



PAPRS NEWSLETTER

PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION SERVICES

2024 BOARD MEETINGS

-  JANUARY 25-26
-  MARCH 21-22
-  JUNE 13-14
-  SEPTEMBER 19-20
-  NOVEMBER 7-8

QUARTERLY NETWORKING EVENT:

THURSDAY, JUNE 20TH
11 AM - 12:30 PM

[REGISTRATION LINK](#)



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 717-655-7662

 www.paprs.org



PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

BY: KIM MACDONALD-WILSON, SCD, CPRP

A lot has happened since my last update in the September 2023 issue. When I began my term as President in 2023, the fiscal health of PAPRS was solid. However, we faced turnover among our staff, Board of Directors, and Board Officers, partly due to the stresses of recovering from a pandemic. To address this, we targeted strengthening PAPRS as an organization to support the growth of psychiatric rehabilitation in Pennsylvania.

By January 2024, we were fully staffed with Executive Director, Denise, Education Manager, Rochelle, Operations Assistant, Aaron, and Bookkeeper, Connie. We elected many new Board Members, 9 of whom began 3-year terms in January 2024 and staffed our committees. We welcomed 3 new Officers of the Board in January to complete the terms of President-Elect (Sara Dobson), Secretary (Allyson Chludzinski), and Treasurer (Tricia Fisher) through 2024. With so many new faces, we have been clarifying the roles and responsibilities of PAPRS employees (for day-to-day operations) and the volunteer PAPRS Board of Directors (for oversight, management, and direction).

We got everyone on board just in time for our Annual Conference in April 2024. Since many of us were new to the work of putting on the conference, it was amazing how we pulled together. I want to offer special thanks all the staff and Board members who helped set up and operate our Attendee Hub, assisted with registrations, solicited sponsorships, awarded scholarships, hosted sessions, presented workshops, organized and contributed to our poster contest, annual membership meeting, and closing ceremonies. And thanks to ALL of you who participated in the conference. You can read more about the conference in this issue.

We have been working with PRA on updates to the CPRP exam. Denise and I have participated on a Job Task Analysis Workgroup with other psychiatric rehabilitation leaders across the country to update the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities of psychiatric rehabilitation practitioners. PRA will be using this to confirm the reliability and validity of the test. PRA has invited our PAPRS members (especially those who have taken our Spring or Summer Bootcamp

PAPRS STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Denise Astaneh
denise.astaneh@papr.org

EDUCATION MANAGER

- Rochelle Reimert
rochelle.reimert@papr.org

OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

- Aaron Burkhardt
aaron.burkhardt@papr.org

PAPRS LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT

- Kim MacDonald-Wilson

PRESIDENT- ELECT

- Sara Dobson

SECRETARY

- Allyson Chludzinski

TREASURER

- Tricia Fisher

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

- Ellwyn Andres

BOARD MEMBERS

Collette D'Angelo
Skyler Deitrick
Virginia Dikeman
Pam Nabried-Abdullah
Julie Sanders
Holly Knoll
Debra Weisgerber
Caitlin Needham
Karen Yob
Katelyn Ivanac
Corinne Schnee
Laura Gardner
Kimberly Wilson-Roberson
Janelle Eberhardt
Nancy Micocci

ADVISORY MEMBERS

Jen McLaughlin	Gwen DeYoung
Susan Poznar	Rita Kraus
Maureen Walsh	Lu Mauro
Eileen Joseph	Amy DeMay
Donna Duffy Bell	

trainings) to take the exam between August 1 and October 15 with an agreement to wait for scores until the end of November. Those members will earn a free retake of the exam (if needed). See the announcement in this newsletter and on our website for details.

