



SPRING 2019

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plounsbury@saratogacare.org
 518.583.8371

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 Secretary
 & Fundraising Committee

Lorraine Gardephe
 Newsletter Chair
lorigards199@gmail.com
 518.587.2851

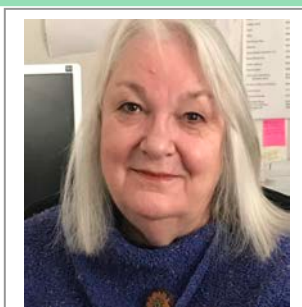
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**SCCCMH Announces
 Our Citizen of the Year!!
 Congratulations to Laraine Desmond**



Laraine Desmond will be honored as the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health (SCCCMH) 2019 Citizen of the Year at the annual Mental Health Matters (MHM) Benefit on May 1st at Longfellows Resturant.

Laraine has provided direct care for hundreds of severely mentally ill individuals during her 30-year career working with Transitional Services Association (TSA). For most of that time, Laraine has served as the Program Director for the Stonebridge community residence. She has served with integrity and commitment through more than a few transitions and changes that have seen within the field of mental health and at TSA. The stability, sincerity, and experience Laraine brings to her job is both substantial and significant. It is impossible to calculate the positive impact Laraine's service has had on TSA residents over the years - it has literally been felt daily by residents for her entire tenure at TSA. When asked about her work, Laraine said, "Often you hear people saying they love helping people, but [I say] I love the people I help. It is that simple."

Laraine's heartfelt approach has benefitted so many clients during her decades of dedicated service to the mentally ill in Saratoga County. It is because of her enormous heart that so many have benefited from being under her care. Being selected as the 2019 SCCCMMH Citizen of the Year is a well-deserved honor for Laraine Desmond.

The Registration form for the MHM Benefit is included in this newsletter.

As in past years, consumers who desire to attend the SCCCMMH MHM Benefit are eligible for the MHM Benefit discounted rate of \$20. TSA will pay for half (\$10) the discounted rate for TSA clients who register for the event.

CHAIRPERSON'S NOTES

By Peggy Lounsbury

The SCCCMH has been busy this winter. We were pleased to be able to provide Youth Mental Health First Aid in January. Read about Mental Health First Aid on page 4. The program was limited to 30 participants and as a result there was a waiting list that was not accommodated. So it is obvious this education is needed in our community. The SCCCMH will be looking at possibly bringing Adult Mental Health First Aid to the Saratoga region.

Mental Health Matters Lobby Day this year was another successful event that positively influenced our elected representatives. I was extremely impressed with the how people who are living with mental illness and who attended lobby day were able to effectively advocate not only for themselves, but for the needs of the entire mental health community. I was very proud of our Saratoga County lobby group.

The Youth Services Team of the Saratoga County Mental Health and Addictive Services Department is once again working on bringing an educational conference this fall in conjunction with SCCCMH. We did not have a conference in 2018 and this left an educational void. So, stay tuned for more information about the Fall Youth Conference.

Finally, please help us get the word out about the SCCCMH: Join SCCCMH, and also friend and share the SCCCMH Facebook page or donate your birthday on Facebook.

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 1st.



by Melodie Masterson

Donate your Birthday to SCCCMH on Facebook.

Using Facebook’s fundraising tool, you can now donate your birthday to a SCCCMH. In order to donate your birthday, simply click on the fundraising tab on your News Feed. From there, you can select SCCCMH as the charity you want your friends to give to and set your fundraising goal for as well as your fundraiser’s end date. You can invite your friends directly to the fundraiser, so they can help you celebrate your birthday by helping the mental health community in Saratoga County.

Participate in the SCCCMH Facebook Spring Challenge!



We propose a Springtime challenge to all our readers and supporters of SCCCMH that will help us to increase awareness of the needs of people living with mental health and decrease mental health stigma by “LIKING” and “SHARING” our Facebook (FB) page!

Currently the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health FB page has only 88 Likes. YIKES!

Please share the SCCCMH FB page with your friends...our goal before the next newsletter in the fall is to have 1000 Likes!

We will report in our next newsletter how we are doing with our FB “Likes”.

