



Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health

NEWSLETTER

Fall-Winter 2012

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2012 ANNUAL DINNER AND FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS

The SCCCMH had a successful fundraiser and annual meeting on May 3rd. During the event, Senator McDonald was awarded the SCCCMH 2012 "Citizen of the Year" award. Before the presentation of the award, Rabbi Jonathan Rubenstein, Pastoral Care Director at Four Winds Hospital – Saratoga, spoke of McDonald's commitment to people with disabilities, especially people living with mental illness. He recognized the personal sacrifice that Senator McDonald makes as an elected official and then said a blessing for Senator McDonald. SCCCMH Chairperson, Peggy Lounsbury then presented the award to Senator McDonald saying that his efforts in the NYS Legislature are making a difference in the lives of people living with mental illness. In accepting the award, Senator McDonald spoke about how having grandchildren with autism changed his life, how this has forever changed his priorities and now guides his efforts in the legislature. Everyone was moved by Senator McDonald's sentiments.

Also, during the dinner, Chairperson Lounsbury then introduced representatives of the organizations that benefited from about \$4,000 of SCCCMH grants and donations that were distributed in 2011–2012: Maggie Fronk of Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Services, Christina Saccoia of Saratoga Bridges, and Sheelah Shortell of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Capital Region Chapter. Each explained how their organizations used grant money to improve or expand their services over the past year. The silent auction and raffle raised money for the SCCCMH grant fund. This was another great effort by the SCCCMH Board of Trustees and by the chairperson of the annual event, Collette Fox.

SCCCMH Board of Directors

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SARATOGA COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC TO MOVE

The SCCCMH and the Saratoga County Network for Mental Health Professionals and Advocates (SCN-MHPA) had to dust off and update our 2007 Position Statement on the relocation of the Saratoga County Mental Health Clinic. Earlier this year, Saratoga County was advised by Saratoga Hospital that they would need to vacate the "Cramer House" where the Clinic is currently located.

In 2007, the Saratoga Hospital advised the county that the hospital would soon need the land that the Cramer House was on so they can expand the operating room and build a new intensive care

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CHAIRPERSON'S NOTES

By Peggy Lounsbury

Continued from page 1 – unit for our growing community. At that time, the SCN-MHPA developed a Position Statement outlining criteria for selection of the new location for the clinic. Several organizations signed-on to this document and it was presented to the Chair of the Board of Supervisors Building and Grounds Committee at the time. However, there did not appear to any be activity on the part of the county since the 2007 notification by the hospital.

After the recent notification to the county that the hospital would need the building vacated by late spring of 2013, the SCN-MHPA reviewed our original 2007 Position Statement and a few edits were made to update the document. Representatives of the SCCCMH met with the current Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors Building and Grounds Committee, Mr. Dick Rowland in July 2012. We presented the Position Statement to Mr. Rowland and he assured us that our criteria were reasonable and he was confident that the criteria would be met in the selection of the new location. Examples of criteria were: the clinic needed to be in Saratoga Springs and on or very near public transportation to ensure access to consumers and facilitate coordination with all the agencies that provide services to people living with mental illness. The county announced in October that property on South Broadway (the old Topper Buick dealership) was selected as the new location for the SCMHC, Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services and Friendship House. The location and access appear to meet the criteria of the position statement and the future consolidation of services should be beneficial to consumers as well.

Much work needs to be done before the new center is ready, but the SCCCMH and the SCN-MHPA are supportive of the new location and appreciative that Mr. Rowland provided us the opportunity to speak on behalf of people living with mental illness.

WANTED: Board Members

The SCCCMH Board of Directors has two openings. Lay people from the community, mental health advocates, and others who want to ensure that the needs of people living with mental illness in Saratoga County are met are needed for our Board of Directors. The Board is in need of a Public Relations talent or interest. The Board meets the first or second Thursday of the month at 5:30 - 6:45 pm at the Transitional Services Association administrative building in Saratoga Springs. If you are interested, please contact Chairperson, Peggy Lounsbury at plounsbury@saratogacare.org 583-8371 for more information or to arrange to be a guest at a Board of Directors' meeting.

WANTED: Members

Join the SCCCMH now. SCCCMH has a "pay what you will" approach to membership So you can join even if you are unable to provide financial support. You will find a membership form in this newsletter. You can also go to the SCCCMH website to join. Help give voice to the mental health needs of our community.



SCCCMH Grants Available to Organizations

The SCCCMH awards monetary grants to not-for-profit organizations that provide services to people with mental illness.

