



Advocate

Kenton Beachy, Executive Director

Megan Daugherty, Editor

New Name, Same Valuable Services: Ombudsman to Become Get Connected

by Maureen Traverse

“I like being a piece of the puzzle,” says LeeAnn Mattes, MHAFC’s Ombudsman. “When I can talk to someone, sort through the details of insurance and type of treatment, then make a smooth referral to a provider, I’ve helped make a difficult situation a little easier.” LeeAnn has served as the Ombudsman since 2016, when she took over for Neal Edgar, who retired from the position after 15 years. “Neal was so well known,” she recalls. “And it took some time for me to build that trust, to let people know they were still going to get the same commitment, because for so long the community knew this program as a single person.”

Identifying the Ombudsman as a program rather than a person is part of why MHAFC has decided to change the name. Going forward, LeeAnn will offer the same valuable services she always has, but under a new name: Get Connected. (MHAFC’s six-week wellness course that was called Get Connected is now called Healthy Connections.) According to Executive Director, Kenton Beachy, the initial motivation for the change was identifying a more accurate name. “The general community didn’t always recognize the term ‘ombudsman,’” he says. “We wanted people seeking help to better understand what LeeAnn can do for them.” For Kenton, the name change also offers another important opportunity—growth. “When you see these services as part of an entire program, it means we could expand and have multiple ombudsmen in different communities. It leaves us better able to spread the concept.”

Landing on a new name took some time. A team of staff and board members with marketing expertise began examining the subject last year. What became clear in those early discussions was that it would be challenging to find a word or phrase that encompassed everything the program provides, from referrals to mental health treatment to family member support to linkage to other social services. LeeAnn explains the term “ombudsman” is antiquated, referring to someone who acts as an unbiased intermediary. “It made

a lot more sense when the program started in 2001.” But as the program evolved, Neal, and eventually LeeAnn, found themselves doing so much more than helping consumers in the mental health system resolve concerns with a provider. “It’s about connection,” LeeAnn says. “Getting people connected to the resource or the service that’s going to make their lives easier. That’s why the new name is perfect.”

The Get Connected Program assists more than 1,000 people in a year. In 2017, 97% of those surveyed said they would use the program again. The top three needs callers bring to LeeAnn are help navigating the mental health system, referral to services, and housing, which gives some idea of the broad array of concerns the program can help resolve. “A lot of what we do is educate people about the mental health system, about their rights, connect people to benefits or cut through red tape when someone has difficulty with an agency or trying to get an appointment with a provider,” LeeAnn says. “Whatever the problem, I’m going to try and help.” (*See Get Connected on pg. 3*)



Get Connected Program Director,
LeeAnn Mattes, MSW, LISW-S

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To Your Mental Health

by Kenton Beachy



Occumetrics®

Three years ago, in finishing up a Master of Public Administration degree, I devoted my capstone project to helping employees have a healthier workplace. I found plenty of scientific studies and practical

projects around the world on employee psychological wellbeing and created a data-driven employee workplace wellbeing assessment process. At that time, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services was keenly interested in tools to curb high employee turnover at Ohio's behavioral health providers and has now engaged us to conduct 13 of these assessments with their agencies each year.

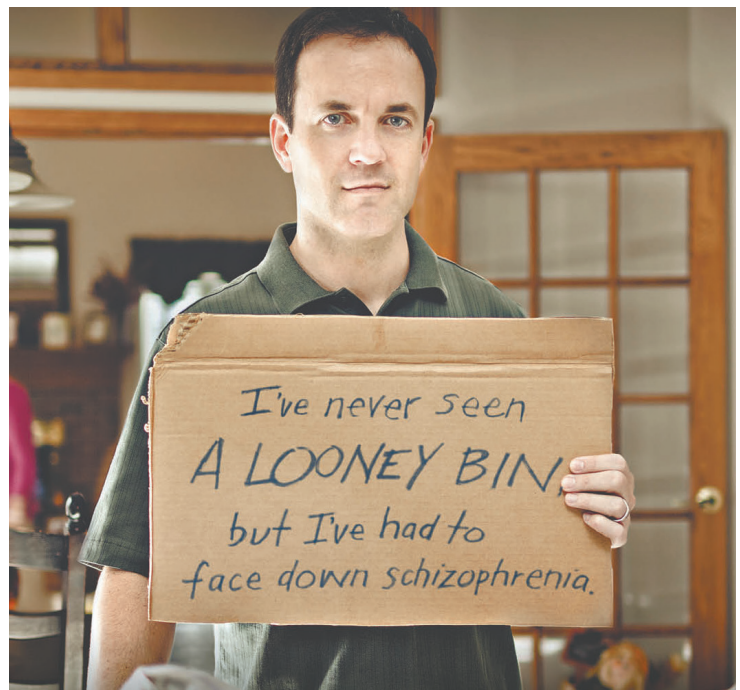
Along with our Director of Workplace Health, Maggie Hallett, we've continued to perfect our process and have turned the assessment into a trademarked social enterprise for MHAFC called Occumetrics. To date, we've conducted about 30 Occumetrics assessments with over 6,500 employees. CEOs and HR Directors have been impressed with the immense value of the information Occumetrics provides about the health of their workplaces. In fact, they've found our recommendations for a healthier workplace so valuable that they've included them in their strategic planning and made immediate changes after hearing our report.

