

AOP MHC'S 2011 CELEBRATION OF HOPE RECOGNIZES COMMUNITY SUCCESS

Judy Hassam, Client and Volunteer Affairs, AOPMHC

The Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Mental Health Center (AOP MHC) proudly presented its annual "Celebration of Hope" mental health awareness event September 2nd at the Anderson County Civic Center.

The celebration was heavily supported by a wide range of community groups and advocates, including the Anderson County Human Relations Council, the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Counties, Mental Health America of Anderson County, VFW Post 6089, Rucker Hall-Anderson, Clemson University School of Nursing, Tri County Technical College School of Nursing, SC Dogs, and the Omega Men of Kappa Gamma Gamma Chapter of Omega Psi Phi. Sandy Hanebrink of Touch the Future and Angie Stringer, Public Information Officer of Anderson County provided special assistance.

The day started with greetings from specially trained therapy dogs from SC Dogs. Student Nurses from both Clemson University and Tri County Technical College also greeted and engaged clients and other guests as they arrived.

Representative Brian White, Chair of the South Carolina House Ways and Means Committee, spoke to the group about the budget issues facing the state and the difficulty for the Legislature in making crucial funding decisions. He emphasized the importance of mental health treatment in South Carolina and the role of DMH. White spoke very candidly and directly about his own experience with his niece's struggles with mental illness while a student at Clemson University, and how with proper treatment and medication she was able to complete her degree with a 3.6 GPA. He connected with the audience in a very meaningful way when he spoke about the importance of seeking timely treatment for mental illness and medication compliance, and he



AOP MHC Executive Director Kevin Hoyle is presented the Client Advisory Board Hero Award by the Clemson Tiger.



Representative Brian White spoke at the event.

thanked the clients present for their commitment to recovery and Center staff for their continued dedication. White showed a very real understanding

of some of the issues our clients and our Agency face and attendees appreciated his candor and encouragement.

The focus of this year's celebration was our "wounded warriors" and the effects of post-traumatic stress disorders and other mood related issues on veterans. Jeff Snover, founder of Champions Made from Adversity, a non-profit organization, which shares the life-enriching benefits of adaptive sports, served as keynote speaker.

Snover, a retired US Army veteran of 18 ½ years, was awarded the Bronze Star for his services in Iraq. His retirement was due to an injury that left him paralyzed. Snover spoke of his journey from injury to recovery. Although wheelchair bound, his motto is, "My injury wasn't a roadblock ...just a speed bump." He shared how important the power of persistence, patience, and the human spirit are in making journey to recovery.

The event was planned and executed by the AOP MHC Client Advisory Board with assistance from

the board's advisory chair. The highlight of each year's event is the Client Advisory Board's presentation of awards.

Mental Health America of Anderson County, the Anderson County Human Relations Council, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness received Partnership in Recovery Awards. Also recognized were local AOP MHC client artists whose work was displayed at the Art of Recovery exhibition at the Anderson Arts Center in September.

Kevin Hoyle, Candy Turpin, and Paula Keller received the Client Advisory Board's Hero Awards for 2011. The Hero Award celebrates AOP MHC employees who consistently demonstrate respect, advocacy, and compassion clients and staff at the Center. The award is client driven, with nominations and selection made by consensus of client input from various treatment sites. The Award's intent is to recognize persons vital to the recovery of those who experience symptoms of a mental illness.

DMH TEAM TAKES PART IN 2011 FAVOR DRY RUN

Ann Marie Dwyer, Office of General Counsel



Team DMH

On a recent Saturday morning, more than 90 runners and walkers gathered at Sims Park in Columbia to participate in the 7th annual FAVOR Dry Run 5k walk/run. Faces and Voices of Recovery South Carolina (FAVOR-SC) is a grassroots advocacy and services organization, which promotes long-term recovery from addiction through education, advocacy, and recovery support services, resulting in healthier individuals, families, and communities.

FAVOR counts among its Board members two SCDMH employees: Kaitlin Blanco-Silva and Pam Wilson, both of Morris Village.

