



# Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health

# NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2018



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## 2018 SCCCMH Citizens of the Year Lisa and Ed Mitzen



The SCCCMH Board of Directors has named **Lisa and Ed Mitzen** our 2018 SCCCMH Citizens of the Year. They were chosen for their leadership and dedication to helping address the unmet needs of people in Saratoga County living with mental illness, substance abuse, serious illnesses and other disabilities. Lisa and Ed will be honored at the SCCCMH annual **Mental Health Matters Benefit on Wednesday, May 2, 2018 at Longfellow's Restaurant**. The event registration flyer is included in this newsletter.

Ed Mitzen is chief executive officer of Fingerpaint Marketing in Saratoga Springs. Among his volunteer activities, Ed is the Vice Chairperson of the Double H Ranch Board of Directors. Double H Ranch is a camp for children with serious medical conditions and disabilities.

Lisa is active with Rebuilding Together having served on the Board of Directors; and most recently was the 2017 Rebuilding Together Annual Dinner. Rebuilding Together Saratoga is committed to ensuring that our neighbors in need, especially those with disabilities, can live independently in safe, healthy, warm and dry homes.

Ed and Lisa Mitzen stand out to the mental health community because of their dedication and support for the Code Blue program in Saratoga. Their original connection with Code Blue came before its inception, when Fingerpaint stepped up to be the first business to contribute funds after the death of Nancy Pitts. They've been committed to helping since. They work at Code Blue sporadically throughout the season, usually cooking and providing meals to the guests. Lisa enjoys preparing the meals and Ed helps her serve. They especially like helping during the holidays.

Ed and Lisa Mitzen, are donating an undisclosed amount money to Shelters of Saratoga so a two-story, 6,500-square-foot shelter for the Code Blue Program can be built. They have also engaged Fingerpaint employees to assist with fundraisers to help finance the Code Blue Program. **(Continued, Mitzen, pg. 4)**

**CHAIRPERSON'S NOTES**

By Peggy Lounsbury

Both on the national level and local level, politics has drawn attention to the needs of people living with mental illness and substance abuse. Unfortunately, the focus has not always been on the needs, but on the stigma. On the national level, the discussion has been on gun violence and mental illness.

However, on the local level, the current issue is the location of the Code Blue Program. Shelters of Saratoga (SOS) is located at 14 Walworth Street in Saratoga Springs. SOS has appropriately absorbed the Code Blue program into their organization. They logically would like to build a facility next to their Walworth location. Unfortunately, the residents do not want the Code Blue shelter in their neighborhood. This is a bit déjà vu for SCCCMH. As you may recall, some city residents did not want the Saratoga County Mental Health Center at its now current location at 135 South Broadway because that location is the "gateway" to the city. The terrible things that were said at the city planning board meeting about people living with mental illness was appalling and discouraging. The good news at that time, very eloquent speakers who live with mental illness told their story and the planning board approved the South Broadway location for the clinic. It's been a few years now, and not a peep or complaint from the neighbors on or near the Mental Health Center. Perhaps SOS is encountering the same inappropriate response from their neighborhood?

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**Grassroots Lobbying – Let's Do It!  
Mental Health Matters (MHM)**

One aspect of the mission of the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health (SCCCMH) is to advocate for the programs and services people with mental illness need in Saratoga County, NY. The SCCCMH does this as an organization, but also leads the grassroots efforts in Saratoga County.

(Continued...)

Individuals, consumers, family members and friends can help the grassroots efforts to improve services and treatment for people living with mental illness by writing letters and e-mails to elected officials and government agencies. Also, join the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health (SCCCMH) and we will have strength in numbers with your help. And, if you can, visit with your elected representatives like the group that recently did just that. Check out the story on page 3.

The most basic grassroots lobbying approach is writing letters to elected representatives. You can find your representatives by following these links:

New York State Senators and Assemblypersons:  
Senate: <https://www.nysenate.gov/find-my-senator>

Assembly: <http://nyassembly.gov/mem/search/>

United States Senate:  
[https://www.senate.gov/general/contact\\_information/senators\\_cfm.cfm?State=NY](https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm?State=NY)

US House of Representatives:  
<https://www.house.gov/representatives>

- a. On the envelope and on the inside heading refer to the elected official as "The Honorable (full name)."
- c. Identify the subject clearly. Use the bill number, if applicable, when writing about an issue that has a bill pending.
- d. State your reason for writing. Explain how the issue would affect you, your family, the practice, your profession and what impact it would have on your community or state.
- e. If extending an invitation or requesting a meeting, suggest a time and date, or several dates, for the visit. Be flexible. Indicate the amount of time you would like with the lawmaker and the purpose of the meeting.
- f. If applicable, provide brief background information about you.
- g. Keep your comments short and to the point. Cover only ONE issue per letter.
- h. Be reasonable. Don't ask the impossible. Don't use threats. Be courteous and respectful in all communications.

