

Community Support Journal

Montgomery County Community Support Program Committee *Newsletter*

July 2024

Volume 7



CSP Logo designed by
Chris Ford

Wellspring Clubhouse open To Montco residents

By: Kathie Mitchell, CSJ Editor

At the Wellspring Clubhouse, membership is a choice, participation is voluntary and relationships are mutual.

“We do with, not for,” said Jocelyn, a representative from Well-spring. “It’s not a day treatment center or drop-in center. Members choose when they come and how they utilize it. We are all equals.”

Jocelyn and Josh, a Clubhouse member, gave a presentation to the Montgomery County CSP Committee at its June meeting. Wellspring is part of St. Luke’s Penn Foundation which is located in Sellersville, Bucks County. It serves residents in both Bucks and Montgomery counties.

According to their website, “Wellspring Clubhouse is a voluntary psychosocial rehabilitation program based on the original “Clubhouse Model” founded by Fountain House in New York City in 1948. The purpose of our Clubhouse is to promote recovery and in-still hope among members with mental health challenges.”

Josh said his experience at the Clubhouse helped him to get reconnected with others and to get back to working and pursuing an education.

“It was a good place for me to get out of the house and eventually later on I found other things I was able to do,” Josh said.

He took on temporary paid employment at St. Luke’s for a 9-month period and got experience. He then went back to school starting at the POWER Program at Montgomery County Community College. Josh graduated from POWER at the top of his class and received a scholarship. He will start his next term at college in the fall.

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The Ferns Peer Respite opens soon

By: Kathie Mitchell, CSJ Editor

Sarah Spath, Chair of the Peer Respite Council, shared information about the opening of The Ferns Peer-Run Respite at the June CSP meeting.

“We’re very excited that we are just about to open - super excited to talk about this with you,” Spath said.

The Ferns Peer Run Respite is a voluntary, short-term, 24-7 place to stay for individuals who are distressed or in a crisis - a place where you are

[Continued on page 2](#)

doing it on your own terms. All staff are peers and trained on Intentional Peer Support, Spath said.

What it is: The Ferns Peer Run Respite is an extra crisis resource in a home environment. A space that values everyone as the expert on themselves. There's an opportunity to connect and to learn from crisis in an environment that holds a person present to agreements of safety, respect and responsibility for the little tiny community that will be there with you.



What it is not: It's not locked down. Each person has their own bedroom. It's not clinical and there's no diagnosis necessary. It's not thinking in terms of referrals or insurance.

"You agree to community guidelines, you respect rights and freedoms of others and they respect yours but you decide how you spend your time there," Spath said.

She added that there's a growing number of peer respites in the country which are considered person-centered crisis alternatives. Individuals who utilize peer respites are 70 percent less likely to use inpatient or emergency room services. Peer respites statistically show improvement in healing, empowerment and self-esteem. There's also a cost savings: Cost per stay for inpatient can be \$35,000 versus \$3,000 per stay for a person at a peer respite.

The Ferns LLC incorporated in 2023 and purchased property in March. The Peer Respite Council has been around since 2017. HopeWorx is the sole member and parent company. The Council is comprised of peers with lived experience. Sue Shannon, Penny Johnson, and Kathy Laws have been part of the Council. The creation of a peer run respite has been a labor of love that so many people have been dreaming about for so long, Spath said.

Please spread the word. We are recruiting for paid staff and volunteers for the council. Donations are helpful, time or money. HopeWorx has been helping with furnishings, she said.

Olivia Kripak is the director and can be reached at okripak@theferns.org. Sarah's information: <mailto:sspath@theferns.org>.

Website:

<https://www.hopeworxinc.org/services/ferns-peer-respite/>



Wellspring Clubhouse from page one

Jocelyn said the Clubhouse empowers members to take full control of their recovery, rehabilitation and how they choose to use the clubhouse. Wellspring follows 37 standards created by members and staff of clubhouses all over the world. There are 300 clubhouses across the globe and 21 in PA.

Jocelyn said they like to call Wellspring “a therapeutic community without the therapy.” There’s no medication management or therapy. It’s not a hospital setting or outpatient setting. The work of the clubhouse is the conduit to the rehabilitation and relationships they build.

Wellspring offers a work-ordered day. There are employment services, education and volunteer opportunities. They also provide mobile psyche rehab. Staff go out into the community and meet people where they are. There are social activities after hours. The Clubhouse also collaborates with Penn Foundation for housing opportunities.

