



The AMI Lion

This month, we are excited to provide you with a newsletter that was written and edited by one of our Psychiatric Rehabilitation Groups. They worked diligently to research, write, interview, and format the contents of the newsletter in hopes of advocating for mental health recovery and educating stakeholders and community members on what is going on at AMI, and within the mental health community. Members of the newsletter committee chose to update the name of the newsletter to The AMI Lion. They chose this name, because Lions represents courage, and they believe that courage is essential in any person's recovery process. We hope you enjoy this newsletter.

Member of the Month: Tracey N

Tracey was nominated for member of the month because of the strides she has made in her recovery. She has been active in AMI services for over 4 years, and recently took the leap to become a member of the Psychiatric Rehabilitation program so that she could accomplish goals she set for herself. Since joining, Tracey has decided she wants to go back to school for medical billing and coding. Since creating this goal 4 months ago, Tracey completed an application for OVR and hopes to seek other resources to help achieve her goal. She is also focusing on learning skills and building supports in her Psychiatric Rehabilitation groups to help her achieve this goal. In her spare time, Tracey shows leadership with her roommates, supporting them in their recovery journeys as well. Tracey is often described as the "rock" in her personal care home, because she is positive, encouraging and helpful. When asked how Psych Rehab has helped Tracy towards her goal, she shared, "Psych Rehab keeps me motivated to work on me." Congratulations Tracey! Keep up the great work.



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Our Mission

- AMI Inc. of Washington-Greene Counties provides an array of recovery oriented services to individuals who experience mental health challenges or co-occurring disorders. Our services are based on each individual's strengths and their desire to achieve personal goals. We accomplish our mission by inspiring hope, encouraging self-advocacy and assisting in the development of natural supports within each person's community.

Outstanding Community Member: Barb Scott Mazza

AMI would like to recognize Barb Scott Mazza as the Outstanding Community Member. When we identify people and businesses for the Outstanding Community Member, we choose people who give back to our community, brighten up the world, and people we admire and look up to. Barb is all of these things and more.

Barb works for the Center for Community Resources. Her job consists of hiring, overseeing policies and projects, getting resolutions and budgeting. Sometimes, Barb will complete intakes and help with direct services when needed. She shared that she doesn't believe she chose this field but that this field chose her because she loves the mind and the way it works. "It fascinates me." What Barb likes most about her job is working hands on with individuals. She said her best day at work is when she gets to speak to groups, build trust and have great communication with people.

Barb got her start in 1986 working in a group home while attending college. From there, she branched out and started working in other areas of the mental health field. Barb has been in the mental health field for 30 years as of May 2023 and loves helping people. "I could never walk away from someone that needs support". When asked who her mentor was, she did not hesitate. She said Larry Waynewright, her supervisor at Centerville Clinics. "I could say he was passionate about what he did and he motivated me to do good." When asked who she admired from the past, she did not jump to a famous actor, but her very own grandmother. "She had compassion, she made the world great." When asked who she admired from the present, she said her boss Beth. "She is profound, kind and passionate. I really look up to her." For fun Barb likes to roller skate, but hasn't in a long time. Most of all she likes meeting and talking to different people. From this writers' observation, Barb Scott Mazza is a gift to all who have met and will meet her because she really cares. I can truly say, she is one of a kind.



Celebrating our Newest Certified Peer Specialist

We would like to take a moment to congratulate Jeramiah Roberts on his recovery journey. Jeramiah started at AMI as a program participant in our Supported Employment group, and since, he was hired as a peer mentor for AMI, and recently, he received his certificate to provide Certified Peer Specialist Services! Jeramiah is a shining example of recovery, and is passionate about sharing what has worked for him with others seeking mental health recovery.



Cope and Save by Charles K

Budgeting and money management is a difficult skill. It requires discipline, education, and patience. Budgeting is a skill that we work on in our groups, to help us become more independent, and achieve goals we set for ourselves. Whether it is to move out on our own, purchase a vehicle, or go on a vacation, responsible budgeting is essential for independence.

