

PAPRS NEWSLETTER

PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION SERVICES

2026 BOARD MEETINGS

✦ JANUARY 15 & 16
(IN-PERSON)

✦ MARCH 26 & 27
(VIRTUAL)

✦ JULY 16 & 17
(VIRTUAL)

✦ NOVEMBER 5 & 6
(IN-PERSON)

NEXT PAPRS QUARTERLY NETWORKING MEETING:

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2026
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

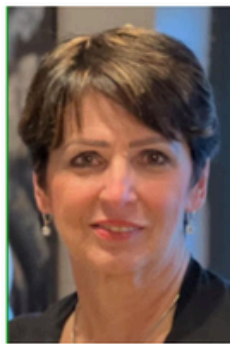


STAY UP-TO-DATE WITH
PAPRS ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

BY: DENISE ASTANEH



A Message from the PAPRS Executive Director:

As summer winds down across Pennsylvania, I find myself reflecting on the people who make our Psychiatric Rehabilitation community so special.

While there may not always be major announcements or headline worthy developments to share, there is something worth recognizing everyday – the dedication of our members.

Across the Commonwealth, professionals, peers, and advocates continue to support recovery, foster hope and help individuals build meaningful lives in their communities.

Having had the privilege of serving in leadership with PAPRS, I know firsthand the passion and commitment that exists within this organization. What has always impressed me most is not just the expertise of our members, but the genuine care they bring to their work and to one another.

Summer often gives us a chance to slow down, even if only briefly. I hope each of you found some time to recharge, spend time with family and friends, enjoyed the longer days, and took pride in the difference you have made so far throughout the year. The work we do can be challenging, but it is also deeply meaningful, and the lives touched by psychiatric rehabilitation are a testament to that.

Thank you for all you do to advance recovery and to strengthen our field. PAPRS continues to thrive because of the dedication, compassion, and collective wisdom of its members.

What continues to give me hope is knowing that across Pennsylvania, our members are quietly making a difference in the lives of individuals and families every single day.

Hoping you have had a wonderful summer, and I look forward to all that we will accomplish together in the months ahead.

"As always, thank you for your continued support of PAPRS and for the work you do every day to make recovery possible."

Best Regards,
Denise Astaneh
PAPRS Executive Director

PAPRS STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Denise Astaneh
denise.astaneh@papr.org

EDUCATION MANAGER

- Rochelle Reimert
rochelle.reimert@papr.org

OPERATIONS MANAGER

- Aaron Burkhardt
aaron.burkhardt@papr.org

PAPRS LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT

- Sara Dobson

PRESIDENT- ELECT

- Laura Gardner

SECRETARY

- Karen Yob

TREASURER

- Jocelyn Giancola

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

- Kim MacDonald-Wilson

BOARD MEMBERS

- Philip Debrasky
- Virginia Dikeman
- Sara Dobson
- Laura Gardner
- Jocelyn Giancola
- Katelyn Ivanac
- Kim MacDonald-Wilson
- Caitlin Needham
- Corinne Schnee
- Hazel Smith Guild
- Debra Weisgerber
- Patrinia Wilkerson
- Kimberly Wilson-Roberson
- Karen Yob
- Skyler Deitrick
- Lisa Quintana

ADVISORY MEMBERS

- Amy Mascolo-Palmer
- Donna Duffy Grimm
- Eileen Joseph
- Rita Kraus
- Peggy Maccolini
- Lu Mauro
- Jennifer McLaughlin
- Susan Poznar
- Ellwyn Andres
- Maureen Walsh



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2026
NAY AUG PARK, SCRANTON



REGISTRATION
8:00 AM



TRUNK OR TREAT
9:00 AM



RACE/WALK
10:00 AM



WELLNESS FAIR
10:00 AM



KIDS ACTIVITIES
ALL EVENT LONG



FREE LUNCH
12:00 PM

REGISTER TODAY AT THEKATIEFOUNDATION.ORG

**WEAR YOUR HALLOWEEN COSTUME
BUT DON'T MASK MENTAL ILLNESS!**

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!



Katie's Place Clubhouse, Scranton, PA, recently held an Open House to celebrate receiving Distinguished Program Award. The members worked hard to prepare for the many guests that arrived. They created a Christmas in July theme for their open house including a christmas tree decorated with flowers and candy bags with candy canes inside.

Thank you to Sara D. and Denise A. for coming to celebrate with us and presenting our award. Katie's Place enjoyed having you with us!