This year has been particularly exciting for Occumetrics, as we've started conducting re-assessments to see what differences our recommendations have made. For example, we started working with an 800-employee organization in August 2017. They had just completed a year with a 41% turnover rate. As a result of our recommendations, leadership prioritized and worked on improvements in overall agency communication, human resources management, supervisor training, and some compensation adjustments. The re-assessment asked about employee experience with these improvements and found that in just one year,

the interventions were reasonably effective and may be credited (at least in part—you can rarely say something is entirely attributable) with a 16% reduction in turnover (to 35% for the year), a 3% increase in job satisfaction, and a 17% increase in satisfaction with pay. Sixty-two fewer positions were replaced than the year before, resulting in a savings of about \$496,000.

Occumetrics is a powerful, scientifically-based management tool that provides data supported recommendations for moving the needle on any measurable workplace issue. And it's catching on. We're closing on fee for service agreements with various employers. In a really exciting opportunity, we signed an agreement with a managed care organization in Michigan doing \$550 million/year in Medicaid transactions to discover the needs of its large provider network over 21 mid-state counties.

But most importantly we're helping to shape a workplace environment that is in the best mental health interests of the workforce. And that is no small matter at all.



End The Stigma

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Community Matters

Fall Trauma Conference a Great Success

by Maggie Hallett

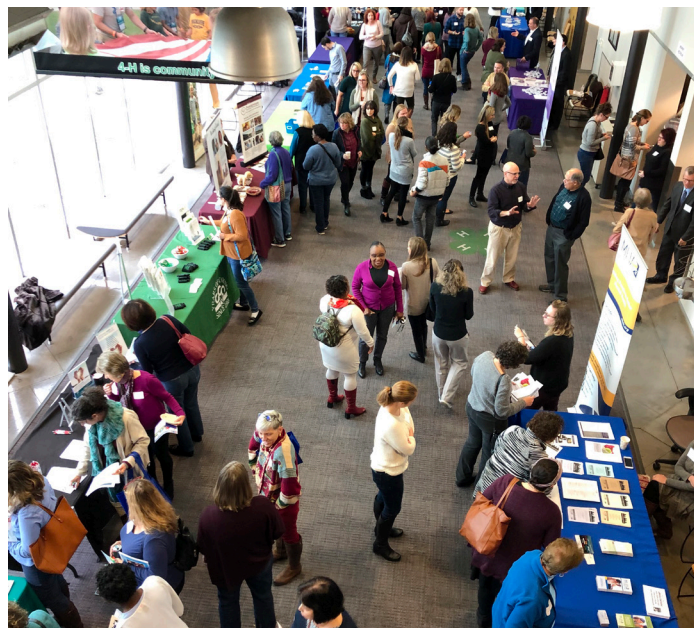


Track one presenters, Kristen Santel, LISW-S and Dawn E. Gross, LPCC-S pictured with Executive Director, Kenton Beachy.

Mental health professionals came from all over the state to attend our *Treating Complex Trauma and Grief* conference last November. With registration at over 250—higher than most recent years—the interest in this year’s conference content was clear. Different from years prior, we offered two separate tracks: one for attendees interested in complex trauma in general and another smaller, more specialized track for professionals interested in perinatal mood disorders and related trauma, particularly perinatal loss and grief.

Kristen Santel, LISW-S and Dawn E. Gross, LPCC-S led *Helping Children & Families Cope with Complex Trauma & Traumatic Grief* which helped attendees gain knowledge of grief, traumatic grief, and complicated grief and develop a working theoretical knowledge of PTSD and complex trauma and the effects on children, teens, and family systems. Tamar Gur, MD, PhD and Holly Kozee, PhD led *Addressing Maternal Mental Health Complications, Pregnancy & Infant Loss, & Trauma & Grief*. They shared how assessing perinatal emotional distress differs from assessing clients in the general population and identified specific interventions to support and meet the needs of mothers and their partners following perinatal loss.

