



Director's Letter

MEETING THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF VETERANS

Dear Friends:

Recently I was invited to a meeting by Congressman James Walsh at the Syracuse VA Medical Center to learn about what is being done for veterans returning from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. This has been an issue much on the minds of the MHA staff and Board of Directors.

Our records show that the MHA website is increasingly being accessed for its links to veteran services and calls have begun to come in from veterans interested in our anger management program as well as other services such as confidential information and referrals and screenings for mental health conditions. We've also been considering how we can help the families of those serving in these wars. Are teachers and coaches trained to meet the needs of a child who knows his father, mother, or both, could be killed in battle? Do employers understand the need to be flexible, or even have the means to be, for the parent at home doing double duty while their spouse is away at war? How can each of us, as part of the community, help and are we, as a nation, prepared for the veterans who will continue to return?


The meeting I attended couldn't answer all of these questions but it was very informative and encouraging. Our own MHA Board Member, **Lauren Love**, LCSW-R, presented at this event. Lauren is part of the Washington initiative called Seamless Transitions. I spoke with Lauren after the meeting and she emphasized a number of points with me:

continued on page 2

Community Service Awards Luncheon set for Dec. 6

AWARD NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

Each year we take time to recognize the amazing work done by local individuals and organizations in support of mental health. We hope you can join us for our 2007 awards event! It will be held as a casual holiday luncheon on **Thursday, December 6, noon—2 p.m.**, at the Horizons Room on the top floor of the Renaissance Syracuse Hotel on East Genesee Street. We are now seeking your nominations for MHA's Community Service awards. The nomination deadline is **Oct. 24**. See page 3 for more information.

Men Who Cook XX Begins to Simmer!

20TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER
TO BE HELD APRIL 25, 2008

Men Who Cook XX will return to the Hotel Syracuse next spring for its 20th anniversary edition on **Friday, April 25!** We're already beginning to line up the 100 local businessmen, elected officials, and celebrities who become chefs for a day to benefit the Mental Health Association's local education, support, and advocacy services.

Former MHA Board President **Sarah Dam**, of **BPA-Harbridge**, will again chair the Men Who Cook planning committee. We invite business and professional men who are interested in participating or companies who want to sponsor a chef team to contact us at (315) 445-5606 or send an e-mail to requests@mha-oc.org.

I n s i d e I n s i g h t s

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- 2 - New MHA Board Members
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- 4 - Eating Disorder Clinical Training
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- Currently there are over 686,000 Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans eligible for VA health care and 33% of these veterans have sought it out.
- These young men (88%) and women (12%) are generally between the ages of 22 to 27 and were either former active duty (46%) or from the reserves (54%);
- Locally, over 7,000 of these veterans have returned to upstate New York;
- The VA recognizes that the current returning veterans present new issues into a system that has been caring for veterans for decades.

Lauren also talked about the enhancement of VA Mental Health Services. The VA is now mandated to respond to any new consult or referral for outpatient services within 24 hours and full intake appointments must take place within 14 days. As well, the VA has established a suicide hotline and created suicide prevention coordinator positions.

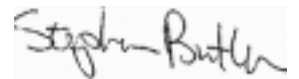
The VA Suicide Hotline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255), currently based at the Canandaigua VA Medical Center, is a 24/7 hotline that is staffed by mental health professionals that are trained to assess and respond to crisis situations. Callers to the hotline (veterans or those concerned about the well-being of a veteran) will never get a busy signal since all calls are answered by the trained staff or transferred to trained staff at other facilities if the counselors are busy. In addition to the hotline, there is also information on the website <http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov>, created to help respond to veterans and their families.

All those who presented at the meeting stressed the need for an integrated approach to help returning soldiers re-enter the community. One Point Access, centralized information, family supports put in place before a soldier returns, reunion workshops for husbands and wives were all identified as positive steps for our returning veterans. Raising awareness about our veterans needs is critical and I hope in some small way this letter helps to do that.

