Time is running out!

**January 8, 2018** is the deadline to submit a workshop proposal for the 12th Annual Working Peer Specialist Conference in New York City. (See next page for details.)
January 5, 2018
(Deadline to submit letter of intent)
--- Scholarship Application ---

New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)
2018 Mental Health Scholarship Program
One Year Residency (MHSP/OYR)
at the Silberman School of Social Work

More Information

January 8, 2018
--- Workshop Proposal ---

12th Annual Conference for NYC Working Peer Specialists
New York University’s Kimmel Center
Thursday, July 19, 2018

Call for Proposals and Application
January 12, 2018
--- Trainer Training Application ---

SAMHSA GAINS Center
2-Day Trainer Training for “How trauma-informed responses improve criminal justice”
Albany, New York
(Training is on March 21 and 22, 2018)

Application

January 15, 2018
--- National Youth Convergence 2018 ---
For young, emerging leaders, within the ages of 18-30.

Application

January 26, 2018 (Deadline)
--- ThriveAtWork ---
Deadline to apply for the next training session, which starts on February 5.

Application

January 26, 2018 (Deadline)
--- Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association ---
41st Annual Wellness and Recovery Summit

Call for Workshop Proposals
Upcoming Events

----- ThriveAtWork Open House ----- 
January 8, 2018  
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm  
2 Washington Street, 9th Floor  
New York, New York 10004  

More Information

----- Thrive NYC “Task Shifting” ----- 
January 19, 2018  
9:00 am – 5:00 pm  
Brooklyn Law School  

More Information

----- OMH Webinar/Seminar ----- 
Free 2-Day Seminar (and Webinar) on Benefits / Entitlements  
Jan. 25, 2018 | 9:00 am – 4:30 pm  
& Jan. 26, 2018 | 9:00 am – 2:00 pm  

How to quickly get approval for SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, and other entitlement programs, presented by John B. Allen Jr. Special Assistant to the Commissioner, NYS OMH.  

Click here for flyer

Save the Date!  
Alternatives 2018 | July 29-August 3  
Washington, DC!  

Learn More
Blogs & Articles

Pause and Reflect
January 2, 2018

As we begin this new year, it may be a time to pause and reflect on how far we’ve come, both as individuals and as a movement for social change. I was updating the Academy of Peer Services – History of the Peer Movement course over the holiday break and found myself, with each pioneer of the movement, deeply grateful for and in awe of those who had the courage and the tenacity to change the mental health system to one that is far more respectful and kind than it was even a half century ago.

Patrick Hendry of Mental Health America recently produced a video on this history called, “From Asylums to Recovery.” It is well worth the less than half hour to pause and reflect on the heroes of our movement.

From Asylums to Recovery (23:38 minute video)

The first term of 2018 opens on January 8, and I encourage you to take a look at some of the updates. There are many more resources about our history available now than ever. As we move forward, let us not forget to look back with gratitude for those who brought us where we are today.

We wish you a happy new year and look forward to your participation in the Academy of Peer Services and the Virtual Community.

~ Rita / Community Coordinator
academy.virtual.community@gmail.com
A Retrospective: Reflecting on the Holidays

HO, HO, HO OR JUST HO, HUM!

BY HOWARD DIAMOND

HO, HO, HO, hope for the holidays. Or is just, ho, hum, blah for the holidays? Whatever one celebrates, is up to each and every individual. Just make it fun and safe. Living on Long Island affords me the opportunity to view an assortment of festive holiday decorations, each one is unique and is carefully crafted by the people who live there. Everyone that contributes has their own separate skills that make great holiday magic.

Just look there is a house mostly in red! Maybe the next block has one is green and gold for all to see. Wow! This place is plastered in blue. Some have Christmas Trees all covered with lights and several others have menorahs waiting to be lit. As I gaze in some of the windows, (Just peeking in), I see garland and tinsels lining these houses and the trees filled with ornaments and a whole slew of figurines that blink on and off. In others, I spot many Menorahs waiting to be lit and an assortment of dreidels and Jewish stars all over the walls and ceiling.

As I continue my journey, I start to feel bad. Yes, I find that there are many of us who have no family or friends and plenty of people that are less fortunate. They are forced to spend the holidays alone without much contact from the neighborhoods around them. In addition, they might not have money or resources to buy anything for their holidays. So, there are no frills, no place to show their beautifications. Yes, this is ho, hum!

These people really need our help. Donate one's time and efforts might assist several, but we need to do more. Some volunteer in soup kitchens or homeless shelters and others of us bring or send clothing and or money to worthwhile organizations. All I am doing is asking each of us (if one can) do something that makes an impact for someone else. Yes, we can make a difference! So, I decide to pick myself up and I do what I can do to help others. What a relief!

For me, the holidays are a lonely time. During this time, I have one brother who I do not spend much time with and my mom is living in assisted living. Also, during this year, two of my friends died