Also, be sure to visit our website:

www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org

**Mental Health Association of NYS
(MHANY) Mental Health Matters
Lobby Day 2019**

By Melodie Masterson

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, the SCCCMH participates, wearing the MHANY's Mental Health Matters T-shirts and carrying the SCCCMH Mental Health Matters placards gather alongside nearly 100 other participants outside the capital building for the Mental Health Matters Rally. Individuals, like the SCCCMH Secretary, Amanda Blodgett, and Karen, a Transitional Services Association Resident, took turns talking about why mental health matters to them individually. Later the group marched around the capitol building chanting loudly, "Mental Health Matters," hope that our legislators and Governor

could hear the message. Later in the afternoon, SCCCMH representatives spoke with the legislative aides for Senator Daphne Jordan, 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:

- **Adequately fund community-based housing programs.**
- **Increase access to transportation.**
- **Increase the stock of treatment-oriented residential options.**
- **Enhance the supportive services available to persons living in the community.**
- **Full restoration of the 2.9 percent COLA for mental health workers.**

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.

Check out the photos of our lobby day on page 5!



SCCCMH Newsletter is the official publication of the
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P.O. Box 820, Saratoga Springs, New York 12866
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

Why is there a Need for Mental Health First Aid?

By Lorraine Gardephe

This past January a Mental Health First Aid Course was offered as a free training to anyone in our community from friends, teachers, coaches, and parents who were interested in learning how to respond to youth who may be experiencing a crisis. I participated in this very informative training program.

The goal of this training is to help in reducing stigma and gaining skills in listening in a non-judgemental manner, so that a young person can be quickly connected to other professionals and care givers that are equipped to help in a crisis.

SCCCMH, Saratoga County Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (SCMH&AS) and Saratoga Hospital jointly sponsored this event. SCMH&AS clinicians Jean Devlin and Katelyn Brunet presented this three year certification course to a full class of dedicated community members hosted by Saratoga Hospital.

Separate simulations were presented in a small group format with each group receiving small amounts of input in stages throughout the day, encouraging discussions that mimic real life situations to learn how to be better and more effective listeners. Skills were taught in how to be prepared and ready to provide the appropriate support a young person may need in finding a safe space. This course provided information and resources that included a handbook along with the phone number for the mobile crisis team for Warren, Washington, Saratoga, and Rensselaer counties, 1-800-273-TALK.

Many thanks goes out to both SCCCMH Chair Peggy Lounsbury and Michael Prezioso, Commissioner, Saratoga County Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, for organizing this vital training. I learned what key factors to consider and be aware of if I am ever in a position that requires determining how to respond in reducing stigma and how to help our youth if they are facing a crisis. I encourage everyone to become part of the solution and be an advocate for bettering the future of our children and our community.

Become a certified Mental Health First Aider!

By Lorraine Gardephe

Nearly 1 in 5 U.S. adults live with a mental illness.

The Mental Health Association of NYS (MHANYS) is providing **free** Mental Health First Aid training to individuals who work with or support the general public within Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties. Mental Health First Aid is often referred to as CPR for the mind; it's an evidence-based training that introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental illness along with a 3-year certification from the National Council for Behavioral Health.

You are more likely to encounter someone — friend, family member, coworker, neighbor, or member of the community — in an emotional or mental crisis than someone having a heart attack. **Mental Health First Aid teaches a 5-step action plan** to offer initial help to people with the signs and symptoms of a mental illness or in a crisis, and connect them with the appropriate professional, peer, social, or self-help care. Anyone can take the 8-hour Mental Health First Aid course — first responders, students, teachers, leaders of faith communities, human resources professionals, and caring citizens.

