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# Noble

## News & Views

A monthly report for those in support of

Truman Medical Centers (TMC) Behavioral Health and our mission.

June 2020

## Upcoming Events

**Friday, June 19 at 9:30 AM**

**Friday, June 26 at 9:30 AM**

TMC Behavioral Health Equity  
Town Hall

(see page 4 for registration info)

## Awareness Months

June is

**PTSD** AWARENESS  
MONTH

**September** Recovery Month

**September 6 - 12** Suicide  
Prevention Week

**September 10** Suicide  
Prevention Day

*For more information  
about upcoming events, visit  
[facebook.com/trumedBH/events](https://facebook.com/trumedBH/events)*

## Spotlight on: New Frontiers and PEER Center

Truman Medical Centers (TMC) Behavioral Health's **New Frontiers** is a referral-based program for clients with severe and persistent mental illness. The mission is to provide a safe environment where people with mental illnesses are empowered to make healthy choices that improve their daily lives.

New Frontiers provides structured groups that focus on topics including self-esteem, mental health, nutrition, physical wellness, music therapy and independent living skills. Eligible clients are considered "members" and need to be receiving care and referred by a mental health professional.

Some of the scheduled groups include smoking cessation, budgeting, pottery classes, tours and art projects in partnership with the Nelson Atkins Art Museum and a pickleball club. Members also enjoy attending and participating in special events such as the Chapel Hill Presbyterian Thanksgiving dinner, the "Creating Hope" art showcase, in-house mini-concerts, fishing outings and holiday parties.

Members have the chance to give back to their community by volunteering together at Wayside Waifs, Thelma's Kitchen, Literacy KC, the Lego Project and the Community Garden. In partnership with TMC's Employment Services program, the KAT (Kitchen Assistant Training) Program helps interested members in training and preparing for a food prep career in small to large kitchens, as well as helps graduates secure employment afterwards.

### The PEER Center

TMC Behavioral Health's Peer Center is a drop-in center that promotes recovery and embraces hope through peer support for individuals living with mental illness. As this is a drop-in center any individual who is living with mental illness is eligible to attend without a referral.

PEER Center facilitates several groups a day revolving around mental health education, recovery support, life skills and leisure. Two of the more popular groups include theatre and parenting. Since staff encourages input from their members, TMC BH created these groups based on this feedback.

### Fun Fact – Did you know?..

that New Frontiers has a "Lean On Me" choir with more than 20 live concerts each year and recorded music CDs? The PEER Center's Music Group wrote a song "Down Peer Center Road" to the tune of "Old Town Road" and recorded a music video that can be found at <https://youtu.be/X485mgZ6N2Q>.

# Noble

## News & Views

### Fast Facts about MENTAL HEALTH

#### How common is Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)?

- About 8 million adults have PTSD during a given year.
- About 60% of men experience at least one trauma in their lives.
- About 50% of women experience at least one trauma in their lives.
- About 7-8 % of the population will have PTSD at some point in their lives.

Source: The National Center for PTSD at [ptsd.va.gov](http://ptsd.va.gov)

### A note from our COO...

Having grown up surrounded by brothers, it can be difficult for me to be vulnerable. I've had to learn how to open up over the years, and conversely, I strive to create space for those around me to feel free to share what they need.

These are unrelentingly difficult times. It is important you reach out to leadership if you feel like you need support. I can't promise to have the immediate solution, but I can promise we will be available to walk with you the road that is ahead of you.

Truly,

Honestly, sometimes I think all of this can come across as just "something leaders say," and I'm not sure I can express within the confines of written word the true depth of this admonition.

Take care of yourself – especially now – because in taking care of yourself, you're also taking care of those we serve. When you have created space for yourself to find healing, you are making yourself available to your clients in a way that will also foster their own healing.

You at your best is the best you can be, and my dream – my aspiration – is to create a space where each of us can lean into mutual resiliency.

Thank you for the work you do.

Thank you for being you.



