

POEM Program Wins National Award for Innovation

by Maureen Traverse

POEM has grown tremendously since its founding twelve years ago, and the ingenuity that fostered that growth was recognized when the Perinatal Mental Health Society and 2020 Mom awarded POEM the 2017 Award for Innovative Programs in Care. This national award recognizes care models (both clinical and non-clinical) with strong outcomes for addressing maternal mental health and that lend themselves to broader adoption—programs that should be lifted up as proven models for broader adoption across the country. Chosen from a competitive pool of 90 national contenders, POEM was selected for its significant impact, serving hundreds of women and families every year; its reach, growing into communities throughout Ohio; and its nimble approach to problem-solving, developing new ways to ensure women access to the care and support they need to recover.

The \$3,000 award was presented to POEM co-founder and MHAFC Program Director, Tonya Fulwider, at the 3rd Biennial Perinatal Mental Health Conference. During a plenary session, Tonya presented to 425 leading clinicians and researchers in the field, giving them a glimpse into the realities of life for women who experience perinatal mood/anxiety disorders and emphasizing the importance of programs like POEM. Her talk generated extensive interest



Program Director, Tonya Fulwider, accepting the 2017 Award for Innovative Programs in Care from Joy Burkhard, Executive Director of 2020 Mom.



in replicating the program in other states as well as invitations to speak to other stakeholder groups. A ninety-minute webinar of Tonya's presentation will be recorded in December, reaching an even wider audience.

What began as a support line and meetings for new moms has become a comprehensive program that connects women and families with treatment, information, and a host of resources. Tonya describes that growth as a process of "running into problems and finding solutions as we go." Direct referrals have doubled the number of moms POEM reaches, and a custom-built database helps track outcomes and trends, allowing POEM to continue innovating its approach. Large health systems may not have that flexibility to adapt, Tonya noted, which makes programs like POEM an essential piece of the system of care. "Every day we sit down and focus only on each individual interaction, honoring each woman's experiences, and helping her discover her strength and value," Tonya said, reflecting on the achievement. "But winning a national award really validates the work we do."

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To Your Mental Health

by Kenton Beachy



2017: A Look Back

Making good decisions involves some skill, a value for treating people well, and a penchant for taking calculated risks.

I wonder, would making decisions be any easier if we could see the future?

Well, we don't have that luxury, and even H.G. Wells in his classic *The Time Machine* in which one *could* see the future said, "We should strive to welcome change and challenges, because they are what help us grow. Without them we grow weak ... in comfort and security. We need to constantly be challenging ourselves in order to strengthen our character and increase our intelligence."

That's exactly what we've tried to do throughout 2017 in the decisions we've made. A year of zero staff turnover, re-aligning our staffing to make things work better, growing in board involvement, and stepping up our services for people with mental health needs has increased our character and intelligence.

For example, our workplace health assessment, **Occumetrics**, took off this year when we were awarded \$75,000 from The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to complete 13 assessments with its certified behavioral health agencies across the state. We also look forward to next year when we can reassess the organizations we've already worked with to see how they are improving with retention and employee satisfaction issues. We've met with numerous other departments of Ohio government to discuss how Occumetrics can be a helpful management tool for their agencies and workforces, and we look forward to program expansion in 2018.

So far in 2017 our **Pro Bono Counseling Program** has recruited 31 new volunteer counselors and linked 145 clients to services. Service requests have increased compared to previous years, giving us the opportunity to link even more people with counseling or other services that they need. We even grew the number of locations donating space for counselors to meet with clients.

Our **support groups** have grown as well, particularly Families in Touch, our Monday night depression group (which added a second facilitator), and an added anxiety group in partnership with Concord Counseling.

We partnered with the ADAMH Board in providing six well-attended **Mental Health First Aid** trainings. Our trainers collaborated with Columbus Police officers to provide Mental Health First Aid for Public Safety to first responders in various roles throughout the community.