MHAFC is grateful to our wonderful presenters and sponsors for allowing us to put on another successful conference!



Attendees visiting vendors while on break at the Nationwide & Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center.



Get Connected (cont. from cover)

MHAFC will roll out the name change in the next few weeks. Look for ombudsman services to be called Get Connected in new brochures and on our recently re-designed website.

“What I always hear from people seeking help is, ‘It shouldn’t be this hard!’” LeeAnn says. Due to stigma and a lack of resources, mental health treatment is still not as accessible as physical healthcare. But through the Get Connected program, MHAFC is working toward change. “I love being the one to take some of that stress and frustration off someone’s shoulders,” LeeAnn says. “Instead of twenty phone calls, they only have to make one. That’s what makes me feel good.”

MHAFC Announces Family Advocate Program

by Maureen Traverse

Four years ago, Ed Desmond was eating breakfast on a Sunday morning when he received a frantic phone call from the mother of a client who had just harmed himself. As a mental health clinician for over forty years, Ed had taken many calls like this one, and he walked the mother through what she needed to do. At the hospital, he ended up in the waiting room with the client's father and learned his son had recently been released from a psychiatric hospital before he was stable, part of an unfortunate pattern. Ed arranged for a longer stay at a different hospital, but his conversation with the father over several hours covered much more—medications, the process of recovery, insurance benefits, and the warning signs of suicide. "I realized there was no one else to help this father," Ed recalls. "And he's in shock and not able to think clearly. So I made an appointment to see him, to train him on how to help and advocate for his son." It was at that moment that Ed knew what he wanted to do when he retired. "Everyone told me, 'do what you love,' and for me, this is it: helping families impacted by mental illness."

Now retired, Ed approached MHAFC to explore starting a Family Advocate program that would offer peer support services to parents of children experiencing a psychiatric crisis. "Family conflict is generated by symptoms of mental illness," Ed explains. "It puts a shock wave into that family." In his roles at Twin Valley and Community Support Network, Ed saw how much support families needed, and how little they received. Because any service he wanted to provide for family members had to be on behalf of the client (in order to be billed to insurance), he was not able to provide those services if the client refused, which happened often in cases when the client's symptoms included paranoia. He knew his vision for the Family Advocate program would need to happen outside of formal treatment, and that it would have to be self-sustaining. "When you educate family members, give them the skills and do it in a peer support manner, they will want to give back, to help others. That will keep plenty of new volunteers coming into the program."

Executive Director, Kenton Beachy, is enthusiastic about the program. "It was a perfect fit for our mission,"

Kenton says. "Our support groups and POEM program function on the peer support model, the idea that people who share a lived experience have so much to offer each other in terms of support and education." MHAFC will provide program coordination and administrative oversight, as Ed directs the program and joins other volunteers to provide support for families and train peers.



Family Advocate
Volunteer Program Director,
Ed Desmond

When a family is referred to the program, they will be paired with a volunteer who meets with them to assess their needs. As Ed explains, the specific needs of the family will drive everything. Help will be tailored to the individual, and volunteers will be matched based on their specialized knowledge. Initially volunteers will be mental health professionals who will then train family member volunteers. As Director of Community Support Network, Ed developed an idea that became a core value. It was written on the wall and on the forms. It was even something they said to each other. "Never worry alone." For Ed, that philosophy is the core of the Family Advocate program—no family will have to worry alone.

If you are a mental health professional or family member of someone with a mental illness, and you're interested in volunteering, please contact Malcom Varner at 614-955-8154 or mvarner@mhafc.org.

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New Faces Around the Office

by Megan Daugherty

2019 has started with significant growth and change. As a result, we have many new faces we're excited to introduce to you.



Long time POEM volunteer, Becca Alexander, joins us in an official capacity in a new position, Peer Support Services Program Manager. Becca will manage our POEM program and support groups, and she'll also provide support for the Healthy

Connections program. Becca is a former high school teacher, data analyst, and yoga instructor, and she draws upon these previous roles to connect with people with a diversity of life and mental health experiences.



Barb Rockwell is MHAFC's new Finance Director. Barb is a CPA who has spent much of her career working for entrepreneurial businesses, structuring their finance departments, implementing controls, and improving efficiencies. New to the non-profit

sector, Barb is excited for the challenge of learning something new and being a part of mission-driven work.