To be a member, a person should be 18 years or older and have a mental health diagnosis. Relationships are equal and staff and members model workplace behavior together. All members have a say in all meetings regarding policies or changes. There are no separate staff meetings and members and staff hire staff together. Members and staff attend conferences together and spend all major holidays together.

Wellspring offers transitional, supported and independent employment. They work with community partners and positions are set aside for members. The Clubhouse covers the job and can mediate with the employer and provides transportation such as Transnet and Bucks County Transport. Wellspring Wheels also picks up people.

Jocelyn said the financial impact of the Clubhouse is very cost effective. One year of Clubhouse equals a 2-week stay at a hospital. Clubhouse International is a great resource about clubhouses. <https://clubhouse-intl.org/>.

We offer three types of Employment opportunities/assistance

transitional

supported

independent



These programs represent various levels of support offered by the Clubhouse



The first step in becoming a member – Reach out to the clubhouse. Get a tour. Fill out a referral. Submit a recent psych evaluation. They are flexible with membership. If a person doesn’t have Medicaid, then the county pays. Lunch is \$1.50.

Contact: jocelyn.giancola@sluhn.org
<https://www.pennfoundation.org/services/mental-health/for-adults/wellspring-clubhouse/>

Annual Election of Committee Chairs

Montgomery County CSP Chair Descriptions

Nominations for Committee Chairs are held every August and the elections are conducted in September. Once a year, an Executive Committee will be elected. Each Member will cast one (1) vote per candidate, and the candidates receiving the highest number of votes will serve on the Executive Committee. Anyone currently serving as chair or subcommittee chair wishing to stay on as chairs are welcome to do so.

The Executive Committee of the CSP will include a person with lived experience co-chair, a provider co-chair, a family member Co-chair.

The Executive Committee of the CSP will include:

- three facilitators' co-chairs.
- a Treasurer
- two Conference Subcommittee facilitators
- two Advocacy Subcommittee facilitators.
- two Community Connections facilitators
- Sue Shannon- HopeWorx Director

Co-Chair duties

The three Co-Chair's duties include rotating running monthly CSP meetings: attending Executive Committee meetings once a month and assisting in executive committee decisions and guest speaker ideas.

Subcommittee Chairperson duties

Assist in keeping the subcommittee working on its assigned tasks; attend Executive Committee meetings each month; give reports on the work of the subcommittee as requested.

Treasurer Duties

The Treasurer will keep accounts of the CSP's financial transactions, and report on all transactions and the financial condition of the CSP.

For more information, contact Penny Johnson:
pjohnson@hopeworxinc.org.



NAMI Montgomery County News



Hope 4 Tomorrow



POETRY WORKSHOP AND CONTEST

WRITING WORKSHOPS
(ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND ALL!)

TUESDAYS: 7/9, 7/23, AND 8/6
6:30 TO 8:30 PM

**SLAM OPEN MIC
COMPETITION**

TUESDAY, AUGUST 13TH
6 TO 8 PM

OPEN TO YOUTH 13-18

**ECLIPSE CENTER FOR
CREATIVE COMMUNITY**



NAMI Family-to-Family

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Every Monday starting July 8th, 2024





What is the NAMI Basics Education Program?

NAMI Basics is a free, six-session program designed for parents and other family caregivers of children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral difficulties. NAMI Basics helps parents and other family caregivers of children to understand the illnesses that are causing those behavioral difficulties, and the critical role families play in the treatment of those illnesses. The program is taught by trained teachers who are also the parents or family caregivers of individuals who experienced emotional or behavioral difficulties prior to age 13.

NAMI Montgomery County the local organization of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, will offer its NAMI Basics Education Program for the summer beginning **July 10th, 2024**. It will be held on **Wednesday's at 6 PM** virtually on Zoom.



Participant Perspectives

"This is such a great step by step program that walks parents every step of the way. It is as if you are holding their hand through it all."

"The course is inclusive of almost all aspects of family and child resources. I could have spent a lifetime getting all this information on my own. I feel supported, strong, and ready to go forward."

"NAMI Basics bridges the gap. It provides help that can't be found in a doctor's office."

Contact us to register for this NAMI Basics class!

Office@namimontcopa.org

About NAMI

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI {Affiliate Name} is an affiliate of NAMI {State}. NAMI {Affiliate Name} and dedicated volunteer members and leaders work tirelessly to raise awareness and provide essential education, advocacy, and support group programs for people in our community living with mental illness and their loved ones.