Our **Annual Conference, Promoting Mental Health in Today's LGBTQ Youth**, featured speakers from the Equitas Health Institute and Nationwide Children's THRIVE Program and was one of our largest conferences in history.

"We also look forward to 2018 with some great things planned that will continue to support our mission of transforming how people think about mental illness, making it easier to get help, and giving people the support they need to get better and stay better."

Our **POEM program** won the national 2017 Maternal Mental Health Innovation Award, based on innovation, impact, sustainability, and scalability. In addition to receiving a monetary award, our winning program was presented at the Perinatal Mental Health Society's conference in Chicago. POEM is on track to service over 600 moms this year and train new volunteers in Delaware, Akron, and Dayton.

Thanks to a generous grant through The Columbus Foundation, our **Ombudsman program** launched a new web-based database, making documentation and call tracking more efficient. We've worked hard to expand our referral base, resulting in new referral sources.

Our **Give Mom the Mic** event was another huge hit in 2017, matching last year's record-breaking net income. The proceeds from *Give Mom the Mic* go

See Kenton on page 3.

Community Matters

Kenton cont'd

directly to the POEM program, which has had its busiest year ever. Our supporters came through in a big way with nearly \$13,000 in donations during The Columbus Foundation's **Big Give**. We've bolstered our social media efforts and focused on sharing local and national legislative news, available mental health and addiction services around Columbus, and informative and share-worthy articles. And ***Laughing Away the Blues*** was a fantastically funny evening of generosity, awareness building, and laughter.

Administratively, we strengthened internal means for managing finances, benefits, coordination support for events and programs, and suite safety. Our Board of Trustees provided needed leadership in 2017, supported our fundraising events, participated in our strategic planning, and nominated an excellent slate of officers for 2018.

In hindsight, we took on the challenges 2017 presented and made changes that strengthened our character. We also look forward to 2018 with some great things planned that will continue to support our mission of transforming how people think about mental illness, making it easier to get help, and giving people the support they need to get better and stay better.

Mental Health America releases *The State of Mental Health in America 2018*

by Maureen Traverse

What if we lived in a country where fewer than half of those with cancer received treatment? What if there were states where many people never saw a doctor simply because there were too few medical professionals to meet the demand for care? Sadly, these statistics are true about mental health care in this country: 56% of adults with a mental illness do not receive treatment, and in the state with the worst access to care there is only one mental health professional per 1,260 residents. These findings offer just a glimpse into the concerning realities reflected in Mental Health America's annual report, *State of Mental Health in America 2018*.

There are over 43 million people with a mental illness in the United States, yet barriers like cost and availability of appropriate services still prevent too many from accessing treatment. MHA's report ranks 50 states and Washington, DC on fifteen measures that identify the number of adults and youth reporting mental illness and substance use disorders as well as rates of insurance, adults and youth who did not receive treatment, and the number of service providers available.

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Board Spotlight

Dr. Nicholas Breitborde is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health at The Ohio State University and Director of the Early Psychosis Intervention Center (OSU EPICENTER). OSU EPICENTER is a clinical research center dedicated



to supporting the recovery process of individuals with recent-onset psychosis through the provision of evidence-based treatments, community education, and family support. To date, Dr. Breitborde's published research has been cited nearly 6,000 times and has been funded by organizations such as the National Institute for Mental Health, the Institute for Mental Health Research, and the Ohio Department of Health. Through his partnership with numerous community mental health centers, evidence-based mental health treatments developed at EPICENTER have been disseminated throughout community mental health centers in Central and Southeast Ohio.

As the relative of an individual with a serious mental illness, Dr. Breitborde joined the MHAFC Board in 2015 to support MHAFC's countless efforts to facilitate the recovery process of individuals in Central Ohio. "MHAFC programs such as pro bono counseling, ombudsman services, and the Maternal Mental Health program (POEM) fill important gaps in mental health services in our community and are demonstrative of MHAFC's commitment to helping all people live mentally healthier lives."