To help us with applying our budgeting knowledge, a group member led us in a fun activity that allowed us to create a piggy bank where we could have a safe place for our hard earned savings!

Below are the directions to make a fun piggy bank.

- Blow up balloon and tie the end in a knot.
- Take newspaper, cut into strips.
- Dip strips in glue, start covering the balloon with the glued strips. Make sure the balloon is completely covered with the glued newspaper.
- *Let it dry for a day*
- Cut writing paper in strips.
- Dip strips in glue, start covering the balloon with the glued strips. Make sure the balloon is completely covered with the glued newspaper.
- *Let it dry for a day*
- Gather an egg carton, you will need 7 sections.
- Stuff each section with crumpled newspaper.
- Glue two sections to balloon ears and one for the nose.
- Glue four sections to the bottom of the balloon for legs.
- Dip strips in glue, start covering the balloon with the glued strips. Make sure the balloon is completely covered with the glued newspaper.
- Repeat the process of covering the egg carton sections in strips of newspaper and writing paper dipped in glue, just as you did before.
- *Let it dry for a day*
- Mix flour and water together to create a flour paste. (thick consistency)
- Paint pig with paste and *let it dry for 3 days*.
- Repeat this process with the flour paste and let paste dry for an additional 3 days.
- Now comes the fun part! Paint and decorate the pig :)
- Cut the coin slot in the top of the pig so that you have a place to put your coins and savings.
- Make eyes, two dots for the nose and a mouth.



Chef's corner

Splenda Brown Sugar Chocolate Chip Cookies

By: Nancy S.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups Flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 cup butter, melted
- 1 cup Splenda brown sugar blend
- 2 large eggs
- 1 Tbsp vanilla extract
- 2 cup nestle sugar free chocolate chips

Directions:

-PREHEAT oven 375 degrees F.

Line cookie sheets with parchment paper.

-Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt in small bowl, set aside.

-Mix butter and Splenda brown sugar blend in large bowl. Stir in eggs one at a time. Add vanilla and mix. Stir in flour mixture. Fold in choc chips. Add 1 cup of nuts if desired.

-Drop dough by rounded tablespoons onto cookie sheets. Bake for 11-13 minutes. Allow cookies to cool for 2 minutes before moving to wire racks to cool completely.

Enjoy :)

Peer Services Update

We interviewed Peer Services Director, Katherine Ranko for an update on the peer services programs.

A few weeks ago, we celebrated Valentine's Day in a sweet way by celebrating the Sweet Successes of the CPS program. Staff was asked to submit a story of leadership and achievement in recovery for their peers. The supervisors voted on the "best" example of leadership and achievement and picked Rodolfo V. as the winner. Rodolfo was able to obtain his driver's license, focused on managing his mental health in preparation for college, and has successfully completed 2 semesters thus far! This was an awesome way of celebrating the CPS staff too, who work so hard to support their peers and their goals! The CPS program is preparing for its May event, which is going to be focused on engaging youth and young adults and providing self care interventions.

Benefits of Socialization

Socialization is a key component to living a healthy lifestyle and promoting positive mental health! Here at AMI, we enjoy hosting social events that offer peers a great opportunity to meet people, practice socialization skills in a supportive environment, and build new relationships. Many of the relationships individuals in program build in group extend outside of the walls of AMI. These friendships can last a lifetime.

Some of the benefits to socialization include:

- Better mental health, it can lighten your mood and make you feel happier.
- Promotes a sense of safety, belonging and security.
- Allows you to confide in others and let them confide in you!

“Social events help me see people that I haven’t seen in a long time” - Scott H.



AMI wants to thank the Washington County Community Foundation for the grant we received that will be used to purchase laptops for on site



participants. This will give group members additional tools to help them achieve their goals. Group members will now have the ability to research schooling opportunities, job openings, update their resumes, and so much more. Thank you so much Washington County Community Foundation for helping AMI further it’s mission of providing recovery oriented services!

