



Spring 2022

Highlights:

- MHM Benefit Fundraiser 1
- Chairperson's Notes 2
- Meet the Citizens of the Year 2
- Facebook Donation Option 2
- Crisis Intervention Training 3
- Asian American Directory 4
- MH First Aide Training 4
- NY Project Hope 5
- Meet Amanda 5
- Amazon Smile & SCCCMH 6



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**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:
Mental Health Matters Benefit Fundraiser
Is Saturday, April 30, 2022 at the
Saratoga-Wilton Elks Lodge**

In the spring of 2020, the SCCCMH Annual Mental Health Matters (MHM) Benefit Fundraiser was scheduled for May 6, 2020. However, a month before, we were forced to cancel our due to the pandemic shutdown. We have not had a major fundraiser for two years!

The SCCCMH MHM Benefit Fundraiser is now scheduled on **Saturday, April 30, 2022** at the Saratoga-Wilton Elks Lodge, Saratoga Springs. The event will be more than just a dinner. The SCCCMH Board felt a fun event was necessary to help everyone spring ahead and forget about COVID-19 for a while, while supporting the SCCCMH and recognizing our Citizens of the Years, 2020-2022. This year's MHM Benefit Fundraiser will have buffet stations, an open photo booth and a DJ to provide dancing music, as well as, raffle baskets. Also, this year, we will recognize three "Citizens of the Years": 2020 – Saratoga Community Health Center, 2021 – Lorraine Gardephe and 2022 – RJ Stutzmann. This is sure to be a fun event, and this will help everyone to "Spring Ahead" and out of this pandemic. The registration form is located in this newsletter. The form is also available for down load from our website: www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org

Meet the SCCCMH Citizens of the Years 2020-2022:



2020
Saratoga Community Health Center



2021
Lorraine
Gardephe



2022
RJ Stutzmann

Continued on page 2 – Meet

CHAIRPERSON'S NOTES

By Peggy Lounsbury

It's time to "Spring Ahead" beyond COVID-19 and this pandemic. So, the SCCCMH is springing ahead to get back to as close to normal as we can.

We did find that we could meet effectively by Webex, instead of in person. Everyone is so busy, this approach is convenient for board members. So, I suspect, we will continue to meet this way.

For the past two years, we were not able to have our annual fundraiser. This is our primary fundraiser. We tried a few "virtual" things, but we recognized we need to get back to our primary fundraiser. However, we want to try a bigger fundraiser that gets our organization more exposure, and also more money. We are hoping our new venue, providing dance music, a photo booth, and food stations, along with recognizing our Citizens of the Year, will result in more participation. Reservations are limited and required. Look for the reservation form in this newsletter.



Meet the SCCCMH Citizens of the Years:

2020 – Saratoga Community Health Center (SCHC): is here for all people in our community who need care — regardless of income. The SCHC is the only facility of its kind in the greater Saratoga region providing high quality, primary, dental, behavioral and addiction medicine health services to members of our community, regardless of their insurance status and ability to pay. For many patients, the SCHC is their first experience with routine healthcare which makes a dramatic difference in quality of health and life. For these reasons, the SCHC is the 2019 SCCCMH Citizen of the Year.

Continued....

2021 – Lorraine Gardephe: Lorraine was a SCCCMH Board Member for 18 years, and has held previous positions on the board including Chairperson and Newsletter Chair. She has dedicated many years to people living with mental illness through her work at Unlimited Potential and now with NYS as a Veteran Vocational Counselor. For these reasons, Lorraine Gardephe is the 2020 SCCCMH Citizen of the Year.

2022 – RJ Stutzmann: RJ is well known in the mental health through his 26 years in the mental health field. He has worked for TSA (now known as RISE) as a case manager and has worked the last 20+ years for Saratoga Hospital's Mental Health Unit. He has fostered relationships Saratoga County Mental Health and Addiction Services, RISE, Wellspring and law enforcement. He coordinates Narcan education and distribution for the hospital. He also is a member of the County Community Services Board. It is this extensive network of connections and his dedication to the mental health community that are the reasons why RJ Stutzmann is the 2021 Citizen of the Year.

Each of our Citizens of the Year will be recognized during the MHM Benefit Fundraiser.



Donate your Birthday on Facebook to Benefit SCCCMH

Submitted by Melodie Masterson

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 to give to and set your fundraising goal 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.

Crisis Intervention Training for Local Law Enforcement

The Saratoga County Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services is proud to partner with the Saratoga County Sheriff's Office and other stakeholders to bring Crisis Intervention Training to local law enforcement.

This New York State Senate-sponsored initiative is coordinated by the Institute for Police, Mental Health and Community Collaboration, in conjunction with the New York State Office of Mental Health. The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program is a community partnership of law enforcement, mental health and addictions professionals, individuals who live with mental illness and/or addictive disorders, their families, and other advocates. Program goals include reducing the frequency with which law enforcement officers are the first responders to individuals in emotional distress. Providing law enforcement with the knowledge, skills and support needed to deescalate encounters with persons in distress is also a goal. Mental health/addictions specialists and law enforcement met to map the system existing human services.

Continued....

On February 16, 2022, local partners representing persons with life experience, families, advocates, mental health/addictions specialists and law enforcement, met to map the system of existing human services. Clifton Park Town Supervisor Phil Barrett, Chair of the County Health and Human Services Committee, also joined the group discussion. Next steps include 40 hours of training for selected members of the law enforcement community, in furtherance of program goals.

Additional information may be obtained from Dr. Michael Prezioso, Commissioner of the Saratoga County Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. (518)584-9030

JOIN SCCCMH 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.