2026 UPCOMING TRAININGS

PAPRS ORIENTATION TO PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION SERVICES

» Sept 14 & 15, 2026
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM each day

PAPRS CPRP JOURNEY THROUGH THE DOMAINS BOOTCAMP

» Sept. 17–Oct. 29, 2026
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM each day

PR SERVICES DOCUMENTATION: SKILLS THAT WORK FOR REGULATORS, PAYERS, AND PEOPLE IN SERVICES

» Sept 21 & 22, 2026
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM each day

**CHECK THE EVENT CALENDAR
SOON FOR ADDITIONAL
OFFERINGS !!!**

REGISTER AT WWW.PAPRS.ORG

For Questions:
[rochelle.reimert](mailto:rochelle.reimert@papr.org)
@papr.org



TO SHOW OFF YOUR PROGRAMS!

PAPRS wants to spotlight your Psych Rehab program in our social media and newsletter! We're excited to showcase the incredible work you and your team are doing to support your local communities. Whether it's a major milestone or a small success, we'd love to help you share it. If you're interested in having your program featured, contact Debi Weisgerber at debra.weisgerber@scrantonscc.org to get started. The process is quick and easy—just 10 minutes or less!

Hill Day

By: Sara Dobson

YOU'RE
NOT
ALONE



On Tuesday, May 4, 2026, several members of the PAPRS staff and Board joined with mental health advocates, partners, and colleagues from across the Commonwealth at the State Capitol in Harrisburg for the 2026 Hill Day. Throughout the day, individuals and groups met with members of the State House and Senate to advocate for key priorities, including mental health

parity, reducing stigma, increasing access to affordable housing, improving access to care (including transportation), and protecting health benefits.

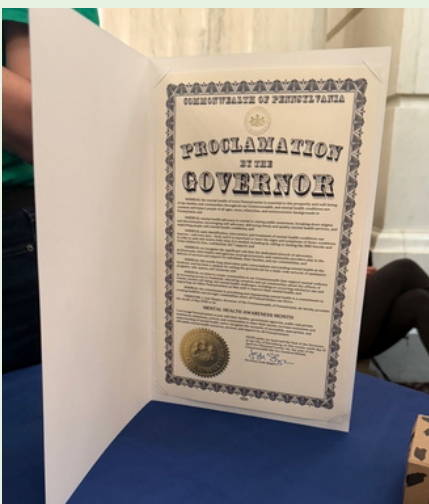
Attendees were also encouraged to participate in a press conference held at 1:00 p.m. in the Capitol rotunda. Speakers included Deputy Director Jen Smith, state legislators, and individuals and families who shared powerful stories of lived experience.

Collectively, PAPRS staff, Board members, and Advisory Board members met with representatives or staff from nearly 10 legislative offices.



These meetings provided valuable opportunities to advocate for policy priorities and to support individuals with lived experience in sharing their voices.

Overall, Hill Day was a positive day, demonstrating the meaningful difference advocacy can make. We look forward to building on this and hope you will join us for Hill Day next year!



2026 PAPRS CONFERENCE STATISTICS

A total of **262** registrants for the conference.

Total Sessions: **26**.

The keynote with the highest registrations was delivered by **Ladji Ruffin - 221**

Session with the Highest Registration: **Bryan McCormick - Loneliness & Isolation**

The session with the Highest Live Attendance **Dr. John Gaines - 138**

First Person to Register: **Chelsea Gerstein (Merakey)**

Organization with the Most Registrants: **Tie-Allied & Skills**

Earliest (time) Attendee: **Andy Bernstein**

Thank you 

THE PAPRS CONFERENCE THIS YEAR WAS AMAZING! WE CAN NOT SAY ENOUGH TO ALL WHO NOT ONLY ORGANIZED THE CONFERENCE BUT TO THE KEYNOTES, PRESENTERS, PAPRS STAFF, BOARD OF DIRECTORS. ESPECIALLY TO OUR SPONSORS AND ALL OF YOU WHO ATTENDED! THANK YOU SO MUCH!!



2026 DISTINGUISHED AWARD WINNERS



Distinguished Practitioner Award

Brittney Alvarado
Sally and Howard Levin Clubhouse
- Presented by Maureen Walsh



Distinguished Advocate Award

Denise Hart
Hand in Hand

- Presented by Maureen Walsh

YOU ARE THE
best

Thank
you!



Distinguished Career Award

Laurie Kivler
Step By Step
- Presented by Maureen Walsh



Distinguished Program Award

Katie's Place Clubhouse
- Presented by Maureen Walsh

CONGRATULATIONS !!!!

NEWLY CERTIFIED CPRP & CFRP

PAPRS would like to congratulate those who have worked hard and passed the CPRP or CFRP exams! Thank you for your dedication to this field and looking to continue this important work of helping others to become their best selves just as you have!

We would like to feature those who worked hard to obtain their CPRP & CFRP credentials with a photo and the date of your certification. Please send information to debra.weisgerber@scrantonscc.org



CONGRATS!

