

# Community Support Journal

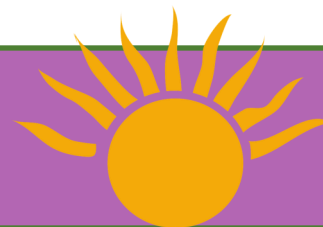
Volume 11, Issue 122

May 2022

Montgomery County  
Community Support Program Committee



## Art contest brings communities together Creating, sharing, connecting



**By: Kathie Mitchell, Newsletter Editor**

Many individual rays of human light came together to create this year's winning piece of art in the 2022 CSP Virtual Art Contest.

"We are the Sunshine" garnered First Place and \$100, winning the most votes in the virtual art contest. It was created by the Forteniters Club as a community project.

The piece, which is displayed to the right, was submitted with the following description:

*"This piece was created by 24 members of the Forteniters Club as individual rays. Together we make sunshine! We chose to submit a collaborative project for the theme "Together We Thrive."*



### Also in this issue:

- CSP Conference May 24...3
- Montco Public Defenders & Mental Health ..... 4
- A Journey of Hope ..... 5
- Mental Health Awareness Month ..... 6
- Virtual Book Club ..... 7
- Youth Move PA ..... 8
- Family Peer Support ..... 9
- Children's Mental Health Awareness Day ..... 10
- Statewide CSP Meeting.. 11
- Forensic Peer Support....13

This year there were 27 entries which were displayed online for viewing. At the end of the entry period, viewers were encouraged to vote for their favorite piece of artwork. The second place winner, Lindsay Mechan Mayo, earned \$50 for her piece called "Blossom". The third place winner was Bill Roberts. He won \$50 for his entry called "Hope". The three winners and all of the entries can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Over the past years, most of the artwork entered into the contest was from individuals. But this year, the Forteniters Club, Circle Lodge and Norristown State Hospital decided to create projects that demonstrated working together, sharing and creativity.

"As I looked at the art entries coming in, I was so happy to see that 'Leave Your Mark' by Circle Lodge, had inspired several group art pieces," said Sue Shannon, Executive Director at HopeWorx. "The art showed how bringing together different perspectives can be so beautiful."



**2nd**

**Blossom - By Lindsay Mechan Mayo**

HopeWorx is the fiduciary for the Montgomery County CSP Committee and provides assistance in collecting and displaying the artwork on the website in addition to other administrative duties.

Carmella Salmons who is a member of the Forteniters, said, "It was very nice to participate in a competition for our artwork. I feel art allows us all to be equal so our personalities shine through."

She added, "While we sincerely appreciated the monetary prize, the fact that our group was recognized and honored was so uplifting for all of us. The theme of togetherness rings true for us as our entry is an example of how much we shine when we work together."



**3rd**

**Hope - By Bill Roberts**

"Leave Your Mark", a beautiful tie-dyed tapestry. was created by the residents of Circle Lodge. Their project was the first entry submitted in this year's contest. This tapestry was created by the staff and resident's of



Circle Lodge. Resident's participated in a tie-dye event held in-house. Staff and residents then added their handprints, leaving their mark.

"Gazebo in Spring" was created by the residents of Norristown State Hospital (NSH) who used their artistic talents to design a project with various medium including wallpaper designs, drawings, painting, hand-made tissue flowers, and real dried blossoms. It was designed as a wall poster and became a project of togetherness.

Catherine Taylor, Occupational Therapist at NSH, said "It was heartwarming to see patients who don't ordi-

narily get involved in art/craft type projects get interested in making flowers or leaves to add to the gazebo as the weeks unfolded. It gradually grew to be a beautiful creation that still graces the wall of the day hall."

Some of the comments made by the artists were:

- "I think it was a good piece of art."
- "I am thankful for everyone that worked on it and for myself for doing it too."
- "I had the 'Joy of Doing' each time I worked on it."