Awards are generally up to \$1,000 and are distributed in December, March and June. For an application and more information, go to our website www.scccmh-saratoga.org.

February 1st is the next deadline for grant proposals to be reviewed at the March SCCCMH Board meeting. Grant recipients and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in April.

IN THE NEWS...

Crisis Ignites Evolution!

Everywhere we turn, each newscast, each conversation, each session and everyday at home and in the offices of mental health and child welfare agencies we are bombarded with crisis; collective trauma, isolated trauma and consistent trauma. From natural disasters, terrorism, the economy, childhood maltreatment and universal suffering we are reminded daily of the need for healing. *Just as there was an evolution to the problem, there is an evolution to the recovery.*

At "coaching for LIFE!", the recovery evolution is gaining momentum internationally. Based on a trauma informed and global paradigm of healing, **Emotional Regulatory Healing (ERH)**© is being taught and practiced by a group of integrative practitioners out of Golden, Colorado at "coaching for LIFE!" Lead by founder and Sr. Clinical Consultant, Juli Alvarado, this consulting firm is transforming thousands of lives through the inspirational, motivational and educational teachings of Alvarado and her staff.

ERH is based on the premise that social, emotional and behavioral challenges are symptoms of a disorganized brain. Optimal organization of the brain and our stress response system developed early in life

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dependent on the health of our earliest relationships and environment. The brain, whether optimally developed and organized or not, becomes the boss of our emotions, socialization and our behavior.

The brain is the boss of behavior. A disorganized brain equals disorganized behaviors. An organized brain equals organized behaviors. ERH is an implicit paradigm for the treatment of trauma, attachment challenges and dysregulation through relational, integrated neurophysiological (mind/body) interventions. It is an intervention based in relationship and always operating in the background the family.

ERH is taught to parents and professionals through explicit, brain-based parenting and clinical interventions for reorganizing the brain around regulation and secure attachments. Increase emotional regulation and attachment and you will also decrease negative social, emotional and behavioral outcomes. No person acts out when they feel safe. We work to create emotionally safe relationships, families, environments and organizations in order to decrease acting out in the family.

The result of the ERH approach for the family is a decrease in disrupted, out-of-home placements and failed adoptions as well as improvements in the macro-system of child welfare and mental health. *But, by far, the most important outcome is safer, happier and healthier kids, "our" kids.* For more information visit the website: www.coaching-forlife.com

SCCCMH Newsletter is the official publication of the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health, P.O. Box 820, Saratoga Springs, New York.

www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org

The views expressed in this newsletter represent the opinions of the authors and do not represent the official position or opinions of the SCCCMMH unless specifically stated.

The SCCCMMH Board of Trustees reserves the right to decide the content of the newsletter, and reserves the right to review, revise, shorten or deny articles for publication. Articles submitted for publication consideration should not be longer than 250 words unless the author is specifically invited to do so. Also, submitting the copy as a Microsoft Word document, or typed within the body of an e-mail message is preferred. Send articles to the Newsletter Editors e-mail address. Articles not submitted electronically can be mailed to the address above.

THE VIEW FROM HERE

Living with a Mental Illness

By Glen Gausewitz

If you were to look at me you would have no idea that I have schizophrenia, at a glance I look no different than anybody else and I try to do my best to blend in. Yet, because of my condition, I often feel different, a man apart. Despite my illness, I have held jobs and had personal success: graduating from college, having friendships, even defeating a grandmaster at chess. However, I often feel alone since many people don't know about or want to acknowledge mental illness. I am relieved that I have a support group that I can go to where I can discuss my problems in a safe environment. There are many people who help me including: my family, my friends, my therapists, and of course my doctors.

My mental illness ebbs and flows. Some days I feel great, other days I feel okay, and on my worst days, I am barely able to function. However, now that I have my medications adjusted I feel better, more functional. I have been on medication most of my adult life, since the age of twenty – two. With my illness, I don't have to deal just with my symptoms, which include hearing voices and seeing hallucinations, but also with the stigma that other people have about mental illness. Many people still don't understand mental illness and are often scared by it. This is why I rarely tell people that I am schizophrenic.

Still I am a member of my community and it feels good to be accepted. Through my illness I have learned to be more accepting and tolerant of other people. To be separated and isolated from other people is a terrible thing and something I would wish upon no one. We are all bound together whether we know it or not. Anything that affects a single individual affects the community as well. We need to tear down the barriers that separate us. Mental illness is just one of those barriers.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS... ANNUAL DBSA WALK FOR MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS IS APRIL 27, 2013

On April 27, 2013, The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of Saratoga County (DBSA-Saratoga County) will host its 3rd Annual Mental Health Awareness Walk at the Carlsbad Pavilion in Saratoga Spa State Park, Saratoga Springs, NY. Registration starts at 9AM and the walk will take place at 11AM.

