

THE NETWORK NEWS

January | February 2018

INSIDE

From the Network Program Director Page 2

Advocacy Days Page 2

From the Co-OP Program Director Page 3

Upcoming Trainings and Classes Pages 3-4

From Where I Sit...Creative Offerings from Members and Friends Page 5

OUR MISSION

To create a climate in Virginia where peers are empowered to understand and find their own recovery through programs that achieve:

personal transformation
community transformation
systems transformation

The Network News is published six times per year by the

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From the Desk of the Executive Director, Deidre Johnson

I'm pleased to announce the hiring of VOCAL's newest staff member, Megan Sharkey, as REACH Coordinator. Megan steps in to the REACH Program to assist with the myriad of trainings and new educational opportunities that VOCAL offers.

Megan was raised in Coastal New Jersey and attended undergraduate university in Pennsylvania. Knowing that she wanted to live in a city, and having an uncle who is Richmond-based, Megan made the move to Virginia. Since settling in Richmond, she has worked to complete her Master of Social Work degree, with a concentration in Administration, Planning, and Policy Practice from Virginia Commonwealth University. Megan's interests include participating in social justice efforts to dismantle institutionalized oppression, getting engulfed in other worlds through books, listening to public radio, and spending quality time with loved ones.

Megan first learned of VOCAL in 2016 while interning with another local mental health organization. She is excited about the opportunity to join the VOCAL staff and continue this incredible work!

Please join us in welcoming Megan to the VOCAL staff! She may be reached via email at megan@vocalvirginia.org or at 804-343-1777.

Upcoming Advocacy Calls – Mark Your Calendar Now

VOCAL Advocacy calls are being planned throughout January and February. All are welcome. We will discuss current bills and their implications on peers. If you are new to these types of conversations, don't worry. Not only can you listen and learn, but there are many resources to help you learn about advocacy.

VOCAL is a membership organization, so it is important that we hear from our members, particularly on these important issues. VOCAL staff is present in many meetings at the capital and elsewhere, so we may have answers to your questions.

Calls will take place on Thursdays at 2PM throughout the legislative session. The number to dial in is: 866-423-8755. Guest code: 6364796

For further info contact Erin Crettier: erin@vocalvirginia.org or 804-343-1777

From the Network Program Director

I am writing on New Year’s Day, the first day of a new year. As a big fan of fresh starts and new beginnings I am happy with what a new year may mean symbolically. I’m grateful for the chance to pause, think, plan, reboot, and then reemerge into this life that I find both challenging and exciting. One chapter closes and allows something new to begin. Of course, all that could just be superstition.

In any case, I’d like to tell you some of the ways we finished out 2017 in the Network office:

We gathered with 28 folks from the Richmond area to talk about advocacy and enjoy a fine lunch at Ledo’s Pizza. Every person in attendance opted to write a short testimonial about the impact of peer support, peer services, and recovery-based programming on their lives.

I attended the VAPRA Conference in Fredricksburg, and led a “Vision Board” workshop. This simple but meaningful creative project starts as a mess of images and collage materials and invites each participant to create a visual representation of their hopes and dreams. I met so many people and exchanged plenty of business cards. A woman from Abingdon noted, “Hey, we are networking!” and it was true. You know it’s a good conference when you make friends and connections, learn new things, and get a little arts and crafts in!

I am SO pleased to report that we had an active conference call with the VOCAL Veteran’s Advisory Committee. AND an excellent meeting in Wytheville with Peer Specialists and others. If you read the newsletter you may have noticed that we are often searching high and low for people who would like to help VOCAL outreach to each of these communities. That offer is still good, by the way. Expect more news about these developments in the months to come.

Even though I write this column, there are two of us in the Network office. Yolande Long is the reason the e-digest never misses a beat and this newsletter is mailed to more than 400 subscribers and emailed to more than 1000 more. Yolande is often the person who answers the phone at the office and she has been at VOCAL many years, organizing the conference and keeping things

running smoothly. She a friendly, competent, caring teammate and I want to take the chance to thank her for all that she does.

Advocacy Days 2018

VOCAL, NAMI, MHAV and Voices for Virginia’s Children are pleased to be collaborate once again in sponsoring Mental Health Advocacy Day. This year, we are hosting two Mental Health Advocacy Days, one focusing on the needs of children and youth and one on the needs of adults. Children’s Mental Health Advocacy Day will be held on Monday, February 5, and Mental Health Advocacy Day will follow on Tuesday, February 6, 2018. Both events will be held from 8am to 12pm in the conference space of Voices for Virginia’s Children. Individuals may attend one or both days. Both events will include refreshments, orientation and review of our priorities, legislative meetings, and other advocacy opportunities. Registration is required and will open in early January. For more information, contact smelton@namivirginia.org or 804-285-8264 x206.