Equally important, is to remember that many veterans from other war operations have probably gone underserved. For instance, according to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, studies conducted at the end of the 1990's showed that in 1998 over 225,000 veterans were in prison, 75,000 veterans alone from

the Vietnam and the first Gulf War, and 23% of all homeless in that same year were veterans. It is also true that veterans experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) do not always manifest symptoms soon after returning from deployments, in fact, it often can take a number of years. What happens to the veteran and/or their family then – when a mental health issue takes hold years after discharge and the family members, other than the veteran, are no longer eligible for VA care?

If the past is any indication, we have much work to do. Right now, the MHA is working with several agencies and funders to determine how it best can help serve the community's returning veterans. In the meantime, we'll continue to supply crucial information and referrals to our veterans who ask for it through our phone lines and website. Perhaps most importantly, we can continue to raise awareness and encourage preparedness about this very important issue that will impact all of our communities for years to come.



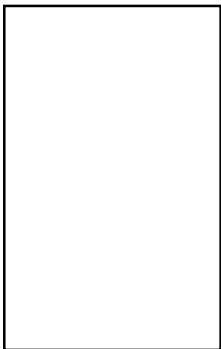
Two Join MHA Board at Annual Meeting

Our board and staff are very happy to welcome two new board members for three-year terms beginning this fall. They were voted in during MHA's Annual Meeting held on May 23 at the Everson Museum. Members toured *The Lives They Left Behind: Suitcases from a State Hospital Attic* exhibit and later heard presentations from **Jay Land, Tanya Gesek, Ron Heilmann, Kathleen Tryon, & Joe Gerace.**



Pragya Shah Murphy is a Senior Financial Analyst for Hand Held Products in Skaneateles who earned her MBA at Canisius College and a BA in Psychology from SUNY Buffalo. She gained fundraising

experience with Roswell Cancer Institute Alliance Foundation, and also volunteered for One World Goods, which aids impoverished third world artisans by selling their products at a store in Rochester, NY. Pragya lives in Marcellus with her husband Michael.



Lauren Love, LCSW-R is the Operation Enduring Freedom/ Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) Program Manager for the Syracuse VA Medical Center. She earned her MSW from University of Connecticut and her BSW from Syracuse University. Lauren was employed as a hospital social worker in Connecticut for five years in dialysis and ran a special

project for pregnant teenagers. She then moved back home to Upstate NY and worked at Auburn Memorial Hospital as the social worker on the 14-bed inpatient psychiatric unit. In 2001, she joined the VA Medical Center as an outpatient therapist in the Mental Health clinic, and transferred to the VA's OEF/OIF program this year. Lauren is a former board member for the Cayuga Home for Children and lives in Marcellus, with husband Adam and daughter Madeline.

Individual Advocate of the Year Award: Honors an individual who works to improve the quality or accessibility of local mental health services; advocates for mental health-related social, legal, political, or policy change; or advocates for individual recipients of mental health services.

Volunteer of the Year: Recognizes outstanding individual volunteer work in support of mental health in any capacity. For example, an individual who had donated many hours or who has volunteered for many years in support of mental health services; who has demonstrated extraordinary compassion or special effort in providing volunteer services; who has done exceptional work in recruiting and training others as volunteers.

Mental Health Professional of the Year: Given to a professional in any field for extraordinary efforts to promote the mental health of Onondaga County residents. For example, an individual who devotes many hours to providing services or education that supports/promotes mental health; provides a significant amount of pro bono service; demonstrates exceptional skill; provides outstanding quality of service; provides an innovative service; or who increases the accessibility of services to the under-served.

MHA COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS (from pg 1)

Anyone can submit a nomination for the following awards. Recipients must live, work, or volunteer in Onondaga County. See box to right for nomination details:

Youth Community Service Award: Honors a youth who spends significant time serving as a volunteer to improve the well-being of Onondaga County residents. Volunteerism not limited to mental health-related services. Teachers, coaches, volunteer coordinators, clergy, family members, volunteer service recipients, and anyone acquainted with a youth's volunteer work are encouraged to make nominations. **Eligibility:** Nominees must be (a) residents of Onondaga County, (b) currently between 12 and 18 years of age, and (c) engaged in one or more volunteer community services.