**Community Art**



# COME JOIN US!

*Please join us for the*

## 9th Annual CSP Conference & 44th Annual Mental Health Awards Reception

**Tuesday, May 24, 2022**

**10am– 2pm**

Martha's Community Farm  
1350 Pawlings Road  
Audobon, PA, 19401

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**“TOGETHER WE THRIVE!”**

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Speakers  
ArtShow  
Music  
Educational Workshops  
BBQ Lunch  
Networking  
Awards  
Fun Games  
Activities  
Breakfast

This celebration will be **FREE, but registration is required.**

Please register HERE: <https://2022montcocsp-mhawards.eventbrite.com>

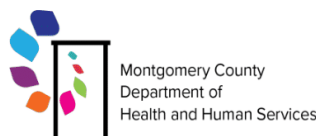
18 years and over only

For Montgomery County Residents and Providers

**Donations and sponsorship opportunities are available and appreciated!**

*For more information, contact Kathie Mitchell*

at [kathiemitchell8221@gmail.com](mailto:kathiemitchell8221@gmail.com)



## “No person should be defined by the worst day of their life”

### How public defenders support mental health

**By: *Alana M. Hook, MA.***  
***Chief of Policy and Social Services***  
***Office of the Public Defender***

I was once told that “What is law isn’t always ethical, and what is ethical isn’t always law.”

Nothing becomes clearer than when the law intersects with mental health, the disease of addiction, or the impacts of trauma on an individual. Through our work at the Montgomery County Public Defender, we look to ensure equity, access, and support in every case we are involved in. Our office is proud to have a Chief of Mental Health, Greg Nester, who is dedicated to representing people who live with serious mental illness facing criminal charges, who are currently placed at Norristown State Hospital, and/or while they are receiving treatment through our community hospitals through the commitment process. But what does that mean, really? It means that people who are having their worst days, will never be alone.

Our office has set the course to be present as early in the process as possible, staffing arraignments with our attorneys to screen for mental health, addiction experiences, or other needs that would be directly impacted by the collateral consequences of a criminal case or arrest. By meeting people in the moments immediately following their arrest, we are able to capture a brief snapshot of what they are living through, what brought them to this point in time, and we advocate zealously by providing person centered, trauma-informed representation to argue for care over incarceration whenever possible.

Through the creation and implementation of Montgomery County’s Pre-Trial Service program, we are now able to provide referrals to recovery based programs, case management, and care at the time of arrest through timely assessments, warm-hand offs to provider teams, and to protect our client’s access to their benefits, housing, and resources by pre-

venting a lapse in coverage due to incarceration. Working in lockstep with our Social Service Department, we endeavor to support our clients, their family and the community even after the conclusion of their case. Our Social Service Advocates work to create comprehensive release plans to provide to the court to support arguments for release, mitigation for sentencing to reduce prison stays, and to provide testimony to ensure that our client’s stories are heard and conveyed to the court in an informed and affirming manner, that highlights their humanity and personal lived experiences. Our advocates not only support adult clients, but are also placed in youth courts that support children facing criminal charges, as well as children who have been placed into foster care, kinship care, or other settings. By being present for these children, we form lasting and meaningful relationships that create a sense of stability and validation within them, perhaps for the first time in their lives. By providing training to staff, community affinity groups, law enforcement, and the judicial bench our advocates and attorneys ensure that each party in the courtroom is equipped with insight and understanding to help aid in making our community whole again.

Truly, our office has taken the call to “Step Up,” to prevent incarceration and adverse collateral consequences for our clients and their families through holistic representation at every case. Although the law may not reflect our credo to provide holistic representation to every person our office serves, we have committed ourselves to ensure that our staff uphold these ethical obligations to see that our pursuit for justice creates opportunities for the law to transform and reflect the morals of the community it serves, and holds fast to the belief that no person should be defined by the worst day of their life.