The Registration Fee is \$20.00 dollars per person and that will include a 3rd Annual Walk t-shirt. T-shirts for the 2013 walk will be totally different from previous walks and we are enthusiastic about our new creation.

As this is our main funding source, we are confident that April 27th will prove to be a beautiful spring day! Although Mental Health Awareness Month is in May, April 27th was chosen so that the park fee of \$8.00 per car load will not be in effect, so entrance to the park that day is FREE!

The walk is a celebration of where we came from and where we need to go with our family, friends, and community. We are calling for recovery but we need the support from those we love and those we deal with on a regular basis. Most people either know someone who has struggled with or is struggling with a mental illness. Unfortunately, there is still much stigma in the community that is passed on and steals our hope away. This is why we are asking everyone in our community to come out and walk with us in Recovery!

Please mark your calendars for April 27, 2013. It seems like a long way off but as in past years, it goes much quicker. Please contact Chris Jasikoff at (518)580-1064 for more information. Registration forms and Information is also available at www.DBSASaratogaCounty.com.



**Fall Youth Conference Was
Enlightening and Educational for
Professionals and Parents**

By Beverly Lazar

The 2012 Youth Conference- "From Chaos to Calm- Emotional Regulatory Healing Responses to Violence and Trauma" was a success on many levels. With more than 135 registrants, there was an overwhelming response from the community. We filled the hall with parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, clinicians, caseworkers, substance abuse clinicians, Head Start/Early Childhood workers, school social workers, group home, residential and inpatient workers.

Juli Alvarado, MA, LPC, NCC brought together her passion, personal experience and clinical expertise to teach us about how to bridge the research on attachment theory with practice. How to be with the pain and dysregulation without furthering injury to self and others. Juli spoke to us about responding with regulation of our own emotions. "I cannot give away that which is not mine to give." She helped us to understand what our patients go through in telling us of their trauma. She taught us that the healing of trauma happens in relationship. She highly supported the importance of working with both the parent/guardian and the youth, not the youth alone. She taught a simple way to understand about how our brain works and how we can help regulate our brain in order to help others. Regulation is relationship dependent. Learning how to cope can only happen with a regulated brain, a dysregulated brain can't learn.

Participants were quoted as saying, "Just knowing that we as adults have to be regulated before our family members will make a great change for everybody, I will use this information with individuals and families, making people aware of 5 senses

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and which ones are useful for them to use to re-regulate themselves." This was incredibly helpful! My life with my son will be so much better! I can understand where he has been and help him to move forward in a more healthy way. Thank you!" "I feel renewed and excited about the field again and the work that I am doing!" "I will be able to take the information that I learned and directly apply it to my practice. This was a wonderful training."

The Youth and Family Services Team appreciates the work of the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health in making this educational conference take place. It truly uplifted the mental health of our community. It was a day of change for many!



*This publication was prepared
with the assistance of Four
Winds –Saratoga*

**Honor or Memorialize Someone in a
Very Special Way**

A wonderful tribute is to make a donation to the SCCCMH in honor of, or to memorialize a special person. Visit our website:

www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org

and click on "Make a Donation" to donate online, or to download a donation form. This is a great Christmas gift idea, too! Remember contributions to SCCCMH are tax deductible.



American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Receives Grant

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) is the leading national not-for-profit organization exclusively dedicated to understanding and preventing suicide through research, education and advocacy, and to reaching out to people with mental disorders and those impacted by suicide. Groundbreaking research, educational campaigns, innovative demonstration projects and critical public policy work form a wide range of suicide prevention initiatives designed to reduce loss of life from suicide.

The Capital Region chapter of AFSP is just one of 54 chapters across the country that is dedicated to fulfilling the mission of AFSP on a local level. The money that we raise locally supports several programs right in our own communities. AFSP's Interactive Screening Program (ISP), a web-based interactive screening tool for college students that allows schools to identify 'at risk' students who are struggling with mental illness and who may be in need of help, is currently being used at the University of Albany. AFSP's film *More Than Sad: Teen Depression* is being shown in many high schools throughout the 15 counties in the chapter catchment area bringing much-needed depression awareness to teens. This film has received a national 'best practice' distinction.

Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health's donation to the Capital Region chapter of AFSP directly helps to provide this kind of local community programming to those in need. Many of our community, educational and survivor support programs are possible because of the tremendous support of the community in our fundraising efforts. Together we are helping to reduce the stigma of mental illness and suicide and are saving lives.

SARATOGA COUNTY PEERS IN PARTNERSHIP

On September 19, 2012, Marie-Pierre Yunes and Chris Jasikoff met with a group of about 10-15 local peers to discuss ways in which we all can integrate back into our community. By setting up a Recovery Center, services like any form of claims processing, housing, financial, educational and emotional assistance, recreational activities, peer to peer counseling, running more peer-run support groups for any diagnosis, teaching peers about Recovery and any services that they might be interested in doing. After meeting a couple times, the group set up Saratoga County Peers in Partnership (PIP), a soon to be Recovery Center in Saratoga Springs.

After a few meetings, we elected Shawn Soderberg as President, Hank Wolske as Treasurer, Amanda Blodgett as Secretary, and Chris Jasikoff and Marie-Pierre Yunes as Co-Directors. After some discussions, PIP is going to be holding a fundraiser on November 20th, 2012. Our fundraiser is going to be an "open mic" night at Cafe Lena's on Tuesday night from 6:30-9PM. We are hoping to collect \$3.00 dollars for admission and have tea, coffee and baked goods at the event. This is going to be a great event and all are welcomed to come on over and enjoy some of the fun!

Any peer of any age is more than willing to join us at our next meeting which will take place on October 17th, 2012. If there are any questions, or if any additional information is needed, please contact Chris Jasikoff at (518)580-1064 or Shawn Soderberg at (518)886-8561. Everyone in our group would welcome all those peers that are seeking more activities in their life and want to make positive steps in their Recovery!

Become a Part of the Voice of Saratoga County Mental Health Community.

Join SCCCMH Today!



For more information, contact:

Chairperson: Peggy Lounsbury
E-mail: plounsbury@saratogacare.org
Phone: 518-583-8371

Or visit our website: www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM FOR YEAR: April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014

SCCCMH Mission: The SCCCMH is a non-profit, charitable organization [501(c)3] whose mission it is to:

Program Development and Enrichment: Award grants of approximately \$1000 to agencies and programs in Saratoga County that provide services to people with mental illness or have mental & emotional needs so they can enrich existing programs or expand services.

Education: Provide affordable educational opportunities for mental health professionals and consumers of mental health services.

Advocacy: Advocate for improved mental health care and services by lobbying government and elected officials.

Increase Awareness: Increase public awareness of the needs of individuals with mental illness. E.g., increase access to public transportation, decrease stigmas or stereotypes.

Member Benefits: Membership fees support the development of mental health services in Saratoga County through grants, educational opportunities, and lobbying, as well as the publication of the biannual SCCCMH Newsletter.

More Members. More Power. More Benefits.

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

New Member Membership Renewal Remove my information from the SCCCMH mailing list.

First Name Last Prefix/Suffix:

Address Home Work

City: State: Zip Code:

Phone Number: Home Work

If you want to receive the newsletter and other notices from the SCCCMH via e-mail, please provide your e-mail address:

If you are a provider of mental health services and would like to be included in the Saratoga County Network for Mental Health Professionals, then check here:

If you would like to participate in a mental health consumer workshop that is organized by consumers, then check here:

Membership fee is based on a "pay what you will" basis (Check One):

- I want to be a member, but I am unable provide financial support.
I want to be a member. I will consider a contribution at a later date.
I want to be a member, enclosed is my tax deductible donation of: \$10 \$25 \$35 Other.

MAKE CHECKS OUT TO: SCCCMH. Do not send cash in the mail. Appreciated if submitted before April 30th.

MAIL TO: SCCCMH, P.O. Box 820, Saratoga Springs, New York 12866

MAKE SURE THE VOICE OF THE SARATOGA COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY IS HEARD.....JOIN SCCCMH TODAY!!

SARATOGA COUNTY



**CITIZENS COMMITTEE
FOR MENTAL HEALTH**

www.scccmh-saratoga.org

*For more information about
the SCCCMH, contact Peggy
Lounsbury, Chairperson,
at 518-583-8371*

*The Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health (SCCCMH) is a non-profit, charitable organization that **distributes grant money** to agencies and programs in Saratoga County so they can enrich existing programs or expand services for people with mental illness. The SCCCMH also provides affordable **educational opportunities** for professionals and consumers, **advocates** for improved mental health care and services; and is committed to **increasing public awareness** of the needs of people with mental illness.*

**Saratoga County Citizens
Committee for Mental Health**

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