Holiday Magic Gift Drive

MHAFC is pleased to once again collect holiday gifts for as many as 400 patients at Twin Valley. Items may be dropped off at our offices during normal business hours (Monday - Friday, 8:30 - 5:00) now through Friday, December 8. You may also make a donation for Twin Valley staff to purchase items on your behalf. Simply make your checks payable to "Volunteer Service Council" and include *Holiday Magic* on the memo line. For a full wish list, please visit our website: www.mhafc.org.

MHAFC News



Nine years in, and *Laughing Away the Blues* remains an outstanding success as our annual fundraiser and reunion opportunity for MHAFC advocates. Thanks to our generous bidders and donors, we once again **raised nearly**

\$75,000 to help support the life-saving services we offer Central Ohioans. Guests enjoyed delicious food, plenty of drinks and another delightful collection of auction packages to battle over as they strolled from room to room at our new venue, The Grand Event Center.

We'd like to thank board member Kristin Chek-McChesney for her wonderful job as emcee, the excellent staff of Auction Ohio, and our entertainers Dan Swartwout and Rod Paulette for helping us create another meaningful and fun-filled evening. We're looking forward to even more fun next year, so please plan to join us in 2018!



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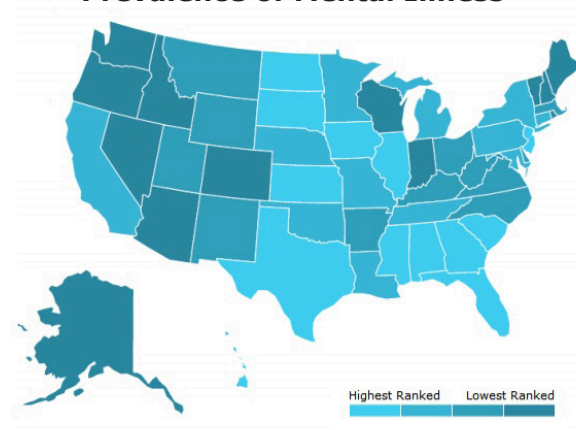
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State cont'd

Ohio's ranking improved this year, rising from 26 to 20 in prevalence and access to care overall, climbing above the national average. The report highlights Ohio's significant increase in mental health coverage among children, specifically a 29% increase in monthly Medicaid/CHIP enrollment from pre-Affordable Care Act enrollment, which demonstrates the very real impact public policy has on people's lives. The state's worst ranking was for adults with serious thoughts of suicide, where it ranked 46th, meaning approximately 408,000 Ohioans seriously considered suicide this year, and more than half (52.9%) of Ohio adults with a mental illness did not receive treatment.

So why are so many going without care? The report sites both systemic and individual reasons. Accessible screening tools (like those available on our website) and encouraging primary care physicians to inquire about mental health are necessary steps in reducing untreated mental illness. Even once a person recognizes the symptoms, they often encounter systemic barriers to appropriate care, such as lack of insurance or lack of available providers. Ohio ranked 37th in mental health workforce availability, meaning for every 630 residents, there is one provider (and

Prevalence of Mental Illness



that includes social workers, counselors, marriage and family therapists, and advanced practice nurses specializing in mental health care, *combined*.)

To view the full report, visit MHA's website at mentalhealthamerica.net. While *The State of Mental Health in America 2018* might seem discouraging, we at Mental Health America of Franklin County take this data as a reminder of the tremendous need in our community and the value of the work we do to raise awareness and improve access to care.

Thank You!

To Our Recent Members & Donors (July 1 - October 31)

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We make every attempt to accurately acknowledge our donors. To report an error or omission, please contact Maureen Traverse: 614-221-1441 or mtraverse@mhafc.org.

Thank you to the 56 donors who contributed \$12,600+ during the Big Give! We look forward to acknowledging your donations in the next edition of the Advocate!

Holiday Health and Giving Guide

Make this season bright with MHAFC!