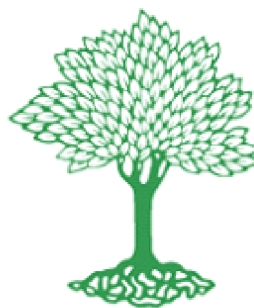
We have also been working on strengthening relationships within the state. Denise participated in Hill Day in Harrisburg in May, and we have regularly involved Robert Hammond of OMHSAS in our Board meetings. He reports that the updated Psychiatric Rehabilitation regulations (Chapter 5230) are nearing completion and may be released by early fall. Robert is also interested in bridging the gap between providers and OMHSAS. Robert asks anyone interested in sharing experiences or challenges, or who would be open to a visit to your program to reach out to him at rohammond@pa.gov.

Finally, I wanted to say that YOU, our members, have a say in how PAPRS operates. You vote for representatives to the Board of Directors each fall. You talk to us at our Networking Forums about challenges you face and supports you need from PAPRS (upcoming June 20, September 12, December 12). You vote on issues of concern to PAPRS – such as our upcoming update to the PAPRS By-laws that we hope to share later this year. You volunteer for a committee. And you can email or call us (717-655-7662) or contact your regional Board member. **PAPRS is here for you, our members.**

PAPRS HAS A NEW LOOK!

We're excited to share that we have redesigned our look! Stay tuned over the next few weeks as we refresh our website, social media pages, and other important documents as well!

Old Logo



PENNSYLVANIA
ASSOCIATION OF
PSYCHIATRIC
REHABILITATION
SERVICES

New Logo



PENNSYLVANIA
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SERVICES

2024 PAPRS CONTINUING EDUCATION

CREATING WELCOMING SERVICES FOR LGBTQIA+ INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR FAMILIES

➤ June 26 & 27
9 AM - 12PM

ORIENTATION TO PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION

➤ August 6, 7, 13, & 14
9 AM - 12PM

PSYCH REHAB SERVICES DOCUMENTATION

➤ August 20, 21, 27, & 28
9 AM - 12PM

ETHICS & BOUNDARIES IN RECOVERY ORIENTED SERVICES

➤ September 4 & 5
9 AM - 12PM

CPRP JOURNEY THROUGH THE DOMAINS (MUST ATTEND ALL)

➤ July 11 - 9 AM to 1 PM
➤ July 18 - 12:30 to 4:30 PM
➤ August 1 - 9 AM to 1 PM
➤ August 15 - 12:30 to 4:30 PM
➤ August 29 - 9 AM to 1 PM
➤ September 12 - 12:30 to 4:30 PM
➤ September 26 - 9 AM to 1 PM

NEW! PAPRS Instructor Application

PAPRS is pleased to announce a new process to apply to become a PAPRS Instructor.

If you are interested in joining our team of Instructors, please complete the [PAPRS Instructor Application](#).

TO REGISTER FOR A SESSION OR BROWSE ADDITIONAL DATES:

[Course Calendar](#)

CPRP CERTIFICATIONS
522 Members

PA IS LEADING THE WAY IN PSYCH REHAB!

CFRP CERTIFICATIONS
9 Members

HILL DAY: ADVOCATING FOR A RECOVERY-ORIENTED SYSTEM OF CARE

BY: DENISE ASTANEH

May 15, 2024 marked a day of unity and purpose, as thirteen mental health organizations, including the Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers' Association (PMHCA), converged on the steps of the State Capitol for Hill Day. Under the rallying cry of "Advocate. Educate. Promote," these organizations came together to demand a recovery-oriented system of care for mental health services in Pennsylvania.

They rallied for change. The central theme of Hill Day was encapsulated in the phrase "There's nothing about us, without us!" This powerful declaration underscores the belief that policies and services for mental health should be shaped by those directly impacted. More than one hundred attendees, including individuals who shared their personal recovery journeys, gathered to emphasize the necessity of inclusive and comprehensive mental health care.



Denise Astaneh, PAPRS Executive Director, on the steps of the Capitol in Harrisburg for Hill Day

The participating organizations presented three primary demands to state policymakers:

1. Funding for Comprehensive Recovery-Focused Services:

- The advocates called for sustained funding to support a full array of recovery-focused clinical services for adults and families in every community. This would ensure that no matter where someone lives, they have access to the mental health services they need to recover and thrive.