# Hope Does Work

**By: Jomel Silverio**

I sit in reflection of the many milestones I have achieved, and I am grateful for the well wishes and prayers, both from the spoken affirmations that I wished into existence and from those with good intentions which I have had the blessing of getting to know. One of my greatest accomplishments is graduating from Temple University this past week with a Bachelor of Arts in Media Studies and Production. Boy did it kick my butt, but all the butterflies in my stomach went away as my name was called. When I walked across the stage and was able to take a picture in the moment, which served to memorialize my achievement, I exclaimed "I did it!"



***Jomel and his mother at graduation May 4th***

This important time in my life wasn't easy or made possible overnight. I had setbacks that made some days difficult as I battled with my personal lived experience. After high school, where I barely graduated and needed to take summer courses to attain my high school diploma, my life was that without direction. Eventually through services connected to my treatment team I was able to join the H.O.P.E. Academy program. Through this program I would meet faces that I would grow to have the pleasure of knowing. I regained direction led by the wonderful people at H.O.P.E. Academy program. I also participated in the POWER program at Montgomery County Community College, where I was able to focus on goals that would lead to re-enrolling in school part time.

Through good folks in the community that had gotten to know my family, (my mom, Sue Soriano and Johan Martinez) I was encouraged to volunteer at HopeWorx. I began volunteering and a position opened up at HopeWorx as a Community Advocate, which I applied for and acquired. There I learned how to facilitate groups within the Montgomery County Correctional Facility where the late JB Brooks served as my example and guide. With Ellen Kozlowski, Sue Shannon and Kathie Mitchell I learned to speak with compassion, and have my voice be heard.

Ultimately, the lesson I learned is that with planning and the ability to accept help from others, one can attain what at the beginning seems impossible. I learned through the example of the people at HopeWorx and they allowed me room to plan and succeed. My future is optimistic, and I cherish the moments and experiences that I was a part of in each of these essential times.

# MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

## TOGETHER for Mental Health

Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental illness. During May, NAMI joins the national movement to raise awareness about mental health. Each year we fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for policies that support people with mental illness and their families.

For 2022's Mental Health Awareness Month, NAMI will amplify the message of "Together for Mental Health." We will use this time to bring our voices together to advocate for mental health and access to care through personal stories, events such as NAMIWalks, month long campaigns, and social media engagements.

Together, we can realize our shared vision of a nation where anyone affected by mental illness can get the appropriate support and quality of care to live healthy, fulfilling lives.



Saturday, May 7th  
Temple University  
Ambler Campus  
[www.namiwalks.org/montcopa](http://www.namiwalks.org/montcopa)

*Join Us!*

# Thank You

**THANK YOU** to all our participants, sponsors, donors, volunteers and especially those that came out on a cold, wet and windy day to raise mental health awareness!

All proceeds from this event stay in the community to help fund NAMI Montgomery County PA's no cost mental health programs and events that make a difference in the lives of thousands impacted by mental illness.

**We raised \$105,361.**

The goal was \$110,000. We raised 96 % of our goal. The walk website remains open for donations for 30 days post walk.







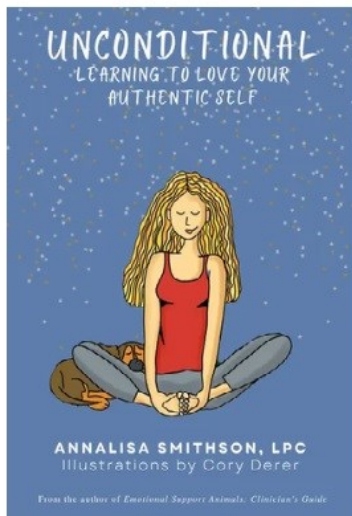
Montgomery County PA

# ***VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB***

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25TH | NOON - 1PM

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

<https://bit.ly/namibookclub>



We will be discussing the book:  
**Unconditional: Learning to Love  
Your Authentic Self**  
with the author, Annalisa  
Smithson, LPC, NCC

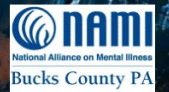
Make self-love a new habit in this  
21-day guide to reducing stress,  
practicing self-care, and increasing  
life satisfaction.

