



## Why mental health matters

It is common to think that only people with mental illnesses have to pay attention to their mental health.

But the truth is that your emotions, thoughts and attitudes affect your energy, productivity and overall health. Good mental health strengthens your ability to cope with everyday hassles and more serious crises and challenges. Good mental health is essential for creating the life you want.

Just as you brush your teeth or get a flu shot, you can take steps to promote your mental health. A great way to start is by learning to deal with stress.

### How stress hurts

Stress can eat away at your well-being like acid eating away at your stomach. Actually, stress can contribute to stomach pains and lots of other problems, like:

- headaches
- insomnia
- overeating
- back pain
- high blood pressure
- irritability
- vulnerability to infection



Stress can also lead to serious mental health problems like depression and anxiety disorders. If you think you have such a problem, you can get help.

Of course you can't magically zap all sources of stress. But you can learn to deal with them in a way that promotes the well-being you want—and deserve. Contact us at 260.422.6441 or more information about ways to reduce stress.

Source: Mental Health America

*“Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of, but stigma and bias shame us all.” - Bill Clinton*

### In This Issue

- From the Executive Director
- What's happening at Cedars Hope
- Annual Gala of 2015
- Seasonal Affective Disorder
- Look who joined the MHA team!
- Upcoming Events



## From the Executive Director

### New Name, Same Great Organization

Since our previous newsletter in October, there has been a lot going on at Mental Health America. We've hired three new staff members. We held our Annual Gala, our premiere event for the community, where we raised over **\$35,000** for our organization through a dinner and silent auction. Finally, we are changing our name! We will no longer be Mental Health America in Allen County; instead, you can call us **Mental Health America of Northeast Indiana!**

The distinction may seem small at first, but this name change indicates big things happening at our organization. Allen County will still be our home, and will always be very near and dear to our hearts, but now we are consciously extending our reach past Allen County to the larger Northeast Indiana region. This is an amazing opportunity both for us and for this region. Expanding our services and programs will reach more people, and reaching more people means providing more education, raising more awareness regarding mental health issues, and even saving more lives.

According to data gathered by Mental Health America, Indiana is one of the lowest ranked states when it comes to general mental wellness and access to resources to improve mental health. If someone struggles with mental illness in Indiana, it is likely that they may not have access to the resources they need to get better. This data makes it clear that our services are needed throughout northeast Indiana. We will serve Allen, Adams, DeKalb, Huntington, Kosciusko LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, and Whitley counties. And we will continue to offer the same quality advocacy, guardianship, education and housing services that people have come to rely on for more than 60 years.

Thank you for your continuing support of our organization, particularly during this time of change. Sometimes change can be daunting, but we truly believe the changes happening here will open up many opportunities for this organization and the community it serves.

*Lisa Smith, Executive Director*

## Happy New Year!

### New Year's Resolutions from our staff at Mental Health America.

With 2016 finally upon us, just about everyone is thinking about their New Year's Resolutions, including the staff at Mental Health America of Northeast Indiana. Maybe you'll find some inspiration for your own resolutions!

**Joseph:** To work on accepting people for who they are and not by my expectations.

**Angie:** To declutter closets and to keep them organized throughout the year.

**Shalynn:** Travel more. Worry less. Drink more water.

**Audrey:** To become more active in my daily life and write creatively every day.

**Lisa:** Improve personal health and make time for myself.; accept those things I can't change

**Teresa:** To be healthier and travel.





Annual Gala, 2015

## 2015 Gala Sponsors

We want to thank our generous corporate sponsors:

### Humanitarian

Ferraro Behavior Services LLC

### Ambassador

ResCare

Pizza Hut of Fort Wayne, Inc.

Lutheran Health Network

Steel Dynamics, Inc.

### Table Host

Crowe Horwath LLP

Granite Ridge Builders

Indiana Mentor

North Node Wellness, Inc.

Parkview Behavioral Health

Parkview Public Safety

Physicians Health Plan of Northern Indiana

Professional Emergency Physicians, Inc.

The Carriage House

### Advocate

Genesis Outreach

Health Insurance, Inc.

Sweetwater Sound, Inc.

Tokheim Athletic Organization

### 2015 Gala Committee

Dottie Davis

## What is Cedars Hope?

Cedars Hope offers safe, affordable, and supportive housing for homeless women living with mental illness. Cedars Hope's supportive housing is organized into a group living environment that encourages peer support and community engagement.