2. Support for Basic Needs:

- They insisted on funding to guarantee that all individuals in recovery have access to essential resources such as housing, food, clothing, shelter, internet, and transportation. The goal is to make these necessities easily accessible and affordable, as they are foundational to a person's recovery journey.

3. Whole-Health Approach to Service Delivery:

- There was a strong push for mental health services to adopt a whole-health approach, integrating physical and mental health care to treat the individual comprehensively. This holistic strategy aims to improve overall outcomes for those in recovery.

During the event, it was noted that Governor Shapiro has proposed a \$130 million increase in funding for mental health services. This proposed budget boost is seen as a step in the right direction, aligning with the demands of Hill Day participants. The collective call to action included a plea for investments in specific support services, such as:

Increased Crisis Services

Enhanced funding for crisis intervention services to ensure immediate and effective responses to mental health crises.

Expanded Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services

More resources for psychiatric rehabilitation services to help individuals regain skills and confidence for community living.

Growth in Community Peer Support Groups

Greater support for community-based peer support groups, which provide invaluable mutual aid and encouragement from those who have lived experience with mental health challenges.

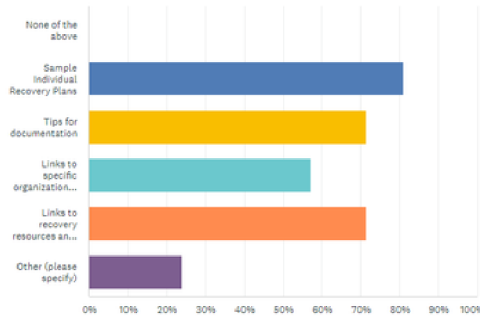
Hill Day was not just a gathering, but a pivotal moment of advocacy and education. By bringing their voices directly to the steps of the State Capitol, the mental health community made it clear that a recovery-oriented system of care is not only necessary, but urgent. The unified presence and compelling stories of recovery underscored the message: ***"Nothing about us, without us!"***



PAPRS WEBSITE SURVEY RESULTS

What tools/resources would you like to see on the website that could help you in your Psych Rehab role?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 1



OMHSAS UPDATE

BY: ROBERT HAMMOND



- PRS Regulations: We are working diligently on finalizing our review for final omit. We are anticipating that this should be completed by the fall.
- PRS SPA: We are moving forward with adding PRS to the State Plan. Stay tuned for further details on this development as they become available.
- Leadership Transition: The Office of Program and Policy welcomes a new acting Director, Jill Stemple.

MEET BOARD MEMBER, KATELYN IVANAC

BY: DEBI WEISGERBER



Katelyn Ivanac became a Board Member for PAPRS in January 2024, and is currently serving on the Membership and Budget/Finance Committees.

She speaks of her family with excitement, sharing “my family is my heart”. She is a wife of 8 years and the mother of 4 children, ages 10, 4, 3, and 1 ½. “Our house is chaotic all of the time but anyone who comes into our home can feel the love that lives there.”

Katelyn began her career in mental health in 2017 when she was hired by AMI as a peer mentor for the Transitional Age Youth and Young Adult program. While working as a peer mentor, she was introduced to Psych Rehab and took an interest as individuals were learning and having fun while doing so. Six years ago, she was presented with the opportunity to become part of the Psych Rehab program. Although she didn’t believe she had the skills to be a Psych Rehab worker, she has educated herself and worked her way up to her current position as On-Site Services Program Director in 2022. She now oversees the following programs:

- Psych Rehab Site Based and Mobile programs
- Drop in Center
- Psychosocial Program
- Specialized Supported Employment and Housing PRS Programs

She loves working for AMI because it is fully consumer run, saying that “recovery is the heart of the agency”. It allows her the ability to watch people learn and grow. “I love being part of an agency that supports personal and professional growth.”

“I am curious but cautious, and driven based on values and morals. I am not afraid to take ownership of my mistakes. I believe mistakes set the stage for growth.”