Additionally, Chad Lominick, also on staff at Morris Village, recently began volunteering with the group. He is currently recruiting for more volunteers, so if you are interested, please contact him at ccl85@scdmh.org

Sixteen DMH employees represented the Agency at the 2011 event. State Director John H. Magill was one of the featured speakers, along with DAODAS State Director Bob Toomey and others. There were refreshments and music and a feeling of fun and fellowship permeated the air.

Those who participated from the DMH family included Mark Binkley, Kaitlin Blanco-Silva, Melissa Craft, Ann & Mike Dwyer, Melanie Ferretti, Tracy LaPointe, Chad Lominick, John H. Magill, Cleo Morris, Debbie Nieri, Janet Watkins, James Wilson, Pam Wilson, and Leslie and Susan Yarborough.

In addition to the Dry Run, FAVOR-SC also holds a concert each spring to promote the organization and its mission. Local chapters include FAVOR Midlands, Greenville, Pee Dee, Charleston, and Tri-County. For more information about FAVOR, visit <http://favorsc.org/>.



DAODAS Executive Director Bob Toomey and DMH State Director John H. Magill

COMMANDING GENERAL VISITS VETERANS

LeeAnne Newton, executive director, Veterans' Victory House

The residents of the Veterans' Victory House enjoyed a visit from Major General James M. Milano on Wednesday September 21, 2011. Victory House is a 220 bed State Veterans Home in Walterboro, SC. This visit is a tradition for the Commanding Officer of Fort Jackson.

Milano and staff were greeted by the President of the Resident Council, Lloyd Freeman. He traded stories with Milano about his time in Basic Training at Fort Jackson. As Milano visited with the veterans it was refreshing to see them recognize the fatigues, medals and insignias. During one interaction, Milano was able to have a conversation with a resident about his time in World War II. This resident rarely communicates, but this visit brought him out of the shadows.

He sat with another Veteran as he received Physical Therapy. He was kind, gentle and compassionate. The residents enjoyed sharing lunch with the General and the Fort Jackson staff. One Veteran commented, "He is just so nice and he shook my hand."

General Milano assumed duty as the Commanding General, United States Army Training Center Fort Jackson, South Carolina in June of 2010. Before this assignment he served as the Commanding General, US Army Armor Center and Fort Knox and as the 44th Chief of Armor.

The Victory House appreciates that the General and his staff made themselves available to our veterans, many of whom trained at Fort Jackson.

Top to bottom:

General Milano greets Bernard Warshaw, Chairman Emeritus of the South Carolina Mental Health Commission.

Heyward Hilliard and VVH Executive Director LeeAnne Newton give General Milano and his staff a tour of the Ancillary Services area.

General Milano greets resident Maggie Waldron.

General Milano talks with resident Roscoe Manigan.

Below:

Colonel Royalty dines with Dr. and Mrs. Odd Nielsen



LEXINGTON COUNTY CMHC RECEIVES RE-ACCREDITATION

Tracy LaPointe, Office of Public Affairs

The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) has re-accredited Lexington County Community Mental Health Center (LCCMHC) for a period of three years in the areas of Community Integration: Adults, and Outpatient Treatment: Adults and Children and Adolescents. Operated by the South Carolina Department of Mental Health, LCCMHC is a component of the Agency's Community Mental Health Services division.

The LCCMHC provides services to adults, children, and families affected by serious mental illnesses and significant emotional disorders in Lexington County. In fiscal year 2011, the Center served 5,796 patients, 2,028 of whom were children and 270 of whom were over the age of 65.

"This accreditation decision represents the highest level of accreditation that can be awarded to an organization and shows the organization's substantial conformance to the CARF standards," said LCCMHC Executive Director Rick Acton. "Our staff demonstrated to a team of surveyors during the on-site visit its commitment to offering programs and services that are measurable, accountable, and of the highest quality."

All 17 of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health's community mental health centers are accredited by CARF International, an independent, nonprofit accreditor of human service providers, which credentials more than 5,900 providers in over 19,000 locations. CARF-accredited providers serve more than 8.3 million people of all ages each year.

