



Providing the basics

Led by Dan and Ann Daniels, the Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Illinois' DuPage County has surged from five members to more than 500 in five years. Passage of the Omnibus Reconciliation Act, which takes away federal payments for the mentally ill living in nursing homes, has pushed the advocacy/support group in a new direction: to provide needed housing.

"We hit a social nerve," Ann says, "because the mentally ill can't speak for themselves."

Says Dan, "We met with a state director who kept saying 'they' will do something. I guess we're 'they.'"

MICHAEL L. ABRAMSON

*Hi Nemesio
Bob Blackburn -
love you -*

Ink, paper and purpose

Robert Blackburn recalls his youth in Harlem and the free after-school programs that were available to him. Now, he says, it's his turn to provide a creative outlet for developing artists.

The veteran printer's nonprofit Printmaking Workshop is housed in an 8,000-square-foot New York City loft where artists explore their potential in lithography, etching, relief printing and photo-processing. "They can learn, experiment or just make prints," says Blackburn, who also actively promotes an exchange of ideas among participants (many of them minorities and foreigners on fellowships). Outside the atelier the artists serve as mentors to inner-city children, teaching them to put ink to paper in projects related to their ethnicity.

Garnering grants and donations for his 42-year-old workshop steals time from his own art—but, says Blackburn, "My purpose is valuable."

PETER BYRON

