

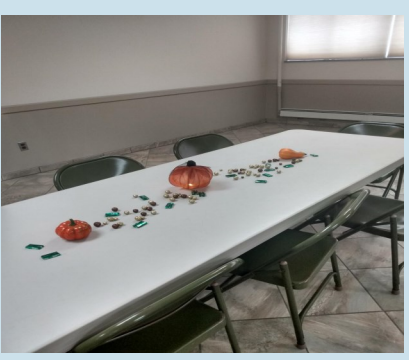
The Bell



WINTER 2022/2023

A publication of
**The Mental Health Association
In Fulton & Montgomery
Counties**

FAMILY SUPPORT



Our Family Support Program is offered to any family in Fulton or Montgomery County that has at least one member with a mental health diagnosis. The children have to be under the age of 18.

This program offers support for the family as a whole. It offers recreational activities as well as very important and helpful information workshops/activities. One of our main goals is to get our families to spend quality time together and to socialize with other families. Offering the workshops and trainings can hopefully give parents some needed knowledge and tools to make daily life a little easier.

On November 8th The MHA Family Support Program along with The Family Counseling Center Family Support Program hosted a Holiday Dinner at the Masonic Temple in Amsterdam, 16 families from both Montgomery and Fulton County attended. The families did holiday crafts, played bingo and enjoyed a ham dinner. On December 16th children received gifts from the Gingerbread Project at Nathan Littauer Hospital. We are now planning for the upcoming year.

The Family Support program has a credentialed OMH Family Peer Advocate.

The Family Support Program collaborates with the Family Support Program of The Family Counseling Center in Gloversville. For more information about this program you can call 518-762-5332 ext. 114 for Della Moynihan or ext. 103 for Pat Gardner, Monday through Friday 8am-4pm



REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE PROGRAM

MERRY CORSO



The Representative Payee Program consumer is a resident of Montgomery, Fulton or Hamilton County, with a Mental Health diagnosis disability who is unable to handle his/her own finances in a responsible manner. Most often the Social Security Administration requires that individuals have a Representative Payee as well as the individual's physician will request that their patient have a payee. The Payee Program consumer may be living in the community, alone or with family, in a boarding home, a family care home or other residence as well as possibly attending an outpatient drug/alcohol rehabilitation program or re-entering the community after incarceration. Each person must have a mental health diagnosis.

People in need of assistance from a Representative Payee may access the program services through the Mental Health Association in Fulton and Montgomery Counties Agency's website, www.mentalheathassociaiation.org or call Merry Corso at (518)842-3717 Ext. 204.

HANDY UPS N DOWNS

Thrift Stores

Catherine Lopresti: Affirmative Businesses Director

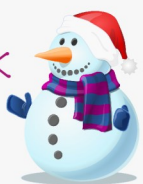
Handy Ups N Downs Thrift stores are located in Johnstown and Amsterdam. Both stores take pride in being able to help those in need in our communities. We partner with some local agencies such as, Fulton County & Montgomery County DSS, Catholic Charities, Centro Civico, St. Mary's Healthcare System and local school districts to provide clothing and household items free of charge through our voucher system. The stores also offer employment training to people living with mental illness, as well as being a worksite sponsor for community service and the summer youth employment program.



This is only possible because of the generosity of all our wonderful donors. Handy Ups N Downs would like to take a moment to thank all of our new and loyal donors who have been with us throughout the years. Please know that your donations help in so many ways and the benefits stay local.

Handy Ups N Downs thrift stores have seen a lot of new customers this year. With the economy being what it is, people are seeking to find items at reasonable prices and are doing a lot of upcycling. There is no place better than a thrift store to find items for this. Quality items at affordable prices. This is another reason our sales continue to rise! Please let your family and friends know we are here and thanks for another great year!

Thank You!



Handy Ups N Downs gladly accepts donations in store only on Tuesdays from 10-4:30, Wed., Thurs., Fri. from 9-4:30 and Sat. from 9-2:30. The stores are closed on Sundays and Mondays. Tax receipts are provided upon request at the time of donation drop offs. Questions about what we accept? You can contact either store at (518)842-2790 in Amsterdam or (518)736-1825 in Johnstown.

CAC

The Regional Child Advocacy Center in Fulton, Montgomery and Hamilton Counties consists of a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) specially trained in Child Forensics. The team includes the District Attorney's Offices, Law Enforcement, Child Protective Services from each county, Victim Advocacy Services (PPH), medical, and the Mental Health Association in Fulton & Montgomery Counties which employs the Center's Mental Health Counselor, Victim/Family Advocates and Center Coordinator.