When making your holiday list, please consider including MHAFC in your plans. With numerous avenues to give, your support is not only tax deductible—it also helps us to continue our life-saving mission to 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.

Membership: Consider a gift of \$60 in 2017. It will make a meaningful and immediate difference! You can also make a tribute gift in honor or in memory of someone special in your life.

Volunteer: MHAFC's award-winning Pro Bono Counseling Program relies entirely on mental health professionals to meet the needs of uninsured and under-insured residents of Franklin County. Or join our behind-the-scenes team and help us with a variety of projects. Your gifts of talent and time will be appreciated.

Planned Giving: By including MHAFC in your estate planning, you can ensure your legacy gift will have a direct and meaningful impact in our community.

Get Social: Like us on Facebook, or follow us on Twitter and Instagram. Help us #StopTheCrazyTalk by sharing our anti-stigma message.

Programs

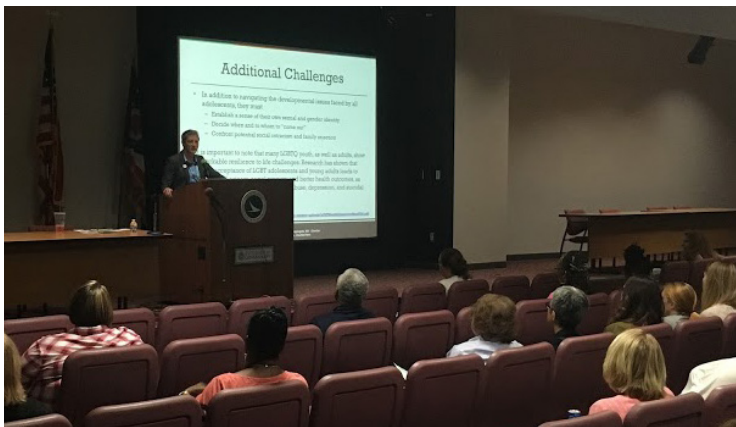
Excellent Turnout at 2017's Children's Mental Health Conference

by Brandi Allen

Mental health professionals and other people who care for LGBTQ youth came from all over the state to learn more about supporting the mental health of these young individuals. With registration at over 200—higher than most recent years—the interest in this year's conference content was clear. Likewise, the need is clear given data like those of a 2015 survey, which showed LGB youth seriously considering suicide at a rate of 40% and 29% reporting an attempt in the prior 12 months.

Julia Applegate and Karen Rubin, lead trainers from The Equitas Health Institute for LGBTQ Health Equity, taught attendees many fundamental concepts related to terminology, health disparities, stigma,

discrimination, and the life-saving role of acceptance by loved ones and caregivers. Additionally, Allison Whittington and Shane Gaun, two representatives from Nationwide Children's THRIVE program, gave an overview of their complex and cutting-edge program serving not only gender non-conforming youth, but also people with differences in biological sex development. Central Ohio has a number of other excellent resources for LGBTQ youth including Kaleidoscope Youth Center and Mozaic, a health and wellness, HIV prevention, and community building initiative for trans and gender non-conforming people ages 13-29. MHAFC is grateful to be part of Ohio's progression toward healthier youth and families via better informed caregivers and providers.



Julia Applegate of The Equitas Health Institute for LGBTQ Health Equity presenting to conference attendees.

Screening of *God Knows Where I Am* Raises Awareness of Mental Illness and Homelessness

by Brandi Allen

Over 100 professionals and community members joined us at The Ohio History Center for our screening of *God Knows Where I Am*, a documentary detailing Linda Bishop's experience with the mental health system and her tragic, premature death. The panel discussion following the film focused on avenues for prompting change and local resources for those with mental illness and their families who need help. We want to thank those who participated in the conversation along with our professional panel members: Patty Fields and Amos Jones of Southeast, Inc., LeeAnn Mattes of MHAFC, and Rachel Rubey of Community Housing Network.

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