Get on Amazon or If you need help getting the  
book, contact:  
[office@namimontcopa.org](mailto:office@namimontcopa.org) or call 215-361-7784





CAPITAL AREA BEHAVIORAL  
HEALTH COLLABORATIVE, INC.  
Established October 1999



**Youth & Young Adults**  
Between the ages of 16 - 29

# WELLNESS DAYS 2022

Evansburg State Park | Pavilion B

## Activities Include (At No Cost)

- ✓ Self-Stigma Workshop
- ✓ Leadership & Teambuilding
- ✓ Art & Music
- ✓ Hiking & Fishing
- ✓ Food & More



**JUNE 21, 2022**  
**10 AM - 4 PM**

851 Mayhall Rd, Collegeville, PA 19426



**Family Members,  
Caregivers, & Support Staff  
are welcome to attend**



**NAMI MAN will be there!**



**[Register Here](#)**

Contact us to be a sponsor or vendor for  
Wellness Days at [ympa@youthmovepa.org](mailto:ympa@youthmovepa.org)



# FamilyWorx

## Family Peer Support and Advocacy Program

Family members sharing information, support, and advocacy services with Montgomery County Families whose children or youth are facing behavioral health concerns

All services at FamilyWorx are provided free of charge

### WHAT WE DO:

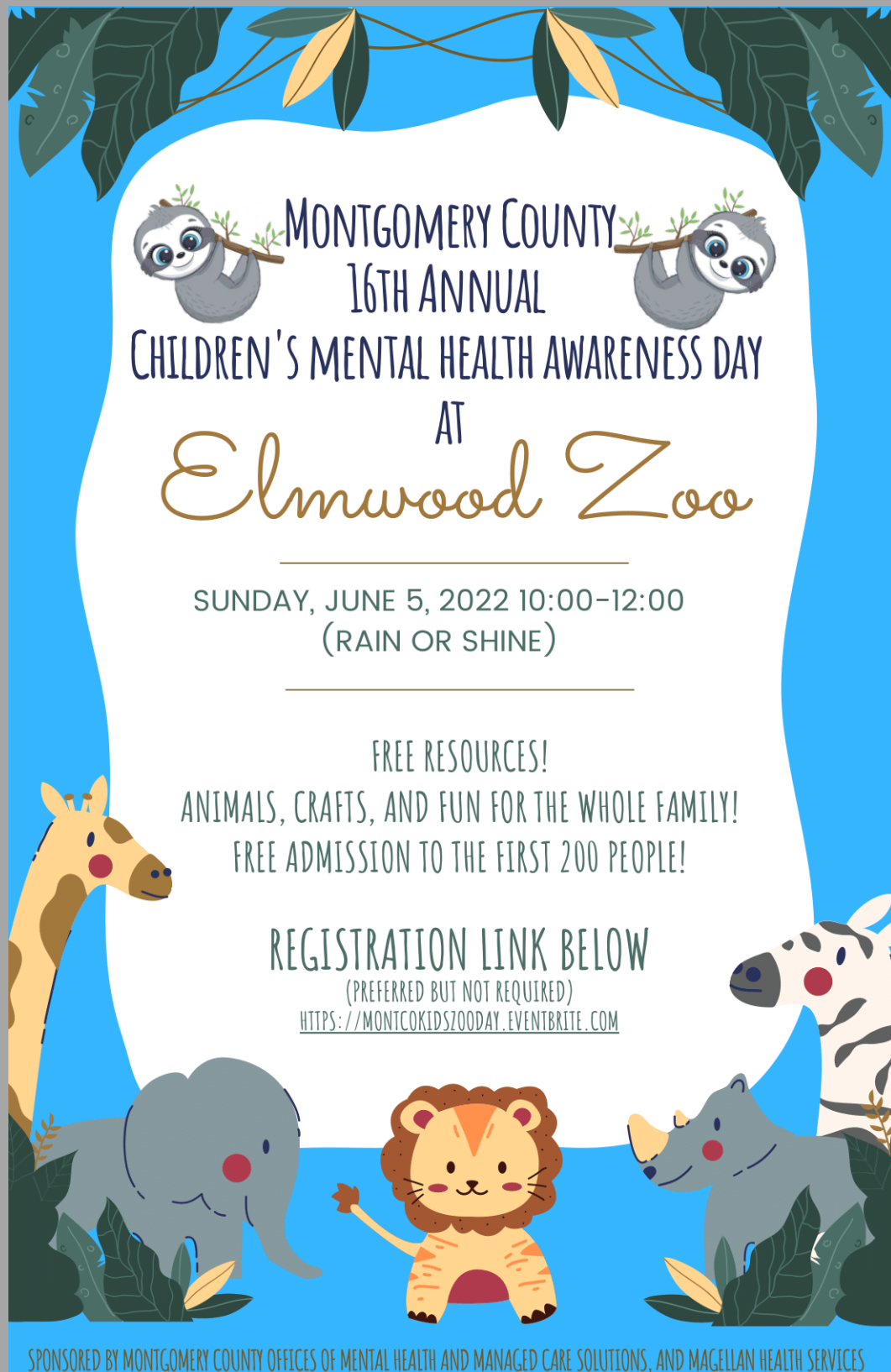
- Support families when navigating the child serving systems- including education, juvenile justice, behavioral health, and more
- Assist parents and caregivers in understanding their child's rights and responsibilities
- Help families prepare for and attend school and community meetings
- Provide information, referrals, training, and support to families and community partners
- Share our own stories of hope and strength as parents who have been in your shoes



