What’s New at MHA?

2023 E-Racing the Blues for Mental Health: Recap

Thank you to everyone who participated in our E-Racing the Blues Walks for Mental Health in Rehoboth Beach and/or Glasgow Park on September 17 and 30th. Our fabulous volunteers, 32 sponsors, 13 exhibitors, 150 walkers, 6 teams, kickoff speakers, tai chi instructor, magician, and the many donors we had helped to make our events successful. We have raised over $33,000 to be used to help support our numerous mental health programs. Our donation site will remain open until October 20th.

We look forward to doing this again next year, and hope you will all be back with us, growing and evolving as we go!
2023 Higher Education Conference: Recap

The 2023 UMatter2DE Higher Education Suicide Prevention Conference was held on Tuesday, September 26th at Goldey-Beacom College, the theme being "You Matter: How To Navigate Your Mental Health." Attendees had the opportunity to learn about trauma, anxiety & perfectionism, mental health stigma, healthy relationships and substance use & recovery, and how they all relate back to mental wellbeing in higher education settings. These topics were presented by our keynote speaker and panelists, with the conference ending with a relaxing and fun art activity. This year's Higher Education Suicide Prevention Conference was engaging and informative, and we couldn't have done it without the following:

**Our Sponsors:** SUN Behavioral Health, SL24: Unlocke the Light Foundation, and Rockford Center

**Our Speakers:** Keynote: Dr. Kristen Wilson; Panelists: Jacob Bates, Allison Burns, Dr. Jackie B. Cousin and Dr. Michelle Ratcliff and Art Activity Presenter: Vanesa Simon

A special thank you to all of the planning subcommittee members & MHA staff members that assisted, vendors, Paws for People, Goldey-Beacom College for having us and everyone who attended. Last, but not least, an extra special shout out to Jaycee Wendell for organizing an amazing conference!
Director’s Note

Dear Friends,

As we look forward to the holidays and the end of the year, we are excited to plan for 2024 and all that the new year will bring. But before we move forward, I want to acknowledge the loss of a very special person: Jim Laffer-ty, the former Executive Director here at MHA.

Jim was a good friend and mentor to me for the last 14 years, and my heart has been heavy as I grapple with his loss. I know that there are many of us in the community whose lives were touched by Jim’s caring and compassion, his warmth and friendship. Jim was a born story teller and could always make us laugh here at the office, whether from hiding plastic cockroaches in various corners or describing some funny incident he had been through, such as falling in a lake while fishing. He always stressed the importance of peer support, collaboration, and quality care for every person – all of which are part of his legacy here at MHA.

Another loss for MHA is that our Deputy Director, Jennifer Seo, stepped into a new role at another organization this fall. We are happy for Jennifer as she finds new opportunity to learn and grow after 13 years at MHA. Jennifer is a wonderful leader and we look forward to keeping in touch with her as she moves forward in her career.

Finally, I want to acknowledge and thank our outgoing board members, who have spent the last 6 years with us, completing the two terms of board membership allowed for the agency.

Stephan and Cyndi Lehm have been absolutely wonderful, committed board members, and leaders in fundraising throughout their membership, bringing in many thousands of dollars in honor of their son, Kevin, through “Team Kevin” at our annual E-Racing the Blues walks. Thank you, Stephan and Cyndi, for your encouragement, thoughtful contributions in planning, and dedicated support for MHA!

John Roland, PhD, has been especially active in our training and conference focused on higher education, as a Professor at Springfield College, and also the Coordinator of their Masters in Mental Health Counseling program. We are grateful to have had John’s expertise and support throughout his board membership at MHA. We look forward to his remaining committed to the agency, and especially to the topic of advancing suicide prevention in colleges and universities.

As we look forward to the new year, we do so with gratitude for all of the many contributions each of these individuals have made to the agency, and continue to value their friendship and the encouragement and support they brought to MHA.

We are grateful for our current staff, board members, volunteers, donors, partners and many others who have worked together this year to promote mental wellness in Delaware through advocacy, education and support.

Warmly,

Emily Vera
Jim Lafferty, former Executive Director of MHA

Jennifer Seo, former Deputy Director of MHA
Outgoing board member, John Roland

Outgoing Board Members, Cyndi and Stephan Lehm (front center) with their E-Racing the Blues Team Kevin
Fall 2023 Campaign

Once upon a time, a master gardener stumbled upon two roses in her garden. One was flawless, without a single blemish, while the other bore scars from battles with the wind, pests, and time. Many would be drawn to the flawless rose, praising its perfection. But the master gardener preferred the scarred one, saying, “This rose, with all its imperfections, tells a story. It has faced challenges, yet it still blooms. It’s truly perfect in its own unique way.”