Dr. Jerome Wayne Award: Recognizes the work of a local pioneer in mental health care, education, or advocacy. For example, an individual who has implemented a new idea/process that improves mental health service, support, or education; successfully advocated for social, legal, political, or policy change that improve the mental health of Onondaga County residents; or has created or expanded a mental health-related service; or has done innovative research in the mental health field.

MHA Community Service Awards Luncheon

*Thursday, December 6, 2007
Noon—2 p.m.*

*Horizons Room (top floor)
Renaissance Syracuse Hotel
710 E. Genesee St, Syracuse*

*Tickets: \$25
Table of eight: \$160*

Sponsorship packages available!

Ticket purchase deadline: Friday, Nov. 30

AWARD NOMINATIONS

Please call (315) 445-5606, ext. 200
or send an e-mail to: requests@mha-oc.org
to obtain a nomination form.

Nomination deadline: Wed., Oct. 24



Employee Assistance Programs

Submitted by
Eileen D. Siddell, MHA, CEAP
Director of the Crouse HelpPeople
Employee Assistance Program

An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is...

“A worksite-based program designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees whose performance/conduct is adversely affected by personal concerns.”

Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA)

Everyone has problems at some time in their life. While most individuals can resolve an issue with the help of family, friends and co-workers, others cannot. When employees bring personal problems to the job, they aren't able to work to the best of their ability, which translates to a loss of productivity and loss of money. Providing a professional, free, confidential Employee Assistance Program for employees and their families is one solution that produces measurable results including improved employee morale.

Common reasons for EAP access include marital and family relationships, eldercare, emotional concerns, depression, job/career issues, stress, and financial or legal problems. Services provided by an EAP include:

- **Assessment** – Employees and family members seeking assistance will work with EAP counselors identifying their problem(s) and outlining steps toward its resolution.
- **Short-term counseling** – Various numbers of sessions are available, depending on the employer's program. Often times, 50% of individuals seeking help will not need a referral outside of the EAP.
- **Referral** – If needed, a referral to a carefully screened community resource will be made for continued assistance and problem-resolution.

- **Telephone consultation** for employees, family members and supervisors.
- **Educational literature** for employees and employer.
- **Supervisor/Employee training.**
- **Critical Incident Management** – in response to trauma/bereavement in the workplace.
- **Substance Abuse Professional Services.**

EAP services are confidential and voluntary. Employers only receive a report that does not have specific employee names, but that summarizes the services provided and categories of problems that have been discussed by all users in a quarter. Individuals are never personally identified. When an individual wants to have information provided to an employer, he/she must sign a written release allowing the EAP counselor to talk with a specific staff member. This process also applies to family members who may be calling about a client.

Services are only available through employer-sponsored benefit packages, and therefore are not open to the general community. Contact your Human Resource department to see if an EAP is offered.

HelpPeople™
Employee Assistance Program

Clinical Training Opportunity!

FAMILY BASED TREATMENT OF
EATING DISORDERS IN YOUTH
(The Maudsley Method)

Friday, Oct. 5 9 am – 4pm

**SU Goldstein Student Center
Rm 201 B&C**

Skytop Rd (off Colvin St), Syracuse

presented by

**NYS Comprehensive Care Centers
for Eating Disorders**

No registration required. For more details:

Visit www.nyeatingdisorders.org

Email: lnaber@unityhealth.org

Meeting the Needs of Rural Onondaga County Residents

This is an opportunity for mental health providers, emergency service responders, the faith community and school guidance counselors to come together!

Over breakfast, we will take time to learn about the unique culture of the rural and farming community and the barriers that rural residents face in seeking mental health care.

a collaborative project of:

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, NY FARMNET,
MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF ONONDAGA COUNTY

Join Us for Breakfast

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Empire Room (Art & Home Center)
NYS Fairgrounds, Syracuse, NY

7:45 am: Registration

8:00 am: Breakfast

8:15 am: "Why We're Here"

Bobbie Harrison

Cornell Cooperative Extension, Onondaga Co.