NAMI-LAURENS COUNTY HOLDS THIRTEENTH ANNUAL DINNER

Melanie Ferretti, Office of Network Information Technology

On Tuesday September 20, 2011, the National Alliance on Mental Illness-Laurens County (NAMI-LC) chapter held its thirteenth annual dinner meeting at the First Presbyterian Church Christian Life Center in Clinton, SC. Former NAMI-LC President Ruth Sharpe and the recently appointed NAMI-LC President, Mim Neiman, took the opportunity to recognize and express deep appreciation to all those who provided education, support, and advocacy for those with mental illness and their families during the past year.

With a crowd of approximately one hundred people, attending dignitaries included Senator Daniel B. "Danny" Verdin III, Representative David Tribble,

Jr., Representative Mark N. Willis, and SC Mental Health Commissioner Jane Jones. Also in attendance were city officials, law enforcement, local mental health board members, advocates, educators, and more.

The keynote speaker, State Director John H. Magill spoke about "Mental illness and recovery in the South Carolina public mental health system: past, present, and future." According to Magill, "South Carolina has a long history of caring for the mentally ill. The first patient was admitted to the Mills Building in 1828, making South Carolina the second state in the nation to provide a state funded facility for the care and treatment of the mentally ill, preceded only by Virginia."

Magill closed his speech by saying, "I ask you to continue to battle the stigma attached to mental illness. Think of mental illness like any other health issue, deserving the same level of treatment and compassion as any other disease, such as stroke or diabetes. In addition, I challenge you to advocate for mental health dollars by talking with those in positions to prioritize the distribution of funds on the federal, state, and local levels."

Following his speech, Magill was presented with the NAMI-LC Meritorious Service Award, for a lifetime



(LR) Mim Neiman, Ruth Sharpe, John Magill, Bill Lindsey

of meritorious service in the fight against stigma from brain disease, the struggle for cures, and treatment of mental illness, and for his tireless efforts devoted to the alliance for mental illness, especially to Laurens County.

Bill Lindsey, executive director of NAMI South Carolina, extended an open invitation to the NAMI South Carolina annual conference to be held October 28 and 29 at the Embassy Suites, Columbia, SC to attendees. Conference registration is \$60.00 and \$25.00 for clients. Call (864) 998-3351 for more information.

This annual dinner was special because the first presentation of “The NAMI-LC Ruth Sharpe Meritorious Award for excellent service to sufferers of brain disease, their families, and care givers” was presented to its namesake. When presenting the award to Sharpe, Ed Young, VP of Thornwell Operations, shared that through the grace of God, he met Mrs. Sharpe at a NAMI family-to-family education program. She taught him that he was not alone, that mental illness happens in many families. Young said, “If the world had more Ruth Sharpes, with her kindness and caring, we would be alright. If it stimulates others to help those who cannot help

themselves, she will consider her recognition worthwhile.”



Ruth Sharpe receives the Meritorious Award, named in her honor.

Upon accepting the award, Sharpe, an active Beckman Mental Health Center board member for 39 years and part of the NAMI Laurens County leadership for 12 years, said, “When you do what is right, even if you lose you win. Statistics show that not even one family is exempt from the effects of mental illness. We need to talk, talk, talk.”

VETERANS’ VICTORY HOUSE RECEIVES PATRIOTIC SERVICE AWARD

Tracy LaPointe, Office of Public Affairs

On Saturday, September 17, the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America presented Veterans’ Victory House (VVH) with the Patriotic Service Award. Conferred for the first time during a gala evening at the Carolina Yacht Club in Charleston, the award is given in appreciation of exceptional services rendered to the veterans of all military services of the United States. VVH Executive Director LeeAnne Newton accepted the award on behalf of the facility.

The OFPA praised “the veteran-centered philosophy” of VVH, stating that “the organization consistently supports our veterans’ desire for choice, dignity, and independent functioning. The staff encourages veterans to enjoy their lives by providing a secure, caring environment and stimulating living experiences.”



Lawrence Savage, Jr., SCOFPA Patriotic Service Award Committee Chair; LeeAnne Newton, VVH Exec. Dir.; Capers McDonald, SCOFPA Governor; Dr. Thomas Leland, OFPA National Governor General.