(Continued, Lobby, pg.5)

**Mental Health Matters!**

By Melodie Materson

SCCCMH members made their presence known at the Mental Health Association of NYS (MHANY) Mental Health Matters Legislative Day at the NY state legislative offices in Empire Plaza in Albany. Clients, and advocates transported to Albany from Saratoga Springs via charter bus. Along the way, Chairperson, Peggy Lounsbury, briefed the group on SCCCMH's legislative agenda, encouraged the group to express their own needs, concerns and stories, and provided instruction on how to best advocate for their needs with legislators.

During the Mental Health Matters Legislative Day, participants listened to legislators, mental health professionals, and other guest speakers discuss important mental health issues. At noon, participants wearing the MHANY's Mental Health Matters T-shirts and carrying the SCCCMH Mental Health Matters placards gather outside the senate chambers inside the Capital Building Steps for the Mental Health for a press rally discussing affordable housing, community investment and general mental health training for educators and school administrators. (Continued, MHM, Page 6)



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[www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org](http://www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org)

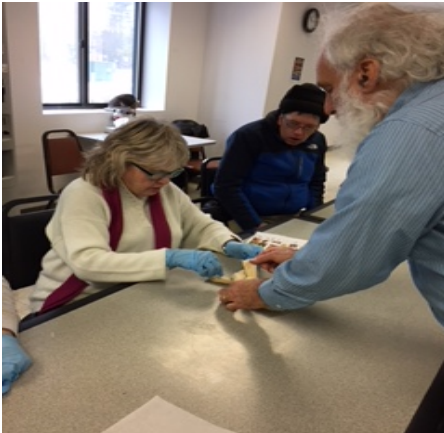
The views expressed in this newsletter represent the opinions of the authors and do not represent the official position or opinions of the SCCCMH unless specifically stated.

The SCCCMH 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 Editor's e-mail address. Articles not submitted electronically can be mailed to the address above.

## THE VIEW FROM HERE

### **The Golden club @ Unlimited Potential**

The recent grant we received from the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health allowed us to sponsor two health and wellness programs. In February Rabbi Rubinstein from "Wings of an Angel Bakery" presented a program on making homemade bread. Members were taught how to braid challah bread and after he baked it everyone enjoyed eating the warm bread. Members are now interested in volunteering at the bakery which we hope to do soon.



Rabbi Rubinstein teaching us how to make bread

### **Mitzen, Continued from page 1...**

Homeless people often are living with mental health or substance abuse problems. Creating a permanent home for Code Blue as part of, and next to, the Shelters of Saratoga facility will improve access for more homeless people to get the help and assistance they need to find permanent housing, jobs and/or treatment. Ed and Lisa's volunteer and philanthropic support of the Code Blue Program is making a difference for people living with mental illness and substance abuse in Saratoga County!

The Saratoga County Citizens Committee  
for Mental Health

Presents a FREE viewing of the film:  
**RESILIENCE: THE BIOLOGY OF STRESS &  
THE SCIENCE OF HOPE**

**Wednesday, April 18, 2018**

**7:00 pm to 9:00 pm**

**Davis Auditorium in Bolton Hall at  
Skidmore College  
FREE ADMISSION**

After the film, Dawn Daum, co-editor of the book, "Parenting with PTSD: the impact of childhood abuse on parenting", will speak on parenting with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and the importance of breaking the cycle of abuse.

*Resilience: The Biology Of Stress & The Science Of Hope* is a one-hour documentary that delves into the science of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the birth of a new movement to treat and prevent Toxic Stress. Now understood to be one of the leading causes of everything from heart disease and cancer to substance abuse and depression, extremely stressful experiences in childhood can alter brain development and have lifelong effects on health and behavior. However, as experts and practitioners profiled in RESILIENCE are proving, what's predictable is preventable. These physicians, educators, social workers and communities are daring to talk about the effects of divorce, abuse and neglect. And they're using cutting edge science to help the next generation break the cycles of adversity and disease.



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**Mental Health Public Policy:**

A Saratoga County Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Update

By Dr. Michael Prezioso  
Commissioner, Saratoga County Dept. of  
Mental Health & Addiction Services

Communicate. Collaborate. Coordinate. Integrate. These drive the mission of the Saratoga County Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services: provide state of the art care to County residents.

We believe more is required than simply waiting for persons to walk through our doors. We strive to *communicate* with individuals and human services stakeholders to ensure that all voices are heard and needs are identified. We *collaborate* to identify resources available to address those needs. To deliver service effectively, these resources are *coordinated* and *integrated* to ensure a seamless continuum of care that is flexible, responsive and which optimizes the strength and resilience of those we serve.