For more information, please contact:

Lisa Radcliffe  
Program Supervisor  
[Lradcliffe@hopeworxinc.org](mailto:Lradcliffe@hopeworxinc.org)  
610-618-2059

Clare Higgins  
Program Director  
[chiggins@hopeworxinc.org](mailto:chiggins@hopeworxinc.org)  
484-672-1446



MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
16TH ANNUAL  
CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY  
AT  
Elmwood Zoo

SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2022 10:00-12:00  
(RAIN OR SHINE)

FREE RESOURCES!  
ANIMALS, CRAFTS, AND FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!  
FREE ADMISSION TO THE FIRST 200 PEOPLE!

REGISTRATION LINK BELOW  
(PREFERRED BUT NOT REQUIRED)  
<https://montcokidszooday.eventbrite.com>

SPONSORED BY MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICES OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MANAGED CARE SOLUTIONS, AND MAGELLAN HEALTH SERVICES



# Statewide CSP Meeting



**June 2, 2022 | 9am to 12pm**



**Two Attendance Options - Virtual On Zoom**

**Or In-Person @**

**Pennsylvania Training &  
Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)  
6340 Flank Dr.  
Harrisburg, PA. 17112**

**\* REGISTER HERE \***

Please join us for a meeting designated to connect everything CSP in Pennsylvania. PMHCA and the four Regional CSPs are working together to initiate and facilitate this meeting as a way to recreate communication pathways and reconnect after the difficult years during the COVID pandemic.

We need to know how many individuals intend to log in so we can ensure enough spaces are available. Please register each person separately if they will be logging into Zoom individually. If you are attending virtually with a group at one location with one login, please only register once.



**Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services  
SFY22-23 Mental Health Planning Council**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

The OMHSAS Mental Health Planning Council will meet on the third Tuesday of the second month each quarter (August, November, February, and May). In years when the May meeting would fall on the Pennsylvania Primary Election, the May meeting will be held on Monday instead.

If any changes occur throughout the year, updates will be provided through the MHPC Appointed Member Listserv and the [OMHSAS Public Listserv](#).

**Schedule**

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Tuesday August 16, 2022 from 10AM-3PM

Tuesday November 15, 2022 from 10AM-3PM

Tuesday February 21, 2023 from 10AM-3PM

Monday May 15, 2023 from 10AM-3PM

**Location**

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Currently the MHPC is meeting remotely through the Webex Platform. Meeting notifications are sent to appointed MHPC Members through an Outlook Calendar Invitation along with a PDF Meeting Access Sheet. The PDF Meeting Access Sheet is also distributed through the OMHSAS listserv for interested sunshine attendees.