Our goal is to help the 15 women we serve break the cycle of psychiatric crisis and homelessness, increase self-sufficiency, and learn to self-manage the symptoms of their mental illness and physical health challenges. Training and assistance with daily living skills, interpersonal skills and increased community involvement through employment, volunteering, education, or other therapeutic activities is an important part of the residents' life at Cedars Hope.

Cedars is located at 527 West Berry Street and 813/815 Fulton Street in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

**Serving 15 residents.**

# CEDARS HOPE

## A smiling face at Cedars

Val has been with Cedars Hope for more than 10 years. Her story is like many people who have lived on the streets and faced personal challenges her whole life. However, it's her smiling face and warm heart that reminds us that life has meaning and joy.



Val is active in the community. She volunteers at The Carriage House and helps her housemates with cooking and chores. Val is eager to pitch in when there is work to be done or someone needs help. She even hosts a Halloween Party for the other residents, and she came as a "cowgirl in pink" this past year.

Val loves Tinkerbell and Disney movies. She enjoys listening to music, exploring downtown, and hanging out with friends. Val would like to live in her own apartment someday, but for now she is staying at Cedars Hope where she can

## Annual gala a huge success!

The 2015 Gala was held at the Landmark Conference & Reception Centre, Saturday October 17. The event included dinner, silent auction, and dancing to the sounds of PrimeTime band. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the event a great success, especially our corporate sponsors (see side panel).

The silent auction consisted of numerous items donated by area businesses and individuals. We thank them for their generosity that helped make this event a success.

We raised more than \$35,000—which will benefit our programs and services that impact children, adults, families and the community. Because of the generous support at the gala, we are better able to expand services to support people who are struggling with mental health issues.

Mark your calendar for the 2016 event to be held Saturday, October 8 at Parkview's Mirro Center for Research and Innovation. Activities include a silent auction and dancing until 11 pm. Tickets will be available in August 2016. Watch more details coming soon!



## A New Year's Toast to Cedars

*By Kathryn Ann Young (Poet in Residence at Cedars Hope)*

Liftoff? It's not the flight it's the landing and takeoff. Circling and circling with no place to land? No passport or visa? Can you try to "speak the language." If you had a cat, would you name her Moscow? Sputnik? Yugoslavia? Would you even still live in this (northern) hemisphere?

Contact Lisa Smith in the control tower — or lieutenants Nancy and Laurie. All have kinetic energy = "hummingbirds." Cedars = "Hope Beautiful." Boots on the ground by 9 o'clock. Everything nailed down or not nailed down = fixed and cleaned. "Praise the Lord and pass the medication" / "what you do when you don't have the determine what you are when you can't help it" / "Pick on somebody with your own diagnosis!" / "anything is possible if it is low key," (the other) Lisa / "it's easier to ask for forgiveness than permission" / "better safe than sorry," says Laurie (who would sweep the seashore if she could) / St. Nancy of Cedars / prn hugs from Lisa / "do your best and forget the rest," Amanda / Resha gives hugs pdq / Maddie "in a New York second" / and Samantha "like white on rice."

At the helm, the staff, I hope, will not burn out and jump ship. What a conglomerate sorority (oops/wow), convent and cathouse. All = soul sistas from Ron the bouncer (on drums) to Lisa Smith = "Queen Mother" (LISA, LISA, SHE'S OUR GAL IF SHE CAN'T DO IT, NOBODY SHALL!) Here's the toast to Cedars Hope!!

## About Us

### Board of Directors

James Dance, President  
Victor Torres, Vice Pres.  
Laura Ramsey, Treasurer  
Dottie Davis, Secretary  
Shelia Bertram  
Sarah Bridgwater  
Albert Brownlee  
Kerrie Fineran  
Kim Fuhmann  
Jane Holliday  
Amy Lehrman  
Jere Leib  
Carlton Mable  
Nancy McAfee  
Amy Nitza  
Marci Olinger  
Rachel Steinhofner  
James Stump

### MHAAC Staff

Lisa Smith, Executive Director  
Shalynn Bailey  
Joseph Blazier  
Julie Cameron  
Teresa Harmeyer  
Angela Helmsing  
Mandy Rush  
Susan Street  
Audrey Whetstone

### Cedars HOPE Staff

Nancy Yoo, Supervisor  
Lisa Adams  
Maddie Corcoran  
Samantha Novy  
Deshire Whitt  
Laurie Zigler

## Seasonal Affective Disorder



There is a lot to look forward to in the winter. The holidays mean that you'll get to see family members you haven't seen in a while. There's the promise of a new year with new beginnings. And while this year's weather has been unusual, soft, fluffy snow coats everything in its blanket.