The Department, its partners, the community, and the individuals and families served have realized a number of successes during the past several years. The Saratoga County Suicide Prevention Coalition was established to provide education and training to prevent suicide. The Department has actively participated in several community forums related to opioid addiction, with family, Medicine and Law Enforcement partners, and has broadened the scope of its addictions treatment offerings. Additional clinical staff have been added, with the assistance of the Sheriff's Office, to the County Correctional Facility to address the mental health and addictions treatment needs of that population. Recently, a new partner has joined the cadre of residential service resources. And finally, the Department has brokered relationships between several County school districts and treatment providers to increase access to school-based mental health services.

(Continued...)

The Department continues to offer group and individual psychotherapy to children, adolescents and adults, addictions treatment and rehabilitation services through the Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) program. Psychiatry and prescriber services are likewise available and in a typical year more than 36,000 services are performed.

**JOIN NOW!**

Consumers, family and friends, mental health professionals and others, please join the SCCCMH now for the new year. As a member of SCCCMH, you will get our newsletter, and more important, you will help SCCCMH carry-out our mission to be the voice of people living with mental illness in Saratoga County. The more members we have, the more power we have to influence local and state government.

Also, consider a charitable gift to SCCCMH. You can honor or memorize someone and help make a difference in the mental health community, too.

To keep up with SCCCMH news and activities visit our website on a regular basis: [www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org](http://www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org)

And follow our Facebook page by searching for: **Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health. Be sure to "Like" and "Share" our Facebook page.**



**Lobby, Continued from page 2...**

- i. Be constructive. If a bill deals with a problem but seems to represent the wrong solution, propose constructive alternatives.
- j. Avoid form letters or stereotyped phrases and sentences that give the appearance of form letters. Communications written in your own words are more effective.
- k. Write when the lawmaker does something that deserves approval, too. A word of appreciation will create a more favorable light for the next communication.

Continued, MHM, from page 3...

Later in the afternoon, SCCCMH representatives spoke with the legislative aides for Senator Kathleen Marchione, Senator James Tedisco, Assemblyperson Carrie Woerner, and Assemblyperson Mary Beth Walsh.

The legislative aides were very receptive to supporting these important mental health issues, especially as they were coming from people living with mental illnesses, who struggle with these issues on a daily basis, themselves. The SCCCMH representatives urged the legislators to:

- Enhance the supportive services available to persons living in the community
- Increase access to transportation
- Increase the stock of treatment-oriented residential options

Those who participated in the Mental Health Matters Legislative Day felt this grassroots lobbying was a worthwhile and meaningful advocacy experience. SCCCMH's participation in this event was made possible through SCCCMH's fund raising activities



**Apply for Grants from SCCCMH**

The Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health awards monetary grants to not-for-profit organizations that provide services or assistance to people living with mental illness in Saratoga County.

Awards are generally up to one thousand dollars and are distributed three times a year. Contact Peggy Lounsbury or visit our website for more information and an application. Applications for the next award cycle are due June 1<sup>st</sup>.



**THE SALVATION ARMY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS IS UTILIZING FUNDS RECEIVED FROM SCCCMH.**

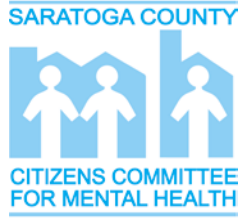
**BY BREE BARKER**

The Salvation Army received a generous donation from SCCCMH, totaling \$1000, to update their facilities to better meet the needs of the community in Saratoga!

These much needed funds will help build an additional shower facility for the Homeless Breakfast and Shower program. This program provides support and assistance to adults living on the streets by giving them a fresh start for the day. Clients arrive at 7:30am and enjoy a hot or continental breakfast, a hot shower, access to laundry facilities, access to our free clothing room, a chance to cool off in the summer or warm up in the winter, as well as access to information on other Salvation Army services and referrals to other community agencies.

Dedicated staff and volunteers build relationships with the clients, which results in positive goal setting and achieved outcomes by the clients. Our current facility only has one shower, which is located in the Women's bathroom. The grant, along with other grant secured from local partners, will be used to build a shower in the men's bathroom, which will result in a safer environment for all program participants. With the addition of a second shower, we will be able to increase the number of showers that we can offer as well as decrease the long wait times for access to the shower facility.

We are grateful that SCCCMH is supporting those in need in Saratoga and look forward to the installation later this year.



For more information, contact:

Chairperson: Peggy Lounsbury  
E-mail: [plounsbury@saratogacare.org](mailto:plounsbury@saratogacare.org)  
Phone: 518-583-8371

Or visit our website: [www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org](http://www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org)  
and check out our **Face Book Page!**

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM FOR YEAR: April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019**

**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 and 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. For example, 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(s): 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 and Advocates (SCN-MHPA), then check here:

If you would like to participate in a mental health consumer workshop, 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.

**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!!**



[www.scccmh-saratoga.org](http://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 **increases public awareness** of the needs of people living with mental illness.*

**Saratoga County Citizens  
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