Katelyn becomes passionate about anything she commits to. In 2018, with the support of her supervisors and coworkers, she returned to school at California University to study Sociology, with a focus on deviant behavior. She graduated in 2022. During this time, she also studied and attained her CPRP in 2019, as well as her CFRP in 2021. She loves to learn, even when feeling scared, because it motivates her to understand the “why” of situations. “I think that’s how I got to the position I am in today.”

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: BEACON LIGHT'S CORNER CONNECTIONS

Nestled on the edge of the Allegheny Forest in the small town of Warren, Pennsylvania, the Corner Connections program at Beacon Light provides site-based psych rehab services to Warren & Forrest Counties. Our small program serves anywhere from 6–14 folks a day and offers nine distinct class topics every week. The past couple years have been a season of rebuilding for our program, as it has been for many programs following the pandemic. We had seen a large number of our participants slowly decrease their attendance as safety regulations made it more difficult to participate in classes, and the normalizing of isolation kept them from pursuing social opportunities. Over the past two years, our program has sought to break the pattern of isolation and withdraw that we saw settle into our local community.

A casualty of the pandemic was the hosting of special events for our psych rehab participants. Over the past two years, we have worked hard to offer meaningful and unique social events every couple months to give people the opportunity to practice using the skills that had begun to lapse during the isolation of the pandemic. Our staff worked hard to design activities that would be engaging and enjoyable to our folks, but also teach recovery principles, such as courage, self-care, handling disappointment, teamwork, and communication. Our events have ranged from indoor carnival games to recovery-themed escape room experiences, having our participants star in game shows, or building catapults out of cardboard boxes. At one of our holiday events, the participants of Corner Connections created hand-made Christmas cards for the residents of one of our local nursing homes as a way of encouraging others. At another event our participants were able to complete a team-building challenge and had their picture put on our wall of fame in the classroom for the next year. These events have been a wonderful way to draw people out of their areas of comfort and give them a chance to try something new.

One of the joys of seeing our participants engage in these activities has been seeing the relationships that are being built as a result. Prior to the revitalization of our special recovery events, the folks attending Corner Connections did not have much interaction with each other outside of the classroom. But since implementing the regular events, we have seen close friendships begin to form among participants.

We are hearing about participants going out to eat together or getting together for a bowling night, completely unprompted by any of our staff. Phone numbers are being exchanged with the offer of "You can reach out to me if you are just needing to talk." It is not uncommon now to hear someone say "I was feeling really down and wasn't going to come to class today, but so-and-so texted me this morning to check in and they encouraged me to come, so I made it today."

We are excited to see the walls of isolation slowly come down and the meaningful recovery that only happens in relationship begin to blossom again!



Corner Connections staff dressed up as Rock, Paper and Scissors for a Halloween social



One of the Corner Connections classrooms

2024 PAPRS CONFERENCE RECAP

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Becky Edwards for winning the Collaborator Game during the 2024 PAPRS Conference! Becky will receive a free admission to next year's conference.



Reminder

**EACH ATTENDEE MUST COMPLETE
SESSION EVALUATIONS BY JUNE 20,
2024 IN ORDER TO RECEIVE A
CONFERENCE CERTIFICATE!**

After this date, PAPRS will no longer be able to access evaluations and certificates. It is each attendees responsibility to complete the evaluations during this time frame.

Attendees must download their certificate from the link that is emailed to them. While the link to the certificate does not expire, we recommend saving the link for future access.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to offer professional CEUs this year (LCSW, LSW, LPC, LMFT, etc.). We apologize for this.

If you have any questions, please email
Denise Astaneh (denise.astaneh@paprs.org)



PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION: BASICS AND BEYOND!

This year's PAPRS 2024 conference: Basics and Beyond welcomed 250 conference participants. We were blessed to have 4 major keynote speakers, 20 workshops geared towards professional development, a game collaborator, poster contest, professional award winners, and tons of networking opportunities!

