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Scooter Haase
Executive Director

Contact us with questions or comments about the newsletter at:

Mental Health America of Lancaster County
630 Janet Avenue
Suite B-110
Lancaster, PA 17601

717-397-7461
www.mhalancaster.org

Greetings, MHA family:

You'll find lots of exciting and interesting reading in this edition of our newsletter. We introduced Ken Boyden (our Director of Development) to you in the July newsletter. Ken has been a great asset to MHA and has written an article inside that covers how you can give to MHA in the form of property.

You'll also find inspiring updates from Joe (Compeer Program Manager), Gretchen (Client and Family Advocate), and Sue (Peer Educator).

I wanted to update you on our very successful Gifts of Joy program, which runs over the Christmas holiday. Case managers and social workers from several local agencies will bring us names of their clients who will not receive a single gift for Christmas. Our staff will then work with local houses of worship, community organizations, businesses, etc. to pair up givers with the wish lists. As you might imagine, this can be a logistical nightmare, since we try very hard to get the client exactly what they ask for. This year, we were privileged to provide Christmas gifts to over 400 Lancaster County residents living with mental illness. Inside are pictures of our office, covered in gifts, and of thank you notes from some who were part of this program.

As many of you are already aware, our annual Pasta Buffet and Auction event is coming up on March 23rd. See the back cover for more details.

Some of you may have noticed a little something extra in your receipt letters: We recently collected notes from some of those we serve, thanking not MHA, but you who support us. We thought you would like to hear directly from those you support, so you'll be seeing these notes in your receipt and thank you letters going forward.

I want to thank all of you for your interest in MHA and your continued, consistent support. We truly couldn't do what we do without you.

Sincerely,

Scooter Haase
Executive Director

Follow us



UPCOMING MHALC EVENTS

Annual Pasta Buffet and Auction | Friday, March 23 | 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

MHALC's main fundraising event. Please see the back cover for details. Buy tickets at www.mhalancaster.org or at the door. Thank you for your support!

QPR Suicide Prevention Training | March 2nd and May 4th | 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

This training will teach you how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) someone to help. This course costs \$15; some scholarships may be available. To register, please call the office at 717-397-7461.

Annual Recovery Picnic—Community Support Group | June 16th, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

No RSVP needed. Come for an hour or a day of music, dancing, food, games, prizes, pet a pig and a 1:30 p.m. kickball game against the case managers. 50s-themed in Pavilion #1 of Long's Park, Lancaster, PA. Contact mha@mhalancaster.org for more details.

For more events visit: www.mhalancaster.org/news-events/calendar-of-events.

UPCOMING COMPEER EVENTS

Game Nights | Thursday, March 8th | 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Annual Friendship Luncheon | Saturday, April 7th, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (RSVP by March 31st at jmills@mhalancaster.org or call 717-397-7461. The event location is East Petersburg Mennonite Church at 6279 Main St, East Petersburg, PA 17520.

FREE DROP-IN SUPPORT GROUPS

*Unless otherwise noted, groups meet at (Parking Lot 4, Entrance F)
630 Janet Avenue, Lancaster, PA 17601*

Most support groups are peer-facilitated, which means that the individual leading the group has walked in your shoes. These groups are a great place to begin your journey through recovery. We hope you'll find that by hearing others' stories, you'll feel less alone in your experiences.

Anxiety, Panic & Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Support Group

1st, 3rd, 5th Mondays | 7-8:30 p.m. | Room B-103

Bipolar Educational Group

1st & 3rd Mondays | 7-8:30 p.m. | Blair Room

Bipolar Discussion Group

2nd, 4th & 5th Mondays | 7-8:30 p.m. | Blair Room

Bipolar Support Group

2nd Thursdays (lunch is provided)

Hempfield United Methodist Church | 3050 Marietta Avenue, Lancaster PA

Depression Support Group (Finding Our Way)

Every Monday | 6-7 p.m. | Room D-155

Depression Awareness and Men's Needs (D.A.M.N.)