**Contact**

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Any questions related to the Mental Health Planning Council can be sent to the MHPC Email Address: [RA-PWOMHSASMHPC@pa.gov](mailto:RA-PWOMHSASMHPC@pa.gov)



**AdvocacyWorx**  
(formerly Community Advocates  
of Montgomery County)

**F.Y.I.**  
**Find Yourself Inside**  
**Forensic Peer Support Group**

**WHAT IS IT?** A peer support group for men and women with behavioral health and criminal justice system involvement to support each other in re-entering society, maintaining their freedom, and building a positive life.

**WHERE:** Christ Episcopal Church—316 E. High St. Pottstown, PA 19464

**WHEN:** Every Tuesday, beginning March 8, 2022

**TIME:** 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

**HOW DO I JOIN?** Just show up. Coffee and pastries will be provided.

**Hosted by:**

**AdvocacyWorx**

Vernon Steed, Forensic Peer Advocate

Email: [vsteed@hopeworxinc.org](mailto:vsteed@hopeworxinc.org)

Phone: 610-270-0375




# Mobile Veterans' Discount ID Card Event



Co-hosted by  
**Jeanne Sorg, Montgomery County  
Recorder of Deeds, and  
NAMI Montgomery County PA**

## May 20, 2022

 **nami**  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
**Montgomery  
County PA**

**10 AM to 12 PM  
NAMI Montgomery County PA  
100 W Main Street, Ste. 204  
Lansdale, PA 19446**

Veterans should bring their DD214 (military discharge papers) and a photo identification card (such as a Pennsylvania Drivers' License) with them to record their discharge papers and receive their discount ID card. There is no fee to record military discharge papers.

<https://www.montcopa.org/478/Veterans-Photo-ID-Discount-Card>

**For more information, contact  
Leann Pettit at [lpettit@montcopa.org](mailto:lpettit@montcopa.org) or 610-278-3289**



## CSP Subcommittee Reports from April 2022

**Advocacy Subcommittee** - We talked about the survey results, the Norristown State Hospital land use, and the portion of the land of NSH will be conveyed to Norristown township. There are 4 programs that will be impacted. This includes a large homeless shelter and 2 residential programs. They have been given notice that they have to be out by July 1. No one will be ready by July 1 to move. We are advocating for an extension of the leases for 6 months to a year so the programs have a smooth transition. We sent a letter out to a number of state reps and senators. We got a response from Norristown that they will not renew the leases. Please contact your elected officials and legislatures. Let your council members know. Tell your friends.

Also, they are building a new forensic unit that will replace building 51 and building 10. This is a long-term project. A reminder that May 17th is an election day and it's an important election. We are electing new reps in the federal state house and senate. We are electing people that will be on the ballot in November. With census we had to do redistricting so check your district.

Peer respite update: A consultant group was hired to help with business planning and finding a property. We will be applying for more funding. It is at least a year from being up and open, but we are moving forward.

**Community Outreach Subcommittee** - No requests for money to decide on. Art contest voting is still going on until tomorrow.

**Conference Subcommittee** - Almost a month away to event. We will be sending out an updated flyer. Please share! We have 36 attendees so far. Please register! We picked a date to help with bag stuffing. Award winners have been selected and notified. We will be looking for volunteers the day of. If you're interested in volunteering please let us know.

### CSP MEETING CALENDER 2022

*Meetings are held every third  
Thursday, monthly @  
Norristown Public Library from  
12: 00-2:30pm*

*The next meeting will be:*

May	19
June	16
July	21
August	18

*Until further notice, these meet-  
ings are via Zoom.*

### Montgomery County CSP Executive Committee

#### *2021/2022 Tri-Chairs*

Provider Member: Abby Grasso

Person in Recovery: Danny Kuchler

Family Member: Kathy Laws

#### *2021/2022 Sub-Committee Chairs*

Social/Media: Penny Johnson

Advocacy: Kim Renninger, Julie Whitmore

Conference: Erin Hewitt, Stacey Volz

#### *2021/2022 Treasurer*

Dion Despaigne, CST Specialist



*Fiduciary* - HopeWorx, Inc.