But aside from the festivities, there can also be a dark side to the season. Half a million people suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) every winter. SAD occurs between September and April, with December, January, and February being the worst.

Symptoms of SAD include sleeping problems, depressed moods, irritability, overeating, low energy, weight gain, and anxiety.

According to Mental Health America and the Mayo Clinic, there are a couple of different causes of SAD. During the winter, there is less sunlight. This affects our internal clocks that tell us when to go to bed and when to wake up. This can lead to the symptoms of SAD. Another cause is the fact that our brains produce more melatonin, a sleep-related hormone, when it is dark. This increase in melatonin can also cause SAD symptoms.

So, if you find yourself feeling more depressed each year during the winter months, you may want to speak with a mental health professional about SAD. Treatments for SAD may involve light therapy, medication, or simple lifestyle changes to expose the sufferer to more light.

## We joined the MHA team!

**Teresa Harmeyer** — My name is Teresa Harmeyer, the new Development Director here at Mental Health America. I came to MHA from *Business People* magazine where I was an account executive for almost 20 years. During my time at the magazine, community engagement and volunteering for nonprofits was very important to me. This new opportunity is exciting to me so we can help spread the message that mental illness and suicide must be part of the community conversation. It is my belief that community partners working together to provide mental health education in our region is essential.

**Mandy Rush** — My name is Mandy, and I was so pleased to be offered the opportunity to join the Mental Health America team as Director of Community Services. At my former agencies when I was able to interact with this team, I've always been impressed with their passion, enthusiasm, and professionalism. I have a Master's in Social Work with a background in mental health, addictions, social services, education, advocacy, and quality improvement programs. I am so excited to offer my services to such a great organization and to see where this journey takes us together!

**Audrey Whetstone** — My name is Audrey, and I'm the new Communication Coordinator at MHA. I'm a very recent graduate from the IPFW English Department (I graduated in December) and was first exposed to this organization when I interned here last spring. During my internship, I enjoyed working with the wonderful staff here and am pleased to know that I've been welcomed fully into the fold.



2200 Lake Avenue, Ste. 105  
Fort Wayne, IN 46805

NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
FORT WAYNE, IN  
PERMIT NO. 449



## Meet Paul Gionfriddo—May 12

Paul Gionfriddo's son Tim is one of the "6 percent"—an American with serious mental illness. He is also one of the half million homeless people with serious mental illnesses in desperate need of help yet underserved or ignored by our health and social-service systems.



On May 12, Gionfriddo will share his amazing story and book, *Losing Tim*. He will describe how Tim and others like him come to live on the street. Gionfriddo takes stock of the numerous injustices that kept his son from realizing his potential from the time Tim first began to show symptoms of schizophrenia and to the inadequate educational supports he received growing up, his isolation from family and friends, and his frequent encounters with the juvenile justice system and, later, the adult criminal-justice system and its substandard mental health care. *Losing Tim* shows that people with mental illness become homeless as a result not of bad choices but of bad policy. As the President and CEO of Mental Health America and a former state policy maker, Gionfriddo concludes with recommendations for reforming America's ailing approach to mental health.

- Legacy Breakfast, 7:30—9:00 am at Hotel Fort Wayne, Keynote-Paul Gionfriddo
- *Losing Tim: How Our Mental Health Education System Failed My Son With Schizophrenia* — Paul Gionfriddo's shares his son's story, 6:00 pm at Hotel Fort Wayne

More information and tickets will be available March 1  
on our website at [MentalHealthFrontDoor.org](http://MentalHealthFrontDoor.org).

## Contact Us

Mental health advocates offer mental health support and information about local resources in northeast Indiana.

**Mental Health America of Northeast Indiana**  
2200 Lake Ave Suite 105  
Fort Wayne, IN 46805

(260) 422-6441  
[info@mhaac.com](mailto:info@mhaac.com)

Visit us on the web at  
[mentalhealthfrontdoor.org](http://mentalhealthfrontdoor.org)