Give power and your support to the mental health community...join today!

SCCCMH Newsletter is the official publication of the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health,
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.

Asian American Federation Launches Mental Health Directory

As Anti-Asian Hate Crimes Crisis Continues, Mental Health Takes Significant Toll on Asian Americans Who Lack Resources to Access Services

The Asian American Mental Health Directory can be accessed using the link below:

<https://mhd.aafederation.org/>

New York, NY – The Asian American Federation (AAF) launched its mental health directory to help Asian American individuals and families find a provider to fit their cultural and accessibility needs. The goal of AAF's directory is to ensure that all Asian New Yorkers who need mental health care can receive it in the language they speak and from providers who look like them and understand their cultures. Mental health professionals included in the online directory service provide counseling, education, and a number of other services that Asian Americans may seek to support their mental well-being.

"There is still much work to be done to help Asian New Yorkers recover from this pandemic, and the first step on the road to recovery is addressing mental health. The stress, trauma, and fear we experience every day because of the increased crimes against Asian Americans weigh heavily on our community," said Jo-Ann Yoo, Executive Director of the Asian American Federation. "For many Asian immigrants and community members, it can be difficult to find not only a provider who understands their culture, but also one who speaks their native language. This directory will help bridge that gap and empower the members of our community to find the support they sorely need during this trying time."

Mental Health First Aid Training

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 is 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.

For more information, visit the MHANYS website:

<https://mhanys.org/products/mhfa/>

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

Join SCCCMH Today!

SCCCMH Grants Available Now

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 download an application.



NY Project Hope helps New Yorkers understand their reactions and emotions during COVID-19.

We have an emotional support helpline, educational materials, trusted referrals, and local provider agencies... all dedicated to helping you manage and cope with changes brought on by COVID-19.

NY Project Hope Crisis Counselors understand what you are going through. Talking with them is free, confidential and anonymous. Talk with someone who is trained, knowledgeable and never judges. Sometimes it's helpful to talk with someone you don't know. Emotional Support Line: **Call 1-844-863-9314, 8 am to 10 pm, 7 days a week.**

If you're not up for talking, take a look at the articles on this site, learn a few relaxation techniques or a few new coping tips:

www.NYProjectHope.org



Submit Mental Health News and Views Articles

Submit your articles via e-mail to: Consider submitting an article for the "View Form Here" column. This is a powerful way to share your experience as a consumer, family member, professional, or advocate.

Also, appreciated are mental health-related news and stories. Articles can be around 150 to 250 words.

info@SCCCMH-Saratoga.org.

Meet Amanda By Melodie Masterson

Amanda Blodgett, our SCCCMH secretary, has been a SCCCMH member since 2008 and has volunteered as secretary for the board since 2009. Amanda lives with a disabling mental health condition, but it does not prevent her from living a full life and being an active member of our community. She has a bachelor's degree in cultural studies with a concentration in literature and is pursuing her dream of becoming a writer. She sets aside time each day to work on writing short stories and poetry, with a goal of three submissions per month to various magazines for publishing. Amanda is also a lector at St. Clements Church. Additionally, she volunteers at the Friends of Saratoga Springs Public Library Used Bookstore a few hours each week.

With support from RISE Supported Housing program, Amanda lives independently in the community, but this has not always been the case. She says, "When I first received my mental health diagnosis while attending college as a young adult, I feared that I would end up homeless. I lived with my parents at the time and I thought I would be dependent on them for the rest of my life. I was scared about what would happen to me once they were gone." However, being in Supported Housing has enabled Amanda to successfully live in her own apartment with minimal support from her Supported Housing counselor.

Amanda has learned to use coping skills to help her be independent and productive. "One of the things I am most proud about," she says, "is that I have not been hospitalized in several years. Previously, I had been hospitalized in the psychiatric inpatient unit several times. Whenever my mental health

Continued, Amanda, Page 6

Continued, Amanda...

symptoms became too much, I would have to go into the mental health unit to become stabilized. But with the support that the Supported Housing staff gave me, as well as the skills I learned from my treatment providers, I am able to manage my mental health with my medications and by using my coping skills."

SCCCMH is grateful for Amanda's participation on our board. She is an excellent secretary and keeps us all on task with her monthly "to do lists". Amanda's full story of how she learned to manage her mental health and be so successful in living independently in the community can be located on the RISE Blog.



**Help SCCCMH Increase Awareness:
"Like" our Facebook Page!**

Currently the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health Facebook page has only 41 likes. Please share with your friends and urge them to check-out our Facebook, and then then "Like" our page, and "Share" with your Facebook Friends

Thank you for your support! We continue to need your support to help us in our advocacy efforts toward improving Mental Health Services in our county, remove the stigma associated with those who live with Mental Health issues.

We provide grant monies to those agencies that want to start up a new service or initiative that improves the lives of those they serve in Saratoga County! Please share our Facebook page to spread the news!



If you are an Amazon shopper, consider indicating the Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health (SCCCMH) as the non-profit charitable organization to benefit from your purchase. When you make purchases through Amazon Smile, Amazon will donate .5% of your purchase to SCCCMH. It's easy to do, and it does not cost you any money.

Please use Amazon Smile, and designate the SCCCMH to receive a donation from Amazon! Every little bit helps!



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For several years, Four Winds Hospital – Saratoga has donated money to the SCCCMH to support the publication of this newsletter. Their generous support of our newsletter and the mission of the SCCCMH is invaluable.





For more information, contact:

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Phone: 518-583-8371

Visit our website: www.SCCCMH-Saratoga.org

Check out our **Facebook Page!**

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM FOR YEAR: April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023

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,
(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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