* On hold until further notice.

Depression Awareness and Women's Needs

1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesdays | 7-8:30 p.m. | Room B-107

Moms Supporting Moms Group

* This is an online group only. Contact: 717-397-8722 or lancastrermsgroup@gmail.com

MHALC

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Executive Director

Gretchen Gaudio
Client and Family Advocate

April Leaman
Support Group Administrator

Sue Tushingham
Peer Educator

Joe Mills
Compeer Program Manager

Charlotte Leckow
Marketing Coordinator

Carol Bowman
Administrative Assistant

Peggy Shaffer
Staff Accountant

ADVOCACY UPDATES

A TRUE STORY OF WHEN A SCHOOL IEP JUST WASN'T ENOUGH

GRETCHEN GAUDIOSO, CLIENT AND FAMILY ADVOCATE



Chelsea was at wit's end when her son, Charlie, was suspended for the 15th and 16th day of the school year. This was more than the school is legally allowed to suspend a child with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) without a Manifestation Determination. Chelsea was upset, nervous and didn't know what that meant. She spoke with her friend that has a child with an IEP from another district. Her friend said, "you need an Educational Advocate". That's when Chelsea called me.

We initially met in their home, with Charlie meeting us for only part of it. Together, we attended the Manifestation Determination meeting, toured the new school being offered, and went to the new school's IEP paperwork meetings together. I was there for Chelsea to provide guidance through the important decisions needing to be made for her son. I supported and helped, using my 19 years of mental health advocate and educational work. If you, or someone you know, could use help with children's advocacy, then please call me.

If you or someone you know are in need of Client & Family Advocacy Services, education for your school, or a community group, please contact MHALC at 717-397-7461 or email gretchen@mh Lancaster.org.

CSP ADVOCATES FOR SUPPORT WITH STATE LEGISLATORS

BY SUE TUSHINGHAM, PEER EDUCATOR

The Community Support Group, CSP for short, is a coalition of professionals, consumers, and family members interested in helping individuals with serious mental health diagnoses live successfully in Lancaster County. I have been taking some members of CSP to meet with local legislators to discuss the importance of mental health supports in Lancaster County.

After the meetings, these folks stated they felt empowered that the legislators cared and were receptive to the message. During the meetings, some of these folks briefly shared their personal stories with the legislator, which took a lot of courage. Participants also discussed the importance of mental health supports and continued funding for these supports.



The Lancaster County congressional leaders met with thus far include: Representative Mike Sturla, Representative Brett Miller, Representative Bryan Cutler, Representative David Zimmerman, Senator Scott Martin, and Senator Ryan Aument. We have plans to meet with Representative David Hickernell.

Each congressional leader was given an invitation to the 17th Annual Recovery Picnic, which will be held on June 15, 2018, from 10:00am-3:00pm at Long's Park. There are a few more meetings with Lancaster County legislators that will be scheduled in the upcoming months.

Members who have participated in these meetings include: Diane Brown, Doug Smith, Monica Thomas, Chelsea Snader & Kim Thomas.

Also attending (as pictured): Kenneth Lee Jones, Sue Tushingham and Diana Blimline at State Representative Michael Sturla's Harrisburg office.

Chelsea stated, "I feel like I was able to speak & advocate for myself; say what services I wanted for myself & others who are struggling! I felt good about myself for meeting with these people who could help us."

NEW DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR



FOUR WAYS TO GIVE THE GIFT OF REAL ESTATE

BY KEN BOYDEN, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, ESQUIRE

With interest rates low and the real estate market booming, many people are finding that their real estate holdings are becoming more valuable. While some other investments may be down, real estate values are rising.