8:30 am: "Working With Unique Needs
in Rural Communities"

Karen Mastronardi, NY FarmNet

9:00–9:15 am: Next Steps & Closing Remarks

No fee Reservations are due October 5
Contact **Bobbie Harrison**, CCE Onondaga Co.
rmh27@cornell.edu (315) 424-9485 ext. 226

MHA Programs Update

ACKNOWLEDGING, ACCEPTING, & ALLEVIATING ANGER

This program for adults meets in Syracuse on six consecutive Thursday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The next session begins Oct. 18. Call 445-5606, ext. 204 for fee information, and other details.

CHILDREN 1ST :

This is a certified educational program for separating and divorcing parents. The 6-hour course helps parents to reduce the potential for lasting negative impacts on children's emotional health. It is led by experienced therapists and attorneys. It is offered in Syracuse one Saturday each month from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is also a two-night evening class option offered each quarter. To register, call (315) 445-5606, ext. 204.

New Program Manager Joins MHA



The staff and board members of MHA recently welcomed **Michael Spring** as the agency's new Program Manager. Michael comes to MHA from the Consortium for Children's Services, where he was Program Manager for six years. He worked with the Even Start Family Literacy Program and the 21st Century Community Learning Center with the LaFayette School District. He has extensive training in Parent Education, Early Childhood Education, and Family Literacy.

"Michael has experience working with diverse populations, including rural communities and Native Americans, and is well-acquainted with the local supports and services available for families. His strong background in community education will be a great asset to our agency's programs." said MHA Executive Director Stephen Butler.

Michael is originally from Michigan, and lived in the Lexington, Kentucky area for many years. He now resides in Fabius with his wife Polly, a paralegal for a Syracuse firm, and has two daughters. One daughter also works in the nonprofit sector, for Contact Community services, and the other is a student at the University of Albany.

When asked about his decision to join MHA, Michael said *"I'm looking forward to helping MHA focus its energy and resources on its central mission of mental health education, advocacy, and support. I also want to be part of the agency's expansion, to serve even more Central New York families."*

Volunteer for Community Companions

The program reduces the stigma and isolation experienced by many people who deal with ongoing mental health issues. Volunteers and recipients of services are matched in a one-to-one friendship. The match spends time enjoying fun, creative, and/or educational community activities.

If you are interested in volunteering, or for more information, please call (315) 445-5606, ext. 200.

Men Who Cook XIX a Delight

(FOR THE PALATE AND OUR PROGRAMS!)

You had to see it to believe it – but it's true! This past April, 96 Central New York business and professional men took time off from their busy schedules to prepare and serve more than 48 appetizers, entrees, and desserts for Men Who Cook patrons! Their generosity and skill helped to raise \$20,000 for the Mental Health Association's programs.

The 2007 Men Who Cook event was one of the best in recent years. It was held at the Hotel Syracuse, a new venue for the fundraiser, and attended by over 500 people. A very successful new silent auction feature was added, with exciting packages of many locally produced or sold products and services.

We wish we could name all our donors, volunteers, and patrons here, but we appreciate them all! We are also so thankful for the support of Men Who Cook XIX's major corporate and media sponsors:

BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB COMPANY
LABORATORY ALLIANCE OF CENTRAL NEW YORK, LLC
WEGMANS
BPA-HARBRIDGE
ATLAS HEALTH CARE LINEN SERVICES
SUMMERWOOD PEDIATRICS
T.J. SHEEHAN DISTRIBUTING
CLEAR CHANNEL RADIO CNY BUSINESS JOURNAL
WAER SYRACUSE NEW TIMES



We were saddened to learn of the recent death of **Freddy Aboud**, who was the owner of Fat Freddy's Cafe in Mattydale, and a local music enthusiast. He volunteered as a chef on the award-winning Ormond Entertainment team. Our condolences to his family, friends, and colleagues.

