



# Advocate

Kenton Beachy, Executive Director

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## By Popular Demand: Social Media and Mental Health Conference

by Brandi Allen

We all know social media is here to stay and will only continue to expand and evolve. We also know it can interfere with some people's lives to a degree that becomes dysfunctional. Some users are so plugged into Facebook (or one of the many other options) that we now have the Bergen Facebook Addiction Scale. Social media users are constantly tempted to destructively compare themselves with online images and posts, leading to feelings of depression and anxiety. The internet has increased and intensified the experience of bullying, which creates a host of psychological outcomes for young people. And most of us are probably very familiar with the way that new media (the catch-all term for our instant and interactive access to information via many forms of technology—phone, tablet, etc.) interferes with our productivity through its siren call of distraction.

Our conference attendees have been asking us to cover social media and mental health for years now, and we're delighted finally to be able to do so. On September 8, we'll bring attendees up-to-date on the impact of social media on mental health professionals' work and clients by featuring Drs. Ali Mattu and John Ackerman.

As a leading advocate in the movement to bring psychology to the masses, Dr. Mattu, clinical psychologist with Columbia University's Clinic for Anxiety and Related Disorders, understands how to leverage social media's reach. Google his name, and you'll quickly see how great he is at providing accessible presentations of key psychological concepts in a way that anyone can grasp and enjoy. One of our favorites is his YouTube series, *The Psych Show*, where you can watch him speak dynamically on a range of topics from implicit bias to mindfulness. Dr. Mattu will share his understanding of the societal, ethical and clinical implications of social media for mental healthcare, along with best practices for integrating social media into the research and practice of psychotherapy. We're excited to see his charismatic presentation style in person.

Likewise, we are fortunate to have Dr. John Ackerman joining us to share the life-changing work of the Center for Suicide



Prevention and Research at Nationwide Children's Hospital. Dr. Ackerman coordinates the Center's efforts at preventing pediatric suicide in Central Ohio, especially through the "Signs of Suicide" curriculum for middle and high school students. From 2007-2010, one to two adolescents in Franklin County died by suicide each year. In 2014, that number rose to 13. Dr. Ackerman will explain how social media can contribute to suicide contagion, but also demonstrate the benefits of social media as a way to promote social support, reduce stigma, and increase access to mental health resources.

With the amount of buzz this conference is generating, we expect a packed house, so register soon at [mhafc.org](http://mhafc.org)! Oh, and we'd be remiss not to give you the conference hashtag, wouldn't we? #SM+MH2016

### In this Issue

<b>To Your Mental Health</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Community Matters</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>MHAFC News</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>Thank You</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Programs</b>	<b>Page 7</b>

# To Your Mental Health

by Kenton Beachy



When Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris murdered 12 students and a teacher in the deadliest high school shooting in US history and then took their own lives in 1999, Dylan's mom Sue was left wondering how her son was able to commit such a heinous crime. I recently had opportunity to tell her that I admired the

personal work she has done over the years to understand, to come to terms, and to both forgive and be forgiven.

At Mental Health America's 2016 Annual Conference last month, **Sue Klebold** shared her experience in the aftermath of that tragedy 17 years ago and the work she does today to advance mental health awareness and intervention. She places what Dylan did in the context of his mental illness, including her own cluelessness about his struggles even though she considered their relationship close and open. How can a mom come to terms with her own son doing such a horrible thing? What was the crucial intersection between Dylan's mental health problems and his violent behavior? She starts out by saying that she's sorry for what happened, for the loss of life, for the many people who were critically injured, for family members who suffered, for the trauma experienced by first responders, and for the lawsuits that crisscrossed everywhere imaginable. I came away just admiring her strength of character in the face of media scrutiny, public humiliation, fearful hiding, self-guilt, and tragedy.

Sue Klebold's story highlighted the conference's focus on media, messaging and the impact of the entertainment industry on the complex issues of mental health and mental illness. Consider **Suzy Favor Hamilton's** bipolar disorder that propelled her into a national scandal and is now the story of an amazing recovery process. A former Olympian, Suzy talked about the manic side of her then undiagnosed bipolar condition that contributed to her leaving daughter and husband to become a high profile escort in Las Vegas. She did this for nearly a year and a half before the media found out, causing her fan base to despise and ridicule her. Today she continues to do the hard work of understanding and living with her illness, supported by her husband and daughter. She described how different her life really was from that portrayed by the media during her track and field success and fame. I came away with sadness for how

an undiagnosed bipolar disorder affected Suzy and her family and frustration about media portrayal of her illness. However, it was hopeful to hear how both effective treatment for bipolar and Suzy's newfound refusal to take responsibility for making others happy are changing her life.