REGISTER HERE



NAMIMONTCOPA.ORG

HEALTHY LIVING

Stay Cool in the Heat

With temperatures high and rising, it's important to keep cool and stay safe while enjoying the great outdoors. Follow these five simple hot weather tips:

**Stay hydrated:**

Drink plenty of water and avoid drinks with caffeine, alcohol, or sugar

Dress for the weather:

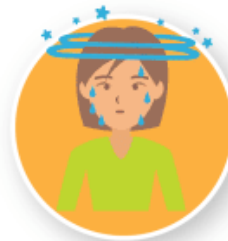
Opt for lightweight, light-colored clothing that won't absorb the sun's heat

**Stay indoors:**

Avoid outdoor exercise during the hottest times of the day

Watch for heat exhaustion:

If you notice you have cool or flushed skin, heavy sweating, and/or dizziness, go to a cooler place, drink water, and rest

**Use the buddy system:**

Keep an eye out for others when working in hot temperatures

Source: Red Cross



Exciting News!

Pottstown Beacon of Hope is thrilled to announce that we can now start building our 24/7 shelter!

After two years of hard work and overcoming title issues, we officially took ownership of the 601/619 West High Street property yesterday.

We deeply appreciate the unwavering support from our volunteers and donors during this time. Your energy and dedication kept us moving forward!

Our 24/7 shelter will provide a constant atmosphere of hope, love, and grace, helping us build trusting relationships with our guests and coordinate resources for their personal growth, independent living, and permanent housing. We aim to open the shelter in fall 2025. Until then, we'll continue operating the Winter Warming Center, offering a warm, safe place for Pottstown residents experiencing homelessness.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support as we work towards making the PBOH 24/7 shelter a reality!

RECOVERY IS FOR EVERYONE WALK

Every Person, Every Family, Every Community



Save the Date!

Saturday, September 21, 2024 | 9:00 AM
741 N. County Line Road | Souderton
(Next to Harleysville Bank/Across from Jesse's Barbeque)

Following the walk, enjoy free food, music, kids' activities, giveaways, and more at Hope Festival 2024, sponsored by Sweatshirt of Hope.

More Details to Come

Visit our website – PennFoundation.org – and Facebook page for updates.

Volunteers Needed

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Ryan Schweiger at 267-718-1464 or Ryan.Schweiger@sluhn.org.



Health and Human Services Block Grant Meeting

Montgomery County residents, organizations, and service providers are invited to help hone the future of human service delivery in Montgomery County. Join their Department of Health and Human Services for an in-person public hearing to discuss their Human Services Block Grant Plan.

Tuesday, July 23 at 3 p.m. at the Human Service Center Community Room (1st Floor), 1430 Dekalb St., Norristown, PA 19401.

[Learn more!](#)





Creating Increased Connections
A program of Resources for Human Development



CREATING INCREASED CONNECTIONS (CIC) GROUPS



CIRCLE OF HOPE

Circle of Hope is peer-to-peer led discussion group. Join us for lively conversation about how we are feeling, our successes and challenges, our recovery, and how we maintain our wellness. Everyone is welcome.

THURSDAYS
1:00PM-2:00PM
Trinity Reformed Church
60 N. Hanover St
Pottstown, PA 19464

WEDNESDAYS
10:00AM-11:30AM
Willow Grove Baptist Church

3600 Welsh Rd
Willow Grove, PA 19090

THURSDAYS
10:30AM-12:00PM
Hopeworx
1210 Stanbridge St #600,
Norristown, PA 19401

TAKING BACK OUR POWER

Taking Back Our Power is a peer support group for individuals with lived experience of sensory phenomena (like hearing things others don't hear) and unusual beliefs

TUESDAYS
2:30PM-4:00PM
Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church
625 Montgomery Ave
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

MONDAYS
3:00PM-4:30PM
Haws Avenue United Methodist Church
800 W Marshall St
Norristown, PA 19401

LIVE ANOTHER DAY

TUESDAYS
12:30PM-1:45PM
Lansdale Library
301 Vine St
Lansdale, PA 19446

Alternatives to Suicide groups are intended as non-judgmental spaces where people can share some of their darkest thoughts without being assumed to have an illness or being assessed for involuntary interventions. Openly exploring these thoughts - and the feelings and experiences underneath them - is often the key to moving toward something different.

COMPAÑEROS (AS) CON VALOR Y EXITO

CIC se enorgullece de ofrecer nuestro grupo de discusión Compañeros Con Valor y Exito. Únase con nosotros para una conversación animada sobre cómo nos sentimos, nuestros éxitos y desafíos, su recuperación y cómo mantenemos nuestro bienestar. Todo lo que se dice en grupo es confidencial y todos son bienvenidos.