“It was an incredible honor to receive the First Patriotic Service Award offered by the South Carolina Society of The OFPA,” said Newton. “The organization is steeped in American history recognizes patriotism. The staff of Victory House work each day to meet the expectations of our veterans, and this award is a tribute to their sacrifices the care provided to them. It is a privilege to care for America’s heroes and we are grateful for the recognition.”

Founded in 1896, the OFPA, through local and national activities, recognizes contributions by past and living patriots and supports education in the histories of both the founders and the patriots of America. It has been chartered in 29 states.

RECENT CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION DRIVES A SUCCESS!

Kersha Sessions, Office of Community Mental Health Services

During the month of September, the Department of Mental Health Central Administration Building's Living Well Committee (LWC) along with the Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services' (DAODAS) Fun Bunch, encouraged staff to donate canned goods and other non-perishable items to assist families and children throughout South Carolina. The event raised more than 500 pounds of food for the Harvest Hope Food Bank.

Harvest Hope Food Bank served 2,037,496 individuals throughout its service area in fiscal year 2010, a 15% increase over the previous year. The LWC and DAODAS Fun Bunch will sponsor another food drive for Harvest Hope during the

entire month of November. Although the holidays can often be a hectic time, taking some time out to help those who are less fortunate can serve to remind you and your family of the true meaning of the holidays.

The satisfaction that comes from making a difference in the lives of others cannot be overstated. Knowing that you've helped make someone else's holiday a little bit brighter is a special feeling, and one that will last with you even after the holidays are over. So if you're looking for a way to enhance your holiday experience, try giving back this year at the November food drive.

In addition to the recent food drive, the LWC recently held an

emergency blood drive at the Central Administration building. The LWC would like to thank Billie Rogers for coordinating this Red Cross Blood Drive. As a result of her efforts, staff donated 18 pints of blood to help save lives.

Kimberly Reaves, Red Cross donor recruitment representative said "Each pint of blood collected has the potential to help save up to three lives, so as a group you have made an even greater impact than these numbers show." The LWC and DAODAS Fun Brunch would like to thank everyone that attended and generously donated. We're very grateful to Billie for all of her hard work in organizing the event.

MILITARY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES PROGRAM VISITS VETERANS GROUP

Connie Mancari, Office of the State Director

On August 31, 2011, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Military Families Strategic Initiative, Services Systems Development Program site visit was held at Central Office with members of the South Carolina Veterans' Policy Academy. The purpose of the visit was to provide technical assistance to the Veterans Policy Academy on the committee's two main goals, employment and communication/access to services. This was an all-day training where two states were conferenced in to provide assistance in these two areas.

Helping veterans and their families is something everyone is interested in doing. South Carolina has received no state funding for this committee; however, it is amazing to see the combined effort of so many agencies trying to help veterans, with little to no resources.

The Veterans' Policy Academy (VPA), which was established in 2008, has grown to include more than 50 individuals and organizations, with the goal of helping returning veterans and their families obtain needed services. The committee is co-

chaired by Colonel Phil Butler (ret.) and General George Goldsmith (ret.)



LR: VPA Co-chairs George Goldsmith and Phil Butler

GET ACTIVE FOR MENTAL HEALTH!

Upcoming Events

- **Columbia, Spartanburg, Charleston, Bluffton/Hilton Head & Myrtle Beach - October & November Out of the Darkness Community Walks**

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention – SC will hold 5 community walks to prevent suicide this year. Here are this year's upcoming dates, save them and spread the word!

- Columbia - October 16
- Myrtle Beach - October 22
- Charleston - November 6

If you'd like to learn more visit outofthedarkness.org. To register for a walk near you, click here: [SC AFSP 2011 Walks](#).

- **Nationwide! October 16-22**

ADHD Awareness Week

To learn more about National ADHD Week, Click here:

<http://www.adhdawarenessweek.org/>

DO YOU WANT TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT A MENTAL HEALTH EVENT? SEND IT IN:

TLL06@SCDMH.ORG!

Mental Health Matters is a newsletter of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health (DMH). Produced by the Office of Public Affairs, it aims bring items of interest within the DMH system to the attention of Agency personnel, the Mental Health Commission, mental health advocates, and other stakeholders.