This has created an unusual opportunity for using a building, raw land, or even a vacation property to fulfill one's philanthropic dreams. For example, taxable property that has appreciated can be given to

Mental Health America of Lancaster County (MHALC) without incurring tax on the appreciation. Thus, the value of the gift may be substantially more than it might be were the property first sold and the after-tax proceeds then given to us.

If you have appreciated real estate — especially property you are no longer using — you may want to consider the benefits of using this asset to make a charitable gift to MHA. There are several ways you can proceed and here are four possibilities to consider:

1. Give the Entire Property.

Since MHALC is a qualified charitable organization (501c3), we can sell real estate gifts without incurring tax on the appreciation. For example, in 2000, Mr. and Mrs. Greenacres purchased a lot for \$10,000. It was recently appraised at \$150,000. If they sell it, they will have to pay tax on the appreciation. However, if they **gift the deed** to MHALC, they will be free of the tax and also escape the hassles of having to sell the property. They will also receive a charitable income tax deduction for the appraised value of the property.

2. Give a Portion of the Property.

Many people cannot afford to give an entire parcel of real estate, but they can give part of it. A good solution is to give an **undivided interest** in the property, say 50 percent. MHALC then works with the donor to market and sell the property. Each party — the donor and MHALC — then receives one-half of the proceeds from the sale. A bonus for the donor is that he or she can use the income tax charitable deduction for the gift portion to help offset any taxes due on the other portion.

3. Give the Property and Obtain Income.

Some real estate owners need additional income. Yet they also want to make a major charitable gift to MHALC. One possibility is to use real estate to establish a **charitable trust**. The trustee will then sell the property and invest the proceeds in a balanced portfolio that will provide income to the donors for as long as they live. After they are gone, whatever is left in the trust will go to MHALC. There are several advantages to doing this and it may be just the thing if you have appreciated property, need additional income, and want to support MHALC, its work and its valuable mission in the process.

4. Give Your House and Keep Living There.

Some donors want to make a major gift to MHALC by giving their homes. However, they still need a place to live, so they arrange what is called a **life estate gift**. This simply means that they give their residence to MHALC, obtain a charitable income tax deduction and retain the right to live there as long as they want. This arrangement removes the property from their estate and relieves them or their personal representatives from having to dispose of the house later.

Please let us know if you wish to discuss making a gift of real estate or any other planned gift to MHALC. Thank you for your continued support.

Gratefully,

Ken Boyden, Esquire

Director of Development, MHALC

COMPEER UPDATES



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR FRIENDS
JOE MILLS, COMPEER PROGRAM MANAGER



COMPEER PARTNERS WITH THE ELIZABETHTOWN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DEPARTMENT

Compeer Lancaster has the opportunity in 2018 to once again for two Occupational Therapy (OT) students to participate in the Compeer program. The objective is for the students to be connected with a friend for a more “intensive” experience than in the regular friendship experience. We work closely with Christine Auchenbach, Fieldwork Coordinator at Etown OT Department, to coordinate the experience for the students to ensure that they meet the OT Department objectives and have a positive Compeer experience.

The expectation is that the students will accrue a minimum of 70 hours with their Compeer friend over a ten week period. Since both students will return to campus for 18-19 school year (OT is 5 year program) they could “convert” to a regular friendship or the friendship could end. Below are our students and their friends.



Left:
Courtney & Megan



Right:
Faith & Emma



MEET OUR NEW FRIENDS!

Meet Crystal and Lauren, our newest friendship connecting on January 29th at Starbucks in the Stone Mill Shopping Center. The initial friendship meeting started at 6:30 PM, and Lauren reported that they “closed the place down” at 8:00 PM. She added that “we found that we have a good starting place of shared interests to do together.” When you see these young ladies, give them a big COMPEER WELCOME!

COMPEERCORPS

Compeer’s program CompeerCORPS (formerly Compeer Vet2Vet) continues to seek veteran volunteers and referrals. We’ve had minimum success, however, currently there are several friendships. In order to move CompeerCORPS further along, we will look for a part-time veteran to coordinate this part of our program.