Pictured above (l-r): Debbie Aboud, Freddy Aboud, Mark Groesbeck, Cindy Ormond, Stacey Galvan, Tim Shattuck

Best Dish Contest Winners

BEST APPETIZER

1st Place: Alterra Wynwood – *Shrimp Tempura*
Mike Tooli & Roger Rainwater

2nd Place: Rural /Metro Medical Services
Dad's BBQ Beans & Cornbread; Ed & Nathan Moser

3rd Place: CNY Church of Christ – *Chiles Jalapenos Rellenos con Picaditas y Salsa de Nopalitos*
Pedro Ramirez, Rod Carter, & Kenny Doles

BEST ENTREE

1st Place: Onondaga County Executive
Nicholas Pirro – *Arrivederci Meatballs*

2nd Place: Update Medical University – *Jambalaya*
Chuck Lutz

3rd Place: Hospice / AIDS Community Resources/
Catholic Charities – *Cuban Turkey Stew*
"Baptist Boys": David Pasinski, Michael Crinnin, & John Sopchak

BEST DESSERT

1st Place: ARISE – *Flan*; Tom McKeown & Rosendo Luna

2nd Place: BPA-Harbridge – *Whiskey Balls*
Joshua White & Dave Pazamickas

3rd Place: Transitional Living Services – *Ice Cream Shop Brownie*; John Randall & Jeff Cottet

BEST TABLE DESIGN

1st Place: Ormond Entertainment
"Gilligan's Gallery"; Mark 'Gilligan' Groesbeck, 'Professor' Tim Shattuck, 'Skipper' Freddy Aboud

BEST FATHER/SON TEAM

Junior Achievement of CNY / P&C Foods
Pulled Pork Sandwich; Kent & Tom Harter

MAKE AND TAKE
GOURMET
WINNING RECIPE

*Chicken & Cheese
Balls*

Father & Son Team
Matthew Dunn
Jordan Dunn

Onondaga Hill
Publishing

Save the Date for
Men Who Cook XX!

April 25, 2008

(see pg. 1)





Membership

Mental Health Association members support the agency in many ways – advocacy, programming, needs identification, and financial support, to name a few. We are most grateful to our over 250 new and longtime members.

To join MHA, renew your membership, or make a donation, please use the form on the back cover of this newsletter.

We thank our members who have joined or renewed their membership since January 2007:

INDIVIDUAL	PROFESSIONAL
FRIENDS	PARTNERS
Gloria Head	Linda Cady
Carol Little	William Cross
Rosemary Palermo	Audray Edwards
John Wallace	Charlene Hughes
Dorothy Wehmann	Heather A. Kipping-Regitano
SUPPORTERS	Michael McGuirl
Phyllis Berman	Cheryl Piper
Minna Buck	Patricia Schwartzlander
Thomas Cheney	James Young
Crystal Collette	Allan Yozawitz
Ochane Dumanian	LEADERS
Peggy Flanders	Wendy Carman
Susan R. Horn	Jeanette & Dennis Claus
Connie Marion	Melissa Davis
William R. McPeak	Dennis Hayes
Susanne Merchant	Pamela Percival
Constance Palumb	Janice Pope
Barbara Vural	David Silverman
Susan Winkert	Sara Wall-Bollinger
FAMILY	Deborah Welsh
Margaret Cram	
	BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION
	PARTNERS
	NAMI-Promise, Inc.
	Professional Counseling Services