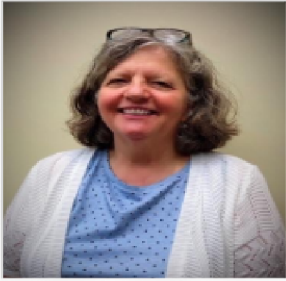
So many thank you's go out to our sponsors, presenters, board members, participants of the conference, staff, and keynote speakers. This year's conference had the highest satisfaction rating of all of our virtual conferences. We are proud to continue to grow, learn, and provide quality sessions for everyone who is passionate about Psych Rehab. We look forward to providing even more quality workshops for next years conference!

CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

PAPRS is proud to have given out 8 scholarships to participants who attended the conference this year! Sponsorships were divided up amongst four different regions throughout the state.

2024 DISTINGUISHED AWARD WINNERS

PAPRS is pleased to announce the individuals and agencies/programs which have distinguished themselves in their commitment to the principles of Psychiatric Rehabilitation in 2024. Award winners were honored at the PAPRS Annual Conference on April 19, 2024, during the Closing Ceremony.



Gwen DeYoung

PRESIDENTIAL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award is given out at the discretion of the sitting president to a deserving individual who has made a significant contribution to Psychiatric Rehabilitation. This is not an annual award.

Gwen received this award due to her dedication and development of Psychiatric Rehabilitation services in Tioga County and across the state of Pennsylvania.

Gwen DeYoung is the CEO of Wellspring Community Services in Tioga County – Mansfield, PA. Multiple years ago, Tioga County wanted to make changes to the services offered in their county. Pivoting from residential services, Gwen and Wellspring Community Services met that challenge. Gwen embraced the recovery philosophy and charged ahead, opening a site-based psychiatric rehabilitation program. That was the beginning of recovery services in Tioga County. Since that beginning, under Gwen's leadership, recovery services have expanded to include a drop-in center and a robust peer support program.

Throughout this growth and expansion, Gwen has provided leadership and stewardship to her staff, her county, and the PAPRS Board of Directors. Gwen has been an active board member for more than 15 years and currently sits on the PAPRS advisory committee. Her quiet leadership and never-ending thirst for knowledge have made her an integral part of the business and finance, and conference committees over the years. Gwen often jokes about her lack of a "math brain," yet she absorbs knowledge of unfamiliar concepts and helps our Board gain a better understanding by questioning and restating her understanding. Gwen lives the concept of always being humble and kind.

Gwen often draws from her personal experiences and shared stories of her childhood in the DV area, her tie living in a kibbutz in Israel, and the pride in her voice when talking about her daughters and grandchildren. She lives the concepts of service to others.

On behalf of PAPRS, we ask that you please keep Gwen in your thoughts and prayers at this time.



Jen McLaughlin

DISTINGUISHED CAREER AWARD

This award is to honor an individual who, throughout their career, has effectively promoted the development and implementation of Psychiatric Rehabilitation services in Pennsylvania.

"Jen has been involved with Psychiatric Rehabilitation within CSG since 1994. She is excellent at building positive relationships with stakeholders across multiple counties. She is truly viewed as an expert in Psychiatric Rehabilitation in Pennsylvania."



Melissa Gardner

DISTINGUISHED ADVOCATE AWARD

This award is to honor an individual who has advocated for the inclusion of Psychiatric Rehabilitation services in their organization, county, region, and/or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

"Melissa has worked in Psych Rehab for 6 years, and during those years transformed AMI's Psych Rehab program to target so many individuals needs. She is continuously looking for ways to grow the program so members can develop their foundation for success in their recovery."

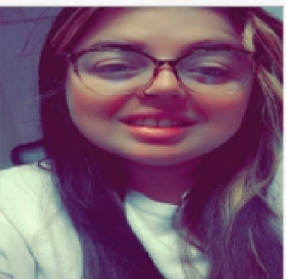


John Echenoz

DISTINGUISHED PRACTITIONER AWARD

This award is to honor an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to the principles and ethics of Psychiatric Rehabilitation in their work with persons in recovery

"John's talents in connecting empathetically with the individuals in services and his team has always been his strength. He goes out of his way to empower and shine hope into everyone's daily life. His personality, along with his work ethic and dedication, have been outstanding."