The Center is a safe and child friendly place where the multidisciplinary team meets with the child and non-offending family members to investigate the alleged child sex abuse and/or physical abuse. Inter-agency communication is enhanced and the victim, as well as the victim's family, is provided with services throughout the investigation and legal process. The Centers have a therapist that specializes in trauma related counseling to assist the victims and non-offending family members through on-going counseling.

The Giving Tree

To help keep the children and families warm this winter we had a CAC giving tree, where each person at the CAC could take a hat, gloves and scarf to stay warm.



In October, members of the MDT team through the CAC participated in the annual Trunk or Treat at MHA.



CAC therapist, with the help of the Open Book Store in Schenectady picked out a book or journal for each of the children seen at both the Fulton and Montgomery County Centers for therapy. We would like to thank Nathan Littauer Hospital for sponsoring several of our families for the Holidays through their annual Gingerbread Project.



Ombudsman/RPS/Social Clubs



Ombudsman Della Moynihan, Cassandra Hazzard, Amy Rankin & Patricia Gardner continue to advocate for an support participants in our community.

With the help of Music Man Entertainment, participants were able to enjoy the Halloween Dance on October 27th, and the Holiday Dance on December 8th. For each event, participants had the opportunity to win one of the raffled off center pieces. Montgomery Terrace surprised everyone and overthrew reigning group contestant winner, Division St. The residents of Montgomery Terrace reaped the benefits and enjoyed their pizza party. Participants and Staff enjoyed a visit from Steve Gordon, former MHA driver. He is cherished by all.

On November 10th, our non residential programs were able to enjoy a Thanksgiving celebration at Winner's Circle. NO one went home hungry.

Resident Peer Specialist, Amy Rankin, has been making house visits to Division St, Montgomery Terrace and Lakeside Ave. During Amy's visits residents enjoyed playing cards, Yahtzee and everyone's favorite, BINGO! Coffee and conversations about family, food, music, health and MHA Holiday events were welcomed and appreciated by all.

Amy will be working with our participants making vision boards for 2023. This will be a positive activity to have some fun, set some goals, and have something decorative to display. With coordination of Cassandra Hazzard, Leisure Lounge and Drop in Center were able to enjoy a day of shopping at Colonie Center, Cassandra has also been instrumental in ensuring that everyone participating in the social clubs are staying well.

We would like to take the opportunity to welcome William Myers, our new agency driver. He is fitting in nicely.

As always, the Ombudsman, the RPS and Social Club team are available to provide advocacy and support for individuals living with mental illness and/or continuing on their recovery journey. Please contact Pat at (518) 762-5332 Ext. 103 for more information.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

GWEN TALLMAN:PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Youth have been involved in several activities that have built upon their social and educational skills. To give back to their local communities, the children made Christmas cards and put together a care package for the residents of the Wells House and River Ridge Nursing Homes. Youth decorated both program sites for the Christmas season, and ASP staff-Debbi made Christmas Gnome's with the children. Before Christmas break, Santa visited both programs!

ASP Staff would like to thank Nathan Littauer's Gingerbread Project for the Christmas gifts the After School Program participants received! Families are so thankful for your kindness!

Upcoming activities the children are looking forward to will be visits to local Police departments, virtual Nursing Home visits, Nutrition classes with Cornell Cooperative Extension, and indoor exercise activities.

If you would like information regarding the Behavioral Health After School Program please contact Gwen Tallman, Program Coordinator, at (518) 762-5332 ext. 110 or gtallman@mhafm.org





Residential News

MONTGOMERY TERRACE— GWEN GYLDENVAND, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

AS WE MOVE FURTHER INTO THE WINTER MONTHS, THE RESIDENTS ARE DREADING THE COLDER WEATHER, BUT ARE THANKFUL THEY DO NOT LIVE IN BUFFALO. OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS GO OUT TO THOSE SO ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE CHRISTMAS BLIZZARD.

RESIDENTS WHO SPENT THE HOLIDAY WEEKEND AT THE RESIDENCE ENJOYED TWO TERRIFIC MEALS ON CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY. A FEW RESIDENTS SPENT TIME WITH THEIR FAMILIES AND ALSO ENJOYED HOLIDAY FESTIVITES WITH THEIR KIN.