**April 17th, 2019 from 9:30am-5:30pm at
Clifton Park Library, 475 Moe Rd,
Clifton Park, NY 12065**

**For more information or to register contact:
jmonaco@mhanys.org
518-434-0439**

For other course offerings, visit:
www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org
or
www.mhanys.org (the "Events" page)





By **Andra Wilkinson** RESEARCH SCIENTIST, CHAPEL HILL, NC and **Hannah Winslow** RESEARCH ANALYST, BETHESDA, MD

White youth are more likely to receive treatment for drug abuse than youth of color, although treatment is rare for both groups. Only a small percentage of youth who report pain reliever (including opioid) abuse or dependence receive addiction treatment, and youth of color are significantly less likely to receive treatment than their white peers. According to Child Trends’ analysis of the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, this gap between white youth and youth of color under age 21 has persisted almost every year since 2002, when opioid prescription deaths began to rise. As of 2016, 16.1 percent of white youth who abused pain relievers received treatment, compared to 16.8 percent in 2002. Just 10.3 percent of youth of color who abused pain relievers received treatment in 2016—a 2.8 percentage point drop from 2002 (when 13.1 percent received treatment) and persistently lower than their white counterparts.

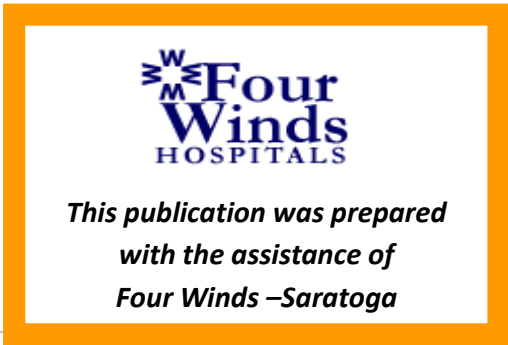
To increase the percentage of all youth who receive treatment for drug abuse and begin to close this gap between white youth and youth of color, decision makers must increase access to addiction treatment for youth.

Critically, even if treatment becomes more available, youth of color may be less likely to seek treatment than their white peers. Youth of color are less likely to be insured, screened for substance abuse, and referred to treatment by clinical providers.

In addition, some barriers to substance abuse treatment are specific to particular racial and ethnic groups.

For example, efforts to expand substance abuse treatment can differ for Native American youth, who may access health care through the Indian Health Service, tribal programs, and in rural areas. In the black community, substance abuse has historically been addressed through the criminal justice system, rather than via treatment provision, which could discourage black youth from seeking treatment. Treatment programs must be culturally tailored to the communities they serve and cognizant of these kinds of fraught histories.

**Mental Health Matters Lobby Day
March 13, 2019**



Grant Update from the Charlton School



Nike is trying out his new cart that we purchased with the generous donation we received from Saratoga County Citizens Committee For Mental Health. The cart will be used in our newly emerging therapeutic driving program. This program will focus on the work that goes into establishing a trusting relationship between our students and a mini horse, with the ultimate goal of the students being able to independently drive the Charlton mini horse.

Learning the skills necessary to drive an equine opens up a whole new arena within the equestrian world. It also incorporates the knowledge our students have gained in our proven therapeutic equine riding, horse care and ground work programs, thus providing a solid foundation upon which our students can begin this new venture.

Occasionally, students come to Charlton with physical problems that prohibit them from taking part in the riding aspect of our therapeutic equine program. By establishing a driving component, we have a vast area on which students in this population can focus.



MEMBERS WANTED - JOIN NOW!

Consumers, family and friends, mental health professionals and others, please join the SCCCMH now for our new fiscal 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.

Consider a charitable gift to SCCCMH. **You can make a donation in honor of, or in memory of, someone special and help make a difference in the mental health community, too.**

GIVE POWER AND YOUR SUPPORT TO THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY...JOIN TODAY!

Share Mental Health News and Views

BY LORRAINE GARDEPHE,
SCCCMH NEWSLETTER CHAIR

Please consider sharing your opinions, ideas, and thoughts regarding mental health issues in our local area!

We want to invite more readers to contribute to our newsletter, so we can continue to enrich, advocate, and educate any and all that happen to pick up a copy! Help us reach out and share what really matters to you!

Thank you for supporting mental health causes by your sharing this newsletter and visiting our website www.scccmh-saratoga.org along with our new Facebook page at this web address:

www.facebook.com/Saratoga-County-Citizens-Committee-For-Mental-Health/

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

and check out our **Face Book Page!**

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM FOR YEAR: April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020

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

*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
Committee for Mental Health**

P.O. Box 820

Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

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