If you know how to be a friend, you can be a Compeer Volunteer.

To find out more, visit
www.compeerlanaster.org
or contact Joe Mills at
jmills@compeerlanaster.org.


THE GIFT OF GRATITUDE 2017

GIFTS OF JOY PROJECT

THANK YOU FOR THE PERSONAL GIFTS



A sincere thank you to the staff and the large number of volunteers who provided gifts to adults and children diagnosed with a mental illness in Lancaster County. These gifts meant so much to the individuals receiving them since they did not receive any other holiday gifts. The project serves over 400 mental health consumers each year and continues to grow.



OLIVER MY CAT

Thank you for the most special gifts. I love all the cat things you gave me. You put a lot of effort and thought into your gift. And I really appreciate it.

Sincerely,
"Leah"
Aleyah

To: The Secret Santas of MHA,
Thank you for the AC Moore gift card and inspiring book. I was able to create art to share with others. I am so grateful for the gift. I was also able to purchase supplies to finish building a model car that I started a long time ago.

Sincerely,
Tyrus

I JOHN WOULD LIKE TO SAY THANK YOU TO YOU, MHA, FOR EVERYTHING THAT YOU DO. I LOVE THE MIAMI DOLPHINS AND MY GIFT. IF THERE WAS MORE PEOPLE LIKE YOU THE WORLD WOULD BE A BETTER PLACE.
GOD BLESS

John

to: Diane and Michael
Thank you for giving me the puzzle and wwe player I SOOO happy you gave them
Merry Christmas Diane and Michael
from: Jaden 😊

**Thank You Notes
From 2017**

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

NEW STAFF INTRODUCTION

CHARLOTTE LECKOW, MARKETING COORDINATOR

We are pleased to welcome Charlotte to our staff! She received her Bachelor's degrees in Advertising and the German & Russian languages from Michigan State University. After growing up in Michigan, she lived 18 years in downtown Chicago, where she worked both in the Telecommunications field and as the Communications Director at her children's private school.

After relocating to Pennsylvania in 2011 and taking a professional leave from her career to be a full-time mother to her two children during the family's relocations, Charlotte started working for non-profit organizations in Lancaster County.

Because Charlotte was an active school volunteer for over 10 years, she witnessed first-hand the sometimes overwhelming social stigmas that children with mental health challenges face. She saw the negative impact on families who tried to navigate the school system without the knowledge and support of the correct advocacy services. So she is excited to now turn her attention to the support of Lancaster County individuals and families on their journeys to mental health wellness.



COMPEER HOLIDAY PARTY : BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS AND MEMORIES

WOW, WHAT A PARTY!

About 90 volunteers and friends had a terrific time sharing stories, listening to (and singing along with) the Lancaster County Folk Music & Fiddlers Society and munching on great food. Topping all expectations was 177 lbs. of food that was donated by the participants to the Lancaster County Council of Churches Food Bank. Many people took home wonderful door prizes. We look forward to seeing all our friends many times before the December 4th, 2018 Holiday Party.





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Lancaster, PA 17601

Phone: (717) 397-7461
Fax: (717) 517-8446

mha@mhalancaster.org
www.mhalancaster.org
[facebook.com/mhalancaster](https://www.facebook.com/mhalancaster)

Friday, March 23, 2018 from 5:30-8:00 P.M.

**Help MHALC promote positive mental health,
awareness and advocacy through its programs and services
by attending our annual fundraiser.**

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church
64 Hershey Ave, Lancaster, PA 17603

Dinner starts at 5:30 P.M.

Live Auction starts at 6:30 P.M.

Silent Auction ends at 7:00 P.M.

Adults: \$20 Children 6-10: \$10 Children 5 and Under: Free

**Tickets available at the door during the event or by visiting:
www.mhalancaster.org/news-events/annual-pasta-buffet-auction**