Because of major construction efforts at the capital space will be extremely limited. You are encouraged to make your own appointment to meet with your representative – it is approximately a one block walk. We will meet at Voices for Virginia’s Children, 701 East Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219. Once registered you will be offered an online training opportunity to address any questions.

We wish to thank the Behavioral Health Advisory Council for their support. Breakfast will be served!

Respect yourself if you would have others respect you.

-Baltasar Gracian

For Your Listening Pleasure

Looking for something good to listen to while hiding out from the cold? The VOCAL Blog has a list of radio and podcast stories that are about peer support and mental

health, but maybe don't even know it; they are just great stories. All are available free of charge and you can listen by phone or computer. www.vocalvirginia.org

VOCAL Conference Save the Date

The VOCAL Annual Conference will be held at the Sheraton Roanoke Hotel and Conference Center, May 21st– May 22nd. Workshop proposals will be accepted through the month of March, 2018. Conference registration will begin on March 1st, 2018 and end on April 30th. There will be a limited number of full and partial scholarships available. The registration form will be available on our web site and via the next issue of “Network News”, which will be published in late February/early March.

Our keynote speaker will be Matthew Federici. Matthew R. Federici, MS, is the Executive Director of the Copeland Center for Wellness & Recovery. He is an internationally recognized speaker, trainer and consultant on recovery, wellness, community inclusion and peer support. Matthew’s personal and professional journey in wellness and recovery includes involvement as a family member and a mental health consumer advocate for over 20 years.

We hope to see you in Roanoke!

Upcoming VOCAL Trainings

Community Inclusion - The Copeland Center for Wellness & Recovery, supported by Temple University Collaborative on Community Inclusion, has developed a dynamic two-day seminar to advance knowledge and practices in community inclusion. The seminar focuses on the roles that peer specialists and peer support allies can play in supporting individuals in participating more fully in the life of the communities around them, moving beyond a reliance on provider-based activities and a stronger engagement in community activities they choose for themselves.

These trainings will be led by Matthew Federici and Dr. Mark Salzer, offered in Fairfax March 8th - 9th and in Henrico July 19th - 20th. More locations to come!

As each date and site are confirmed, information will be shared. Keep reading future VOCAL newsletters and e-digests to stay updated on the various recovery education programs coming to your area!

From Heather Orrock, Co-OP Program Director

As we continue to raise awareness about the peer movement in Virginia, we must take a moment to congratulate the organizations who have been providing peer services for years. In November '17, On Our Own of Roanoke Valley celebrated their 25th anniversary and WeCare in Martinsville celebrated 11 years! Congratulations to them, and to all the peer run organizations across the Commonwealth who are celebrating years of hard work, dedication, and success.

Two BOD Openings with VOCAL

VOCAL has an opening on its Board of Directors for the Region 5 (Tidewater) and Region 6 (Southern) positions. Interested applicants should contact Erin Crettier: 804-343-1777 or erin@vocalvirginia.org

Daniel Carey, MD Appointed Secretary for Health and Human Resources

Governor-elect Northampton has appointed Dr. Daniel Carey, currently Senior VP and CMO at Centra in Lynchburg, as his HHR Secretary replacing Dr. Bill Hazel who had held the post for the last eight years.

QUIT NOW Virginia

This New Year, take a fresh approach to breaking free from tobacco with the **QUIT NOW Virginia Program**. When you enroll, a Quit Coach® will help you create a quit plan that's just right for you. One-on-one phone sessions with your coach will give you the encouragement, tips and replacement strategies (suck on a mint instead of a cigarette) you need to quit. Your coach will help you overcome the triggers, barriers and cravings that keep you addicted. Don't wait until January! Call today to set your quit date!

1-800-QUIT NOW (1.800.784.8669)
www.quitnow.net/virginia

Ethics Training in Christiansburg for CPRS's

This training will provide 3.0 VCB approved hours. Saturday, February 10th from 8:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

\$45.00 fee

890 Life Drive, Christiansburg (24073)

For an application and further information, email:

kcurtis@nrvc.org

Upcoming Classes/Groups at Friends 4 Recovery Whole Health Center

8-week WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) Class Begins February 7th

8-week WRAP class beginning Wednesday, February 7th, from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Learn how to written an Action Plan for working with your mental health challenges.

11-Week PSWHR (Peer Support Whole Health and Resiliency) group Begins February 5th

Create “Whole Health” for Your Mind, Body, and Spirit 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

8-Week MBRP (Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention) for Addictive Behaviors Group Beginning February 9th

2:00 - 3:30 p.m Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP) is a group for preventing relapse in addictive disorders that integrates mindfulness meditation with standard relapse prevention practices, generally based in various cognitive-behavioral therapies (CBT).