Pronto

WOMENS IDENTITY AND EXPERIENCES GROUP

WEDNESDAYS
3:00PM-4:30PM

This group was created for women as a safe environment to voice & openly share our life stories as women & to empower ourselves to find greater meaning & purpose in life.

[Zoom Link](https://rhd.zoom.us/j/83638683076)
<https://rhd.zoom.us/j/83638683076>

For more information Contact Sheila.HallPrioleau@RHD.org 215-906-0453
www.ciconnections.org



Creating Increased Connections

A program of Resources for Human Development

Taking Back our Power

Taking Back Our Power is a confidential peer led support group for those who hear, see, feel, or believe things not shared by others. Anyone with these experiences is welcome to join.

Enter in rear of the church
on King St
Ring Bell to Enter

Thursdays

1:00PM-2:00PM

Trinity Reformed Church
60 N. Hanover St
Pottstown, PA 19464

Visit Our Website
www.CIConnections.org

Questions Contact
Hugo.Lopez@RHD.org
484-374-0904



WE ARE HIRING



FULL-TIME, PART-TIME, PER DIEM

Who? and Where?

- The Ferns Peer-Run Respite
- Pottstown, PA

Requirements:

- Valid Drivers License
- Experience or training in direct peer support
- Personal lived experience

Apply Now

If Interested in a job position email:
okripak@theferns.org
 with the subject line:
"Ferns Peer Partner Position"



COMMUNITYWORX ANNUAL

GREEN LANE

CAMPING ADVENTURE



Free Trip



Limited Space

Join us for HopeWorx's Camping Adventure! as we venture into the wilderness, explore breathtaking landscapes, and create memories that will last a lifetime.

Dates: August 2nd, 3rd and 4th Return. (2024)



Camping Skills



Firing Up Memories



Engaging Activities



610-270-3685 ext. 3502
Call for Reservations

HopeWorx Inc.
www.hopeworxinc.org



Subcommittee Reports from June 2024

Advocacy Subcommittee: Akilah talked about advocacy goals for 2024. Homelessness. Transportation. Writing a letter to talk about barriers to timely access to healthcare, transportation. Symposium for statewide CSP and they are looking for stories. Julie said Hill Day on May 15th was awesome. Very powerful. Speakers were inspirational. We advocated to legislators. Justin shared his story with legislative reps. Kathy said the committee appreciated the CSP contingent that represented Montco CSP at the Capitol. Need a co-chair!

Community Connectors - Reaching out to CPSs. Go to meetings and talk about our grants and newsletter. Reach out and network with Hispanic communities. Sharing PowerPoint. Showcase event to providers. Need a co-chair.

Conference Subcommittee - Harry said they reviewed what we did this year. Just minor things to work on for next year. Any recommendations, please email Harry. hbowles@hopeworxinc.org.

CSP MEETING CALENDER 2024-25

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

The next meetings will be:

July	18
August	15
September	19
October	17

*Meetings are held in person
and via Zoom.*

Montgomery County CSP Executive Committee

2023/2024 Tri-Chairs

Provider Member: Jim Markey

Person in Recovery: Justin Chamrin

Family Member: Kathy Laws

County Liaison -
Tracey Riper-Thomas



2023/2024 Sub-Committee Chairs

Community Outreach: Dion Despaigne, Julie Whitmore

Advocacy: Akilah Williams, Michelle Gonzalez

Conference: Danny Kuchler, Stacey Volz

Fiduciary - HopeWorx, Inc.

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

2023/2024 Treasurer

Dion Despaigne

CSP Principles

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

Organizations who regularly send representatives to CSP:

Central Behavioral Health, AdvocacyWorx, Community Satisfaction Team of Montgomery County, Magellan Health Services, Montgomery Co. Department of Behavioral Health, Montgomery County Emergency Services (MCES), NAMI Montgomery County, Norristown Vet Center, Resources for Human Development, Salisbury Behavioral Health

Meetings:

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

3rd Thursday of each month

HopeWorx

1210 Stanbridge St.

Suite 600

Norristown, PA 19401

In person & Zoom

Kathie Mitchell, Newsletter Editor

Join our Mailing list!

We have an email list as well as a regular mailing, to join:

Send an e-mail to:

pjohnson@hopeworxinc.org

Or send your contact info to this mailing address:

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. The newsletter editor can be contacted at: kathiemitchell8221@gmail.com.
- * **Community Connections 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 Subcommittee** – The conference subcommittee will plan and fundraise for the annual Montgomery County CSP Conference.

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

Website: www.montcopacsp.org

<https://www.facebook.com/montcopacsp/>