Word Scramble

ELLWESNS

LSEF-VOLE

RYCEOVER

LOSAG

PTOSUPRR

NEATOC DUI

HINTS

1. Keeps us healthy and focused.
2. Have a positive outlook, gives us opportunity.
3. I can’t function without it.
4. Makes us feel good.
5. We set these for ourselves.
6. Gain knowledge.

Reflecting on Covid

As we enter 2023, we can't help but to reflect on 3 years ago, when the world stood still. The start of the COVID-19 pandemic anniversary is right around the corner. We took some time to reflect on the shut downs, mask mandates, and chaos. Christine shared "I had a seizure in the middle of Giant Eagle. Seeing all the bare shelves was too much for me." Through the pandemic, we learned that one of the most important parts of our recovery is being around people. Nancy S shared, "FaceTime was a great perk for me, I couldn't be around my family so I could see them on video". Tracy W shared, "I'm still suffering from the aftermath, and can't breathe right, I'm still go through tests. But I have my support around me today." These times were trying for us all, but it was collectively agreed upon that the comradery and relationships is what ultimately pulled us through.

Reflecting back, we were also able to reflect on some of the beauty that happened because of the pandemic. There were drive by birthday wishes, connections through zoom groups and meetings, people dropping off homemade food when a friend was sick, and an extra focus on the important things in life. We all took some time to slow down for a bit, and gain a deeper appreciation for the lives we had. Today it's hard to imagine going through another shut down, but we know we would get through it together. The gratitude is that we appreciate our support and value all of our peers here at AMI and in the community. We found a way to utilize our resources, technology and drive to continue our recovery. "We still keep swimming" Andrew H.

Psych Rehab Focus Groups

Recently, we have added focus groups to our Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program in order to allow program participants to explore additional wellness tools, skills and supports. The focus groups include:

- Fun in Recovery
- Creative Expressions
- Community Resources
- Self-Care
- Yoga
- Music Based Workshop
- WRAP

These groups have been refreshing for participants and staff. They have given people the ability to explore additional interventions, and have had positive outcomes. These groups have allowed us to take a more holistic approach to Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services.

WRITERS CORNER

by Christine Wiley

"My cats are the most loving, caring pets I've ever had. They make me smile when I feel like I have nothing to smile about. They keep me motivated to do the things my mental health tries to stop me. I don't know where I would be without them. I can't thank my family and friends enough for helping with them. They take care of them when me and my husband are away. I wouldn't have them without the support from my grandparents, my aunt and uncle, and other supports in my life. My cats are my wellness and I am forever grateful.



Celebrate Success

AMI loves to celebrate and acknowledge accomplishments. See below for a list of recent goal accomplishments by individuals our Psychiatric Rehabilitation program!

- Carolyn going back to school.
- Steve D. beat cancer twice!
- Amanda P. got her own apartment.
- Jamie R. is modeling.
- Alfred C. is volunteering at AMI!

Newsletter Committee:

Sean G	Robby R
Charles K	Donald M
Tracy N	Melanie M
Nancy S	Amanda P
Christina W	David K

Shine the Light
on
Mental Health & Suicide Awareness



Presented By Washington County Behavioral Health & Developmental Services

Saturday, May 20th, 2023

Registration 11:00 am-12:00pm, Run starts at 12:00pm; Event
12:00-2:00pm

Join us in our efforts to increase awareness & eliminate stigma



Washington Park /Stone Pavilion

Park Road, No 1, Washington, PA 15301

OPEN TO PUBLIC

Additional Activities Include: Depression & Suicide Screening;
speakers, music, refreshments & Prize Raffles

ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST PRE-REGISTER

<https://forms.office.com/g/KWF57J2XA7>

Free event/Free t-shirts to those who pre-register (limited supply)

One t-shirt per household

For additional information please contact

Christina at 724-250-4135

Children under the age of 18 MUST be accompanied by a responsible adult



Sponsored by The Pennsylvania National Strategy for Suicide Prevention