MBRP is based in principles of self-compassion and acceptance of all experiences, including cravings and urges. In MBRP, we are encouraging peers to accept that we will indeed have urges and cravings—it is normal—and instead, learn to roll with the cravings or “urge surf”.

Friends 4 Recovery is located at 7420 Whitepine Road, North Chesterfield (23237). 804-308-1366 or info@friends4recovery.org

New Year, New Support Group!

VOCAL Virginia LGBTQ+ Support Network

Meetings weekly on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

With assistance from SAMHSA VOCAL is able to focus on the needs of LGBTQ+ individuals in Virginia. This will happen in many ways: the creation of a learning tool for mental health workers and agencies, outreach, WRAP classes at Diversity Center in Richmond and an online support group for those who cannot easily attend a group in person. PLEASE SHARE this with anyone you think may be interested.

To join, search VOCAL Virginia LGBTQ+ Support Network and click the “Join Group” button here or email malaina@vocalvirginia with questions. We will process your request as soon as possible. This is a closed group. Closed groups are visible but private, so must request to join or be invited. Only current members will see the posts in the closed group – but your other Facebook friends will see that you have joined.

We encourage everyone in the group to use this space to post information, ask questions, have conversations and get to know each other. VOCAL staff will monitor the site as often as possible and remove any person who uses disrespectful or hate language.

MHAV Schedules Advocacy Retreat in February

Mental Health America of Virginia’s Advocacy retreat is three days of workshops on advocacy at the state policy level and hands-on advocacy experience at the legislature to promote consumer civic engagement. The retreat focuses on skills and tools that build confidence, encourage participation and speaking in public. The program format is two days in class and a morning at the General Assembly in Richmond, meeting legislators and advocating together for mental health awareness. Topics include: Creating your message, speaking with your legislator.

February 12th-14th in Richmond

Scholarships available. Apply at mhav.org or call 804.257.5591 for more information.

Peer-run Organizations and Other Enthusiastic Folks

Do you want to help individuals receive the care THEY want during a mental health crisis?

Do you want to promote self-determination and autonomy?

Do you want to empower your community?

Did you know that YOU can become a certified Advance Directive Facilitator now?

Virginia law changed as of July 1, 2017, allowing any individuals who complete an approved Advance Directive Facilitator program to offer one-on-one facilitation with citizens around the state. (Prior to this law change, only attorneys and health care providers were allowed to offer AD Facilitation.) See Va. Code § 54.1-2982 <http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title54.1/chapter29/section54.1-2982/> There are currently three state-recognized advance directive facilitator training programs, but the Institute of Law, Psychiatry and Public Policy at the University of Virginia is the only one that addresses mental health advance care planning. The other programs only discuss end-of-life care planning. To learn more about the UVa/DBHDS Advance Directive Facilitator certification training, email Cynthia Elledge at Cynthia@virginia.edu

Research has shown that the most effective Advance Directives are those that were facilitated. Having a trained individual collaborate in the process results in a much more meaningful, detailed, and appropriately completed AD form. Help empower yourself, your friends, your community by becoming an Advance Directive Facilitator.

From Where I Sit ... Creative Offerings from Members and Friends

Destiny by Geisha Battle

Get ready to step into a
New level of your destiny and
Discover talents you didn't
Even know you had. You were meant to
Be successful, to accomplish your
Goals, and to leave a

Nice impression on this generation
You have greatness in you in a nice place.

Winning by Geisha Battle

Winning is part of you.
You've got what it takes.
This is your time.
This is your moment.
Shake off doubts,
Shake off fear and insecurity.
Get ready for favor,
Get ready for increase and
If you get ready for the fullness of
Your destiny you can win and you will.

A Wish List for 2018 (from a Blog by Leo Babuta)

1. Say thank you to everything and everyone, even to your grief and those who frustrate you.
2. Ask how you want to use this gift of a day.
3. See this moment as the most important moment in the world, and don't want to be happy.
4. Do every task out of love for someone else and yourself.
5. To make better habits, put everything you have into small steps. And ask for help.
6. Travel lighter, pack fewer fears.
7. Overcome procrastination by sitting with on task, not letting yourself run from discomfort.
8. One thing at a time.
9. See discomfort as no big deal.
10. Ask yourself how you want to spend your one wild and precious life.

From the Newsletter Editor:

The deadline for the next issue of "The Network News" is *Monday, February 12th*. Contact Yolande Long: yolande@vocalvirginia.org with submissions.