Life is much like that rose. We all have our scars, our stories, and our imperfections. But it's these very imperfections that make our journey beautiful and worth cherishing. -Kristina Lakhiani

Life's challenges seem to be increasing more than ever, with almost one in five Americans living with a mental illness. MHA advocates for those with these challenges, helping to reduce the stigma and promote wellbeing. This year, MHA educated over 3000 people in DE virtually and in person via peer trainings, suicide prevention and gatekeeper trainings. Ninety percent of training participants expressed changed behaviors after completing their trainings. Close to 300 individuals have attended an MHA wellness group. Every $25 donation allows us to train one facilitator to lead a wellness group for depression and anxiety, and each $45 donation can train one person in ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training).

Won't you please help the roses bloom despite the scars and challenges? Please visit our website at www.mhainde.org to view all of our services. Our donation link can be found below.

Thank you, and may your holidays be blessed with health of mind and body, along with beautiful roses.

MHA CEU’S & EVENTS

Understanding Veteran Needs and Resources: CEU

As peers in Delaware, we will encounter a wide range of people with a myriad of needs. Many former service members also live with mental illness and SUD. Only sixty percent of veterans utilize VA services, others would prefer not to discuss their service. How then are we to connect these individuals with the services they need and are open to them because of their service? This training will achieve 4 goals related to veterans in need through the following learning objectives:

1. Identify common things that veterans want others to know.
2. Define and discuss the “Ask the Question” campaign from the Governor’s Challenge, priority group
3. Identify resources that are specific to Veterans and their families.
4. Discuss current trends in veteran services with VA panelists during a Q&A session.

Date & Time: Thursday, November 16th at 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM on Zoom

Register Here: Mental Health Association in DE — Understanding Veteran Needs and Resources (corsizio.com)

November Peer Specialist Career Information Session

Do you have personal experience with mental health and/or substance abuse and consider yourself in recovery? Are you looking for a way to use your lived experience to give back to others, and turn it into a career? The profession of Peer Support might be for you! Please join us at a Peer Support Career information session (formerly known as Peer 101), where Peer Educators at the Mental Health Association in
This training is a certificate course, taught by two Copeland Center certified WRAP Advanced Level Facilitators. You will learn how to facilitate WRAP based on the best practices outlined by the Copeland Center for Wellness and Recovery. Additionally, you will learn the values and ethical guidelines of WRAP facilitators and how to use the WRAP Facilitator manual to support you as a WRAP Facilitator. There is an application process for this training. To complete the application, please click the register button and fill out the questions. You will be informed by email if you have been accepted into the training.

**Applicant Requirements**

- Applicant must be at least 18 years of age.
- Applicant must have completed WRAP Seminar 1: Developing your own WRAP
- Applicant must have completed and used their WRAP for at least 30 days
- Applicant must have a properly trained WRAP co-facilitator or have a co-facilitator attending the training with him or her.
- Applicant must have access to a WRAP facilitator manual.

**Dates:** Monday, December 4th - Tuesday, December 12th from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM

**Location:** Community Services Building (CSB), Wilmington, DE 19801

**Register Here:** [Mental Health Association in DE — WRAP Seminar 2: Facilitator Training (corsizio.com)](https://www.corsizio.com)

Delaware will take you through the roles and responsibilities peers face, requirements needed for employment, training opportunities, our yearly Peer Internship program, and other relevant opportunities. See you there!

Registration is preferred, walk-ins are welcome!
Come join our
MHA's Wellness Groups

CLICK ME!
To view more information

MHA offers a variety of peer-led wellness groups for adults, including Depression & Anxiety, Survivors of Suicide for Grief and Healing, People of Color, LGBTQ+, Disability Haven, Seeking Safety, Men's and Women's Wellness Groups

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<th>Location</th>
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<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>To register, contact Sydney Elliott at <a href="mailto:selliott@mhainde.org">selliott@mhainde.org</a></td>
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*Seeking Safety Wellness Group does not require registration
Mission:
To strengthen knowledge, resources and support around mental health and recovery.

Vision:
To create an environment in which everyone feels supported throughout their mental health and recovery journey.

Core Values:

Dignity: We respect the dignity and worth of every person. We all have the right and responsibilities to achieve our full potential in our society.

Compassion: We treat every person compassionately, free from stigma and prejudice.

Community Understanding: We persistently promote community understanding of mental health.

Elevating Voices: We advocate for those with lived experiences to have their voices heard.

Collaboration: We collaborate with others, and we actively look for partners to strengthen mental health.

Integrity: We work together with integrity and a sense of purpose.