**CSP Principles**

- \* **Consumer Centered/  
Consumer Empowered**
- \* **Culturally competent**
- \* **Able to Meet Special  
Needs**
- \* **Community Based with  
Natural Supports**
- \* **Flexible**
- \* **Coordinated**
- \* **Accountable**
- \* **Strength Based**

**Join our  
Mailing list!**

We have an e-mail list as  
well as a regular mailing,  
to join:

**Send an e-mail to:**

**pjohnson@hopeworxinc.org**  
*Or send your contact info to  
the mailing address below*

***Meetings:***

*12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.*

***3rd Thursday  
of each month***

*Norristown  
Public Library Community Room  
1001 Powell St.  
(at Swede St.)*

**Kathie Mitchell, Newsletter Editor**

**Montgomery County  
Community Support Program**

1210 Stanbridge Street,  
Suite 600  
Norristown, PA 19401  
610-270-3685

Website: [www.montcopacsp.org](http://www.montcopacsp.org)

**ABOUT CSP*****Mission Statement:***

Montgomery County's Community Support Program (CSP) brings together individuals that receive mental health services, their family members, providers and the Department of Behavioral Health in an equal partnership to promote recovery and excellence in the delivery of community-based mental health services.

The committee strives to include a balance of people who use services, people who provide services, family members, and interested members of the community at large.

The CSP initiatives continue to grow state, regionally and county wide. As the involvement increases CSP has become a place that feedback can truly be given to the county from individuals that receive services and information can be given that suits the needs and requests of those that attend.

***CSP Subcommittees:***

- \* **Advocacy Subcommittee**—Works on legislative, policy, communication, budget, voter education and other issues related to mental health services in the county, statewide and at the federal level when relevant. At the direction of the CSP Committee, the Advocacy Subcommittee gathers information on issues, plans advocacy events and creates a monthly newsletter to provide information to the stakeholder network as well as the community at large about the work of CSP. The newsletter also provides updates on new and changing mental health services provided in Montgomery County.
- \* **Social/Media Subcommittee**—Works on facilitating opportunities for people in the CSP community to be more involved in the Montgomery County community. This includes implementing the Community Connections grants, which provide funding for people to participate in a variety of activities. The committee also implements transportation grants that provide gas cards and SEPTA day passes to CSP community members. The annual CSP Poster Art contest is also organized by this committee.
- \* **Conference Sub-committee** – The conference subcommittee will plan and fundraise for the annual Montgomery County CSP Conference.
- \* **Newsletter Subcommittee**—The newsletter subcommittee works to provide information to the public about CSP and mental health advocacy. The newsletter subcommittee is committed CSP recovery principles which is person centered and empowered by stakeholders. Our goal is to provide information through various media avenue and to create a quality newsletter that includes but is not limited to, legislative advocacy, events, services, personal recovery stories and creative writing such as poems. Please feel free to submit articles and stories to enrich our newsletter. Send to the editor: [kathiemitchell8221@gmail.com](mailto:kathiemitchell8221@gmail.com).

***Organizations who regularly send representatives to CSP:***

Central Behavioral Health  
Community Advocates of Montgomery Co..  
Consumer Satisfaction Team of Montgomery County  
Hedwig House  
Magellan Health Services  
Mental Health Partnerships  
Montgomery Co. Department of Behavioral Health  
Montgomery County Emergency Services (MCES)  
NAMI Montgomery County  
Norristown Vet Center  
Resources for Human Development  
Salisbury Behavioral Health

We invite all peers, family members and providers/professionals to attend.



**If you can't attend the monthly  
CSP meetings but would like to  
give your feedback on topics we  
discuss, please email us at  
[amalcolm@hopeworxinc.org](mailto:amalcolm@hopeworxinc.org)**