Sharon Freese, RN, BSN, MSW

### *New Frontiers and PEER Center continued from page 1*

In the theatre group, members learn acting basics, play theatre games and engage in theatrical exercises. As a result, they improve skills such as recognizing and expressing emotions, increasing body and social awareness, improving literacy and building self-confidence. In the parenting group, members talk about parenting young children, and the changing dynamics as their children transition into adulthood. They discuss healthy boundaries, self-care and share valuable lessons they've learned during their parenting journeys. Members leave this group with a sense of community and hope.

On the horizon for the PEER Center is a basic sewing skills group. Each member who participates will receive a sewing kit complete with needles, buttons, safety pins and several colors of thread. The PEER Center is actively involved in the community, with its members volunteering at a number of organizations including Literacy KC, Harvesters, KC Pet Project and Scraps KC.

### *Success Story*

New Frontiers and PEER Center staff rose to the occasion when usual services were temporarily stopped due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rehabilitation Specialists from New Frontiers and PEER Specialists were assigned to the Tracy and Crossroads group homes to provide group activities to members in place.

*"The work that all of you have been doing for us is just as important as the school-teachers who helped students stay involved in their education. Thank you."*

*— Kathleen,  
member of New Frontiers*

TMC Behavioral Health also used technology to provide virtual groups, and delivered group materials, to people living independently in the community. The second floor of New Frontiers became a successful reverse food pantry. Runners from other departments delivered food, donated by Harvesters, to families and clients of BH who were struggling as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. From 3/24 through 4/29 TMC Behavioral Health served **789** Households, **1,426** Individuals including **1,007** adults, **373** children and **46** seniors.

## Reverse Food Pantry Team



Back row left to right: Sean Dale, Supervisor Food Service; Jennifer Haley, Sr. Employment Specialist; Terner Ervin Sr. Employment Specialist; Mark VanMeter, Community Rehabilitation Program Manager; and Kylah Hitchcock, Community Occupational Therapist. Front row left to right: Vonda Strother, Administrative Assistant

Community Rehabilitation; Mary Hieronymus, Employment Services Billing Specialist; Athena Horton, Supervisor Community Rehabilitation Services; and Markita Phillips, Sr. Employment Specialist.

## Welcome New TMC Behavioral Health Staff Members

Pictured left to right: Trisha Drownes, Intensive Community Services; Shawna Courtney, Inpatient BHAC; and Kevin Holmes, Inpatient BHAC.



## In the News

**Chad Cadwell** (pictured right), Doctor of Pharmacy and manager of Walgreens at TMC Behavioral Health gave a great interview on [facebook.com/cheddar/](https://www.facebook.com/cheddar/about/why-mental-health-is-so-important-during-covid-19) about why mental health is so important during COVID-19.



TMC Behavioral Health's **Vladimir Sainte, LCSW**, was featured on KMBC Channel 9 to discuss coping with the stress of the pandemic, social unrest, and injustice, as well as another story on screaming to release stress.



**Dr. Trent Myers**, a TMC child and adolescent psychiatrist, was featured in KCPT's digital magazine Flatland addressing "Pandemic Spurs Concern about Suicide among KC-Area Youths".

Fox 4 featured TMC Behavioral Health Coach **Lolita McShann**, who delivered a 1-year recovery chip to one of her clients, Robyn Potter, at the height of the pandemic.



## TMC Behavioral Health expands role of Peer Support Specialists

To reduce stigma and create career opportunities, Truman Medical Centers (TMC) Behavioral Health, was awarded a Mental Health Innovations grant from the Jackson County Mental Health Fund to expand the quality of our peer support specialists.

TMC Behavioral Health is positioned well to be the first in the country to create opportunities for our peer specialists to "evolve" into Community Health & Wellness Ambassadors (CHWA). These positions would be used internally at Behavioral Health and over time, expand to hospital and auxiliary systems, such as libraries, insurance providers, etc.