Marrah Anesetti

DISTINGUISHED PRACTITIONER AWARD

This award is to honor an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to the principles and ethics of Psychiatric Rehabilitation in their work with persons in recovery

"Marrah has shown nothing but dedication and love for the Psych Rehab program by going above and beyond to strengthen her skills as a facilitator. She values the principles and ethics, and it shows in her work daily. Marrah is a light to so many."



2024 POSTER CONTEST WINNERS



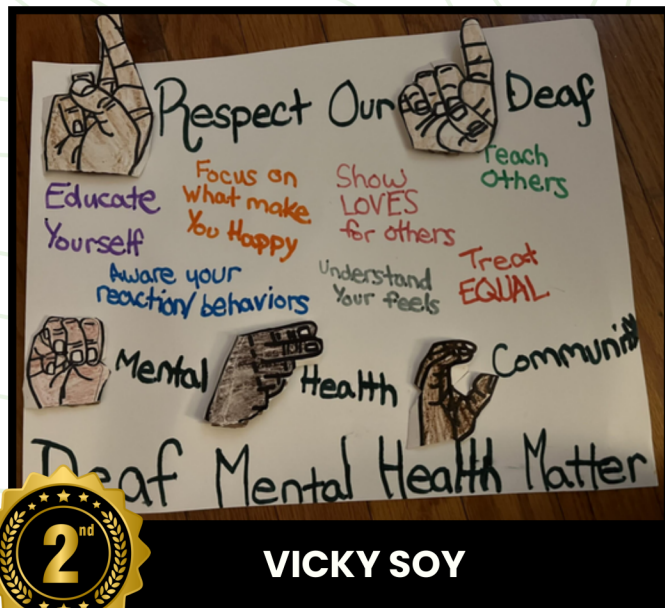
Adult Winners

This year we had a total of 52 entries in our annual R.E.S.P.E.C.T. Poster Contest!

There were 21 entries in our Youth & Young Adult age group (14-26), and 31 entries in our Adult age group (27+). Each of the winners above were award a gift card. THANK YOU to all of our participants!



FELICIA NOMURA



VICKY SOY



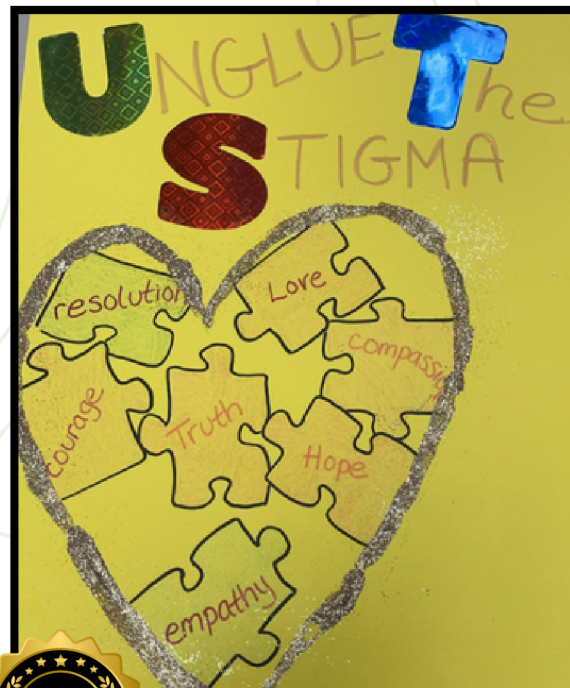
KIMBERLY COVATCH



2024 POSTER CONTEST WINNERS



Youth & Young Adult Winners



QUINN SMITH



MARIETTA SCOUTEN



DAMIENT HUNT

CONFERENCE SESSION RECAP:

EXPRESSIVE WRITING



BY: ALLY DOWNS, PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION SUPERVISOR, THE CHALLENGE CENTER

2024 marks my third year attending the annual PAPRS Conference and my first presenting! It was a very rewarding experience, and despite some technical difficulties and frazzled nerves, I feel that I have grown personally and professionally because of it. When I was presented with the opportunity, I wasn't quite sure what information I could present to so many professionals who have significantly more experience. After about two weeks of racking my brain for ideas, inspiration struck while I was teaching one of my classes at the Challenge Center, the class I've been teaching for over two-and-a-half years: expressive writing!