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Oct. 3 **NAMI-Promise Conference**; *New Directions to a Better Understanding*; 9 am–3 pm; Empire Room, NYS Fairgrounds, Syracuse; **Steven Levenkron, MS** to speak on Cutting; Call (315) 487-2085 or e-mail nami-promise@nami-promise.org
- Oct. 5 **Family Based Therapy for Eating Disorders**: Clinical practice training in the Maudsley method; 9 am – 4 pm; SU Goldstein Student Ctr; Skytop Rd off Colvin; Email cris@lightlink.com. **No fee; No registration required.** (Also see page 4 of this newsletter.)
- Oct. 5–7 **9th Annual Domestic & Sexual Violence Faith Weekend**
Sponsored by the Syracuse Area Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition’s Diversity & Religious Task Forces. Call (315) 425-0818 ext 220 or e-mail emorales@verahouse.org.
- Oct. 16 **Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Rural Onondaga County Residents**: 7:45 am–9:15 am; Breakfast Meeting; Empire Room, NYS Fairgrounds, Syracuse; Register by Oct. 5; No fee; Contact Bobbie Harrison, rmh27@cornell.edu; 424-9485 ext. 226. (Also see page 5 of this newsletter.)
- Oct. 24 **Report to the Community on Domestic & Sexual Violence**: Noon–1pm; Curtin Auditorium, 447 S. Salina St.; Free, open to public; Call (315) 425-0818 ext 208, or e-mail lcunningham@verahouse.org.
- Oct. 26 **Suicide Prevention Across the Lifespan Consortium**; Renaissance Syracuse Hotel; sponsored by NYS Office of Mental Health (315) 426-3930
- Nov. 14 & 15 **C.H.I.P. 2nd Annual Conference**
sponsored by St. Joseph’s CPEP Unit & Onondaga Co. Dept. of Mental Health; “Improving Clinical Skills” & “Implementing High Fidelity Wrap-Around”; Contact Sabrina Baxter; CHIP@sjhsyr.org (315) 448-6346; www.sjhsyr.org
- Nov. 17 **National Survivors of Suicide Day Conference**: 11am–3pm; webcast held 1pm–2:30pm; Alumni Auditorium, Weiskotten Hall, SUNY Upstate Medical University; Contact **Debra Graham**, AFSP CNY Chapter Chair; (315) 695-2201, macdag0153@aol.com.
- Dec. 6 **Mental Health Association Annual Community Awards Luncheon**
12–2pm; Renaissance Syracuse Hotel; \$25 per ticket/\$160 table of 8. (315) 445-5606 for reservations/info (Also see pages 1 & 3 of this newsletter.)

MHA Insights is a publication of the
Mental Health Association
of Onondaga County, Inc.

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Fax: (315) 445-1828

Website: www.mha-oc.org
E-Mail: requests@mha-oc.org

**Mental Health Association
of Onondaga County
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Syracuse, NY 13206**

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
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Monica Alexander
Technical Assistance
Gloria Kraegel
Anger Management
Kathy Tryon, LCSW
Joe Gerace, LCSW-R
Support Services
Laurie Marsh

**The Mission of the Mental Health Association is to
promote mental health in the community through
advocacy, education, and access to mental health services.**



It's always a good time to become a member of MHA or renew your membership!

MHA Membership/Renewal Form



- I would like to join the Mental Health Association of Onondaga County.
- Please renew my membership.
- I would like to make a donation to MHA (in addition to or instead of membership). Amount \$ _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
E-mail _____

(Optional) Please designate my gift to the following MHA program:

- Apply where it's needed most
- Children 1st! Parent Education Program
- Anger Management
- Anorexia/Bulimia Parent/Partner Program
- Community Companions
- Information & Referral
- Mental Health Education & Advocacy

- Payment enclosed (Please make check or money order payable to: Mental Health Association of Onondaga Co.)
- Charge my (circle one) VISA MC

Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____
Signature (required): _____ Total Amount Charged or Enclosed: \$ _____

Please mail this form with your check or money order to: MHA, 6493 Ridings Rd, Suite 112, Syracuse, NY 13206

Your contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Thank you for your support!

Membership Levels

INDIVIDUAL
___ \$250+ Advocate
___ \$100+ Benefactor
___ \$ 50+ Family
___ \$ 30+ Supporter
___ Friend \$ _____

PROFESSIONAL/BUSINESS
___ \$500+ Benefactor
___ \$250+ Provider
___ \$100+ Leader
___ \$ 50+ Partner
___ Friend \$ _____