Malcolm Varner is also kicking off a new MHAFC position as the Get Connected Program Coordinator where he will manage the Family Advocate program and support the Get Connected Program. Throughout his career in social services, he has primarily

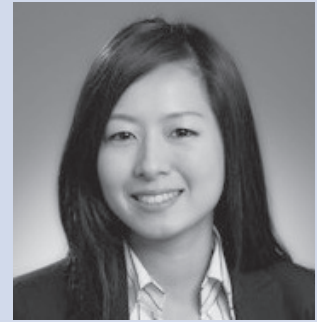
worked in in the areas of homelessness, HIV treatment and prevention, Medicaid care management, and most recently prior to joining MHAFC, mental health.



Kassidy Barrett, an Ohio State University, College of Social Work MSW Intern, came to MHAFC after her first year field placement with Lifecare Alliance. In addition to finishing up her Master's degree, she works in the children's section of the Gahanna Library.

Board Spotlight

Ruei Chen is passionately involved at Startup Scene with a focus on social enterprises, tech startups and giving back to the community. She currently works at Grange Insurance as an Emerging Technology Lead and an organizer for GiveBackHack. Prior



to Grange Insurance, Ruei served as a Portfolio Manager focusing on product adoption, roadmap definition, strategic alignment, and training/OCM at Navigator Management Partners. Ruei also worked at Nationwide Insurance and Financial Services where she cultivated a wide array of experiences including emerging tech, innovation, design thinking, and go-to market strategy. When she isn't working at her full time job, she fulfills her passion for Emerging Technology and Innovation by acting as a Lead Organizer for startup events through TechStars/Startup Weekend and GiveBackHack. In this capacity, she engages with startup communities and external thought leaders, organizes events, and coaches event participants on R&D, rapid prototyping, developing MVP's, design thinking, and other techniques. She has an MBA and Master of Arts in Workforce Development from The Ohio State University and a Bachelor of Arts in Instructional Psychology and Counseling from the National Hualien University of Education, Hualien, Taiwan.

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Other

Programs

MHAFC Congratulates Tonya Fulwider, Associate Director



In her nearly seven years serving as MHAFC's Program Director, Tonya Fulwider has had an invaluable impact on our services. From the tremendous growth of POEM (Perinatal Outreach and Encouragement for Moms) to increased educational offerings and

new support groups, MHAFC and those we serve have benefited from Tonya's insight and dedication. That's why we're so pleased that Tonya has become our first ever Associate Director. "We couldn't be more fortunate to have a person of Tonya's caliber move into this new position," says Executive Director, Kenton Beachy.

As Associate Director, Tonya oversees the Community Engagement, Education, Healthy Connections, Get Connected, and POEM programs. Tonya is a Certified Mental Health First Aid USA Instructor, and also teaches de-escalation, work-life balance, and perinatal mental health workshops. She is the co-founder of POEM, formerly a nonprofit organization now within MHAFC's umbrella of services.

POEM is one of the largest and longest-running programs of its kind in the US and was the recipient of the 2017 Innovative Programs in Care Award from the Marcé Society of North America and 2020 Mom Project. Tonya is a Postpartum Support International (PSI) Founder's award winner for her "outstanding contributions related to emotional health and childbearing," and is a co-author of PSI's guidebook, *Developing a Sustainable Perinatal Support Network in Your Community*.

Closing 2018 with some Holiday Magic

by Maggie Hallett

In early December, the Holiday Magic awards banquet and gift drive for Twin Valley Behavioral Healthcare (TVBH) celebrated its 61st year. It was a lovely night with a room full of supporters, mental health care providers and consumers and other partners in the MHAFC mission to promote mental wellness.

Once again it was a generous year, with over \$1,100 in gifts and monetary donations raised for patients at TVBH with severe mental illness who had to spend their holidays in the hospital. These gifts help to make a difficult situation a bit brighter, so a giant thank you to all who contributed!

Holiday Magic is also a night devoted to thanking and awarding our most outstanding partners and any departing board members. This year we said goodbye and thank you to past board president, Corey Perry, who was with MHAFC for seven years and board members, Bob Dolciato, Daron Larson, and Mike Watson. We are forever grateful for their invaluable perspectives and leadership.



Dustin McKee from NAMI Ohio accepted the Norman Guitry Award on behalf of Justice Stratton, who could not be in attendance.

Norman Guitry Award

Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton

Corporate Partner Award

Columbus Springs

Community Partner Award

Nemeth Counseling

Pro Bono Counseling Program Volunteer of the Year

Dana Moody

POEM Volunteer of the Year

Donna Senchesak

Support Group Volunteer of the Year

Stephen Willey



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