I packed as much information as I possibly could into a 90-minute workshop, which proved to be pretty difficult. We touched on the basics of expressive writing and the research into its effectiveness, the multitudinous benefits of practicing expressive writing on both mental and physical wellness, a large variety of expressive writing methods, and the ways expressive writing practices are implemented at the Challenge Center.

Expressive writing is a technique in which you honestly and freely reflect on a particular challenge, trauma, or a distressing experience. It focuses more feelings than memories, events, objects, or people. Simply put, expressive writing is simply expressing what's on your mind and in your heart.

There have been numerous studies proving the significant health benefits of practicing expressive writing. It's been found that it can alleviate the stresses (and even some of the symptoms) of a wide array of conditions including major depressive disorder, PTSD, rheumatoid arthritis and fibromyalgia, high blood pressure, and cancer.

Expressive writing is a very personal practice, so naturally, it looks different for everyone. There are a variety of expressive writing methods including stream of consciousness writing, story construction, & perspective-switching, just to name a few—so if one particular method doesn't work for you, there are plenty others you can try! Certain methods of expressive writing can help people overcome creative blocks, reframe past struggles, and view experiences from different perspectives.

Preparing for this workshop was an enlightening experience. I learned a lot from my research and have since begun incorporating new expressive writing methods into my class, but I learned so much more from our panel of Challenge Center participants. Hearing them talk about how much writing has helped them heal and grow and how much my class has helped them was one of the most fulfilling parts of this process.

In the end, seeing everything come together was rewarding. While we were pretty nervous in the days leading up to our workshop, seeing our ideas and hard work come to fruition was exciting for all of us. Some of us (mostly me) stumbled over our words a bit, and technical difficulties were unavoidable, but I'm proud of what we accomplished together. I'm especially proud of our panel of participants—they are living, breathing proof that something as simple as writing can have a profound impact on our lives.

2024 CONFERENCE SPONSORS

A special **THANK YOU** to our 2024 Conference Sponsors! Without you, we would not be able to achieve our vision. We continue to meet our mission of offering state-of-the-art educational training to practitioners across the state and beyond, and you are a huge part of that success. Your generosity year after year is truly appreciated!

Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors



Friends of PAPRS





KATIE'S PLACE CLUBHOUSE

BY: JOHN W. ROSENGRANT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (SCRANTON, PA)

Katie's Place Clubhouse held their grand opening on May 23rd, 2024! The Clubhouse is located in the Northeast Region in Scranton, PA. John Rosengrant (Executive Director), along with his Coordinator, Tammy Fedorchak, have been working hard to create a work-ordered day to assist 42 current members.

The Clubhouse offers two work units: Clerical and Hospitality.

- The Clerical Unit has been creating a monthly newsletter, answering phones, taking lunch orders, taking and collecting money, ordering supplies, creating flyers, menus and other data tracking spreadsheets.
- The Hospitality Unit prepares meals for the clubhouse, operates a snack cart and counter, plans parties and social events, creates decorations and clubhouse crafts.

The Clubhouse is in the process of assessing the members interest in employment and the possibility of starting temporary employment positions (TEP). They are also quite involved in the community.

Check out a [short video](#) from WBRE highlighting their open house!



OUTREACHING TO THE COMMUNITY
SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA - SEPTEMBER 2022



AUG 2023 - CLUBHOUSE INTERNATIONAL
COLLEAGUE TRAINING AT THE GENESIS CLUB IN
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

The Clubhouse model is internationally recognized and utilized with over 300 Clubhouses worldwide in 33 countries. Pennsylvania has had a long history of being a forerunner in the development and expansion of the Clubhouse model. For more information on the Clubhouse Model, visit <https://clubhouse-intl.org/>.

OUR NEXT PAPRS NEWSLETTER: SEPTEMBER 2024