DESPITE THE COLD WEATHER, THE RESIDENTS HAVE BEEN ENJOYING OUTINGS SHOPPING AND FINDING AFTER CHRISTMAS SALES. THE RESIDENTS ARE ALSO LOOKING FORWARD TO A CHINESE TAKE OUT NEW YEAR MEAL AND SUNDAY MOVIE MATINEES IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY. AS THE HOLIDAYS COME TO AN END, WHAT THE RESIDENTS ARE TRULY LOOKING FORWARD TO IS THE END OF WINTER AND THE BEGINNING OF SPRING WEATHER.

LAKESIDE

JoAnn Raflik-Program Director

Lara Sinisi-Assistant Program Director

Lakeside residents have been busy. Staff and residents have decorated the house and tree for every holiday or season. The Thanksgiving holiday was enjoyed by all. They had the traditional turkey dinner with all the trimmings. Residents are happy to get out in the community and have gone shopping and out to lunch. Residents attended the harvest dance and also the holiday dance. A good time was had by all that attended. Staff and residents did a beautiful job decorating the Christmas tree and the house. They also made cookies which everyone said were delicious. Residents were pleased with their Christmas gifts. Even though it is only the beginning of 2023 everyone is looking forward to spring.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Lauren Ferlazzo— Program Director

Tanisha Grisel— Assistant Program Director

The Christmas season has allowed many of our youth to go on extended home visits and spend time with their families. As we work to strengthen the relationship between client and family we have also had one youth be discharged home after successful completion of the program. We are thankful to have received donations of gifts for all of our residents to allow them to experience being able to fully celebrate the Christmas season. The snow has also been a welcome event for our youth as they have been able to play outside and enjoy outdoor activities. As a residence we have received a few new staff members and are in the process of admitting new residents to our facility. We look forward to the opportunities that 2023 has to offer.

Apartment Treatment Program

Jennifer Hayes– Program Director

Heather Brand– Assistant Program Director

The Apartment Treatment Program is a congregate care level II residential program certified by the New York State Office of Mental Health.

We provide supportive apartment environment to adults that have a diagnosis of a serious and persistent mental illness.

Each individual in our program is assigned an apartment counselor. The apartment counselor works closely with each individual to create a service plan based on individual needs. The service plan is designed to focus the services on the needs and interest of the individual.

The apartment program staff support the individuals in their goals and self-sufficiency all while working with the individuals to accumulate the skills they will need in order to successfully transition into a more independently living environment.

We have recently had some individuals transition out of the Apartment Treatment Program and into a more independent setting. Our residents have enjoyed some fall/winter activities such as: the movie theater, apple picking, Thanksgiving Dinner at the Winners Circle, MHA Harvest Dance, The Holiday Dance as well as Aladdin at Proctors Theater. The program participants are looking forward to the upcoming Holiday Season.

We currently have openings in our Apartment Program, if you or someone you know could benefit from the services that the Apartment Program offers, please contact Jen Hayes at 518-842-3717 or at jhayes@mhafm.org.

Supported Housing Program

The Supported Housing Program is current serving 38 participants. The Supported Housing Program is a program in which the participants reside in a home of their choice, whether it be alone or with whomever they choose to live with. The participants do need to reside within Montgomery County in order to be considered for this program. The program provides many supports to the participants. Some of the supports that are provided include:

Transportation to Dr. Appointments/Benefit entitlement appointments

Monthly Home Visits that include fire safety checks

Staff assistance in creating individual support plans which address the goals of the participants

Activities throughout the year which include: picnics, lunches, movies, etc.....

The participants of the Supported Housing Program are invited to attend all of the Mental Health Associations activities and transportation to these events is available. Most recently they have enjoyed some fall activities such as; the MHA Harvest Dance, MHA's Holiday Dance, a trip to the Headless Horseman as well as to Proctors to watch Aladdin, MVP Arena to see Gretta Van Fleet, enjoyed breakfast at Peaceful Valley Farms in Johnstown, as well as enjoyed a trip to see Lights on the Lake in Syracuse.

We currently have openings in our Supported Housing Program, if you or someone you know could benefit from the services that the Supported Housing Program offers, please contact Jen Hayes at 518-842-3717 or at jhayes@mhafm.org.

The Mental Health Association in
Fulton & Montgomery Counties

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snowflakes.
Unique and one
of a kind.*

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