The CHWA model was developed through collaborative efforts of regions 5, 6, and 7 of Health & Human Services (HHS). It seeks to ultimately create a "career ladder" for peer support workers and help professionalize their work beyond mental health agencies into the greater healthcare industry.



Mirna Herrera, CPS, MA-MTBC, TMC Behavioral Health Special Projects Coordinator

Through piloting CHWA at TMC Behavioral Health, Mirna Herrera, CPS, MA-MTBC, Special Projects Coordinator, will centralize our current peer support services for efficiency and standardization of performance. She will enhance training by cross-certifying peer specialists as community health workers. Mirna has been a manager at TMC for seven years, and is a certified peer trainer for the Missouri credentialing board and a trauma informed care facilitator.

Herrera is excited about the opportunity to help create a career path and expand the traditional peer specialist roles outside of mental health agencies, as she has seen the amazing work the peer specialists are able to do to help clients at TMCBH. This career ladder opportunity will build on the skills professionals with lived experiences already have and train them to be even more equipped to help clients in multiple systems of care.



# Come join the conversation.

Please save the date for one of the TMC Behavioral Health Equity Town Halls on the following dates:

• **Friday, June 19 at 9:30 AM**

• **Friday, June 26 at 9:30 AM**

Both town halls will be hosted virtually via Zoom and at the Healing Canvas building. Due to physical distancing considerations related to restrictions of COVID-19, space will be extremely limited, and the final room will be sent out on Thursday once registration numbers are collected. If you register to attend virtually, you will be provided the Zoom information on the registration form (below).

The town halls will be hosted by Willy Pegues (Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer) and Sharon Freese (Chief Operating Officer). Questions do not need to be submitted in advance. Please come prepared to share any thoughts you might have.

**Register for the date of your choice here: <https://bit.ly/equitytownhall>**

## Truman Medical Centers Behavioral Health Services

### TMC Health Sciences District

2301 Holmes  
Kansas City, MO 64108

### Healing Canvas Building

300 West 19th Terrace  
Kansas City, MO 64108

### TMC Lakewood

7900 Lee's Summit Rd  
Kansas City, MO 64139

### Lakewood Counseling

300 SE 2nd St  
Lee's Summit, MO 64063

**816-404-5709 or  
[BehavioralHealthKC.org](http://BehavioralHealthKC.org)**

## Kudos!

Visit [facebook.com/trumedBH](https://facebook.com/trumedBH) to read more about our staff who exemplify Our Noble Cause of acceptance, hope and compassion to those they serve.

The TMC Behavioral Health New Frontiers and PEER Center staff rose to the occasion during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing care in new and innovative ways. Robert Ellis, Program Director, would especially like to give a huge kudos to the following team members:

**Athena Horton** for managing the day-to-day operations of the food pantry.

**Kylah Hitchcock** for tirelessly typing up food pantry invoices and being Athena's right-hand person in the daily operations.

**Vonda Strother** for making sure the New Frontiers billing was collected and submitted on time.

**Mirna Herrera** for ordering and picking up food from Harvesters (there was a lot!) and handling the donations.

**Mark VanMeter** for making phone calls to all New Frontiers members on a weekly basis to maintain a sense of community. Mark also created group kits and delivered them to members' houses so they would all have the same group supplies for Kristie's virtual groups.

**Kristie Parrish and Payton McGee** for being flexible and providing groups virtually and at the group homes during the quarantine.

**Debbie Kolarik** for maintaining contact with her caseload and providing a virtual spirituality group weekly that was available to all New Frontiers members.

**Yann Aquirre, Shalise Williams, and Gloria Little** for screening employees and clients at the Healing Canvas, as well as facilitating groups at Tracy and Crossroads group homes.

**Sean Dale, Curtis Torrence, and Rebecca Shafer** for preparing food for the Healing Canvas Building, Tracy and Crossroads group homes.



## OUR NOBLE CAUSE

Dedicating our professional lives to accepting people as they are today, bearing hope for their future, and using compassion to empower those we serve.

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