MHA's conference introduced us to one prominent person after another who was in the media spotlight dealing with mental health and/or substance use issues. **Chris Herren**, a former NBA player struggled with substance abuse for much of his basketball career. Alcohol- and drug-free since 2008, Chris founded the Herren Project to combat substance abuse. He presented at the conference along with seven astonishing long distance runners who had just completed the 3,200-mile **Ice Breaker Run** in under four weeks from Los Angeles to the conference in Alexandria, VA to raise awareness for mental illness and substance abuse.

We heard from **Chamique Holdsclaw**, #1 WNBA draft pick in 1999, who lives with mental illness that at one time threatened her life. And actor **Chris Wood**, who currently stars in *Containment*, talked publicly for the first time about the loss of his father to mental illness and his family's struggle to get his father help. **The Honorable Patrick Kennedy**, former US Representative from Rhode Island, shared openly about his own recovery from addiction and gave a stirring call to action for mental health parity and reform.

A true highlight was hearing from **Kevin Hines**, recipient of this year's Clifford W. Beers Award, presented to a person with lived experience who best embodies the spirit of MHA's founder. Kevin was diagnosed with bipolar disorder at age 19. Two years later he tried taking his own life by jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge. The moment he jumped he regretted the worst mistake of his life and prayed to survive; 70 feet underwater, legs paralyzed and one arm dangling, he fought to rise and surface. Kevin is now a global speaker, author and mental health advocate who reaches audiences with his story of an unlikely survival and his strong will to live.

Media and the entertainment industry profoundly impact the messaging we hear about mental health and substance use issues. I came away from the conference even more determined to help transform how people think about mental illness, make it easier to get help, and give people the support they need to get better and stay better.



# Community Matters

## Cycling and Paddling Across Ohio to Break Stigma



Mission accomplished: the moment before Derek pulls his kayak from the water at the end of his four-day trip.

A little over a year ago, Derek Davis decided to stop letting the fear of embarrassment and stigma keep him from getting help for the depression and anxiety he fought for so long. He found the MHAFC website and connected to one of the depression support groups and a counselor through our Pro Bono Counseling program. Counseling and regular exercise helped Derek find joy in life again. Now he says it's time to give back and raise awareness in the best way he knows how: through movement.

On July 9, Derek got on his bike and rode 84 miles to Dayton's Englewood Metropark. The next morning he launched a four-day, 95 mile trip down the Great Miami River to the Ohio River.

Along the way he shared his story with others: that no one should suffer mental health challenges in silence and that mental illness deserves the same path to recovery that physical illness receives—a path without shame or embarrassment. At the time this article went to print he had raised close to \$4000 through crowdfunding and is generously passing 100% of the donations on to MHAFC. Thank you, Derek. We are so proud of you!



Derek visiting with the MHAFC staff the day before his departure.

### Board Spotlight

Stephanie Pavol is a public relations manager at Cardinal Health, first-time mom, and mental health advocate. She became involved with MHAFC through the POEM program after fighting anxiety and depression during her pregnancy, and she has a specific passion for perinatal mental health issues. She is also a "Warrior Mom" ambassador for Postpartum Progress, a national non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness, fighting stigma and providing peer support and programming to women with maternal mental illness.



As someone who has personally been impacted by mental illness, Stephanie wants to use her experience to in turn help others who may be facing their own mental health struggles. With a background in advocacy and policy issues, she's also excited to put that experience to use helping to further MHAFC's mission.



## Give Mom the Mic: Connection, Laughter and Generosity



*Tales from the Motherhood*

Our 2016 *Give Mom the Mic* event, featuring best-selling author Glennon Doyle Melton, was a wonderful success.

Close to 400 women (and a few guys) joined us to hear Glennon speak on motherhood, mental

health, and most importantly, supporting one another. **We raised a record \$40,000, doubling the amount raised in 2015!**

A huge thank you to all of our volunteers, auction and raffle donors, and everyone who attended! Your support will help many pregnant and new moms dealing with postpartum depression and related disorders get the services they need.



(L to R) Katie Toomey, Jessica Schmidt, Becca Alexander, Jessica Shapter, Danielle Gibbs, Julie Lindstedt, Virginia Beecher, Maria Springfieldt, Mary Ann Doyle, and Jennifer Wilson.



Guest Tori McKenzie sharing her "Carry On Warrior" tattoo with Glennon.



Glennon is excited to meet Sarah Givens, creator of the comedy blog "It's Like They Know Us."



Glennon Doyle Melton (center) with POEM co-founders, (L to R) Amy Burt and Tonya Fulwider.



(L to R) Kaela Vance, Sarah Weisenberger, Merissa McKinstry, Brian Schweitzer, Emily Clegg, and Sarah Widrig.



(L to R) Front row: Ann Poole, Marie Hennessey and Jenny Schoning. Back row: Ruth Schooley, Diane Hobson, Nancy Drees, Robin Hall, Barb Kourie, Hilary Dodson, and Lisa Berens.

## Big thanks to our Give Mom the Mic supporters and volunteers!

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MHAFC's 2016 Ethics Training  
**TEAM PLAYERS**  
Making ethical decisions as part of a team

**Date:** Wednesday, August 24, 2016  
**Time:** 1 PM - 4 PM  
**Location:** Alvis House, 2100 Stella Ct, Columbus, OH 43215  
**Cost:** \$35 early registration; \$45 after August 5

**REGISTER AT MHAFC.ORG**

# Programs

## Volunteer Spotlight: Annette Funk, GOALS Friends and Families

by Brandi Allen



When a parent sees their child in life-altering pain, a number of reactions can and do occur. Parents may find themselves withdrawing due to the shock and bewilderment from unexpected outcomes, or they may find themselves able to come

alongside the child in a way that is open and curious about how to help. For most parents, and especially over time, reactions are a mix of those two extremes. Annette Funk saw how OCD was changing her son's life, and through education and lots of conversations eventually found her spot beside him. She's now leading other family and friends of those with OCD down a similar path.

A few months ago, Annette approached MHAFC and offered to facilitate a support group aimed at teaching people to be as helpful and understanding as possible to their loved ones with OCD. "As a person in addiction recovery myself, I was convinced that we needed the faith, hope and strength of other families who face the

same challenges," said Annette when asked why she started the group. Thanks to her and Dr. Beth McCreary, facilitator of our original GOALS support group for those with OCD, Worthington United Methodist Church is a powerhouse of OCD support on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. Their groups meet about the same time and in separate rooms, and as with all MHAFC groups, attendees can come just as they are, when they're ready and for as long as they'd like—all for free.

Annette says, "There is great hope for OCD sufferers to live productive, dynamic lives. Families play an important role in this hard work. It is my hope to respond well to my son and not accommodate the OCD thinking. Our support group encourages me and equips me in my role." So far attendance has been excellent, and MHAFC could not be more grateful for Annette's courage and commitment to help others in these circumstances.

For more information about this or any other MHAFC-sponsored support group, please call or email Brandi Allen: 614-221-1441; ballen@mhafc.org.

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## MHAFC Welcomes Two New Employees

### Sheronda Palmore

The new Pro Bono Counseling Program Director, Sheronda Palmore, LISW-S, comes to MHAFC with a Master of Social Work degree and nine years of experience in counseling and case management. She has worked in a variety of settings in trauma, home-based, and adult services where she established significant community relationships. Most recently Sheronda held a position at The Center for Family Safety and Healing, where she served as an outpatient clinician and played an integral role in helping develop the Adult Services Program there. Sheronda says, "I'm excited to be a part of MHAFC, and I plan to continue the rewarding work of expanding a program that serves the community's under- and uninsured in need of quality mental health care."

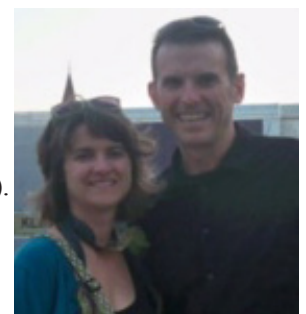


### Tracy Moebius

Tracy Moebius serves part-time as an MHAFC Ombudsman located at the Center of Vocational Alternatives (COVA). She comes to MHAFC after many years of providing monitoring for Medicaid and other programs in the older adult service network. As a social worker, she is an advocate of access to quality healthcare services for EVERYONE!

She is a runner (she says, "OK, really a jogger") and enjoys kayaking the Central Ohio waterways with her husband and two children.

Tracy sees clients in person at COVA, and also works with them over the phone. She enjoys guiding them through the complicated service system and helping them solve problems.





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