shapiro Family Foundation
Katherine and John Stanton
Richard B. Walters
Nancy and Charles Walters
Michelle and Lacy Williams
William and Marie Wise
Family Foundation/Marie F. Wise

$500 – $999
A friend of DBSA
Bonnie and George Allen
Amegy Bank of Texas
BHP Billiton Petroleum
Missy and Ron Bandy
Mr. and Mrs. John Bitner
Cam and Rod Canion
Maggie and Mike Castleman
Vicki and Jim Clepper
Cissie and Dillon Ferguson
Hackett Family Foundation
Joanie and Don Haley
Sally and David Harvin
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Kelly and Curtis Kayem
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Dianne and Dick Kilday
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Marek Family Foundation
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Daisy and Bill Quayle
Peggy and Bill Roe
Karol and William Scarbrough
James Stephens
Ken Summer
Lene and William Symes
Victoria and David Wilson
Carolyn and Bryan Wimberly

Up to $499
A friend of DBSA
Marjory Alexander
Chris and Merrell Athon
John E. Bailey
Bette Benton
Boone and John Bullington
Margot and John Cater
Janie and Gareth Cook
Camaryn Crisantes
Lana and Chip Cureton
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E. Ted and Sallie Davis
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Mollie and Malcolm Pettigrew
Nancy Porteous-Thomas
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Kathleen and Dick Rogers
Claudia Rosen
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Tom and Don Nell Rushing
St. Luke’s United Methodist Church
Frances Bedford Sampson
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Judge and Mrs. Ewing Werlein, Jr.
Tetine and Chip Werlein
Victoria and David Wilson
Betsy and Jim Winn
Margaret and Jerry Wolfe
Joy L. Woodard

DEPRESSION AND BIPOLAR SUPPORT ALLIANCE GREATER HOUSTON DONORS
In Honor of

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Ann Trammell

Jim Braniff
Bobbie and John Nau, III and Silver Eagle Distributors, L.P.
Marc and Jeri Shapiro Family Foundation

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A friend of DBSA

Martha and Phil Hanson
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Carey C. Shuart

Mr. and Mrs. Scott Sturges
Ann Trammell

Mrs. Carolyn Trammell
Ann Trammell

Tuesday Night Chapelwood Group
Susan Pavlica

Mr. and Mrs. David M. Underwood
Ann Trammell

Carolyn and Jeremy Woodard
Joy L. Woodard

In Memory of

Mary Andrews
Marilyn and Gene Shepherd

John Alden Bumstead, Jr.
Marilyn and Bolivar Andrews
Evelyn and Bob Jewell
Jo Ann and Gary Levering

Mr. Ting Tsung Chao
Linda and Don Condon

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Robert J. Bachman

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Peggy Wagner

Alfred Glassell
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Robert Philip Gregory
Suzy and Roy Box, Jr.

Kathryn Hitchcock
Vicki and Jim Montague

Robert Alden Jewell
Jennifer and Tom Henley
Evelyn and Bob Jewell
Elise and Tony Massoth

Martin C. Klein
Annette and Mel Klein

Pauline “Polly” Liberti
Carol and Keith Kimmick

Leigh Masterson
Jo Ann and Gary Levering

Mark Chapman Powell
Helen and Joe Allen
Bette Benton
Scott Davis
Betty Hellman
Nancy and Bob Kurtz
Marilyn and Gene Shepherd

Adelaide C.K. Russell
Evelyn and Bob Jewell

Paul Kelly Triplehorn, Jr.
Christ Chapel Bible Church
Beverly and Staman Ogilvie
Victoria and David Wilson

Norma Brooks Walters
Richard B. Walters

Betty B. Williams
Evelyn and Bob Jewell

All gifts received 1/1/08 – 12/31/08
Every year millions of Americans struggle with depression and bipolar disorder. Many go undiagnosed for years and then spend a life learning to live with an illness that has robbed them of what many take for granted – a happy marriage, a fulfilling career a brighter tomorrow. Once individuals are able to learn how to manage their illness, they are able to live a full life. DBSA support groups play an active role in the recovery of many individuals. Here is the story of one amazing woman whose human spirit was not to be extinguished by her mental illnesses but illuminated by her participation in a DBSA sponsored support group. Through it all, she has learned to live again and is excited to share her story with you:

In 1997, I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Unfortunately, it took seven additional years for me to become an active participant in managing my illness. Once I faced it, I realized bipolar disorder had played a significant role throughout my life. Prior to my diagnosis, I failed out of college, married an old high school friend and in the blink of an eye, my world became my husband and my two children. I lived the majority of my thirteen-year marriage undiagnosed. As my husband sought comfort from others, my manic and depressive episodes became more and more extreme. I would go for days without sleep, shop excessively and start business after business. And then the lows would come – I would rarely get out of bed, sometimes only to take my children to school in my pajamas. I went through the motions of each extreme state without any idea that there was a reasonable explanation for my behavior. But the worst was yet to come.

In November 2001 my world came crashing down around me. My husband took our two young sons and went to live in another city with another woman. I lost everything dear to me, as well as my version of a support system. Without the coping skills and ability to handle the situation, I was on a sudden and dangerous downward spiral. Over the course of the next four years, I often had suicidal thoughts, was arrested numerous times and lived in a manic state. In sum, I was trapped in a tunnel of darkness with no ray of hope to be found at either end.

Finally, in January 2005 it hit me like a lightning bolt: “The storm has passed, Sarah! Make the choice to control your own life! Pick up the pieces and face the world!” The next day I called Krist Samaritan Center and was set up with a fabulous therapist. Within the next two weeks, I was with a new doctor and on the right medication regimen. Based on the therapist’s recommendation, I tried a DBSA support group. I went to my first meeting and left thinking “this is not for me.” My therapist urged me to try it again. I did, begrudgingly, and suddenly I was hooked. As I listened to others share their stories, and in turn told my own, I saw people nodding with understanding – for the first time I had an empathetic support system. These people really understood me!

The DBSA sponsored support group connects me with others and helps me to deal with my own illness. I have had the pleasure of being a DBSA facilitator for two years now and was the proud recipient of the 2008 Rookie Facilitator of the Year award. As a facilitator I know I am helping others by giving the participants the tools they need to help each other. In group, we do not always have the answers and sometimes there are no words that can express the feelings; but we will always listen, be a shoulder to cry on and keep working week after week to support each other. I am honored to be a part of DBSA, and am thrilled with the growth and vision of the Greater Houston chapter.

As my life has come into clarity, I now have a job with more responsibility than I ever thought possible, and I have returned to school to get my degree in Social Work. I am excited about the opportunity to share my story with others; while some will be shocked, I know many will nod and understand. Because I know my life has had some anguished times, I want to share my story with others, giving them hope and encouragement to have the strength to keep coming back to our groups, knowing that a better life is out there for them. Thanks in large part to DBSA, a life that was once full of sadness and pain is now a life worth living. I know I deserve it, and now I look forward to every day with hope, promise and the adventures that await my new life.

“It gives me hope when I see others such as myself get better with the support of DBSA groups.”

– DBSA Group Participant

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Suite 300
Houston, Texas 77098
(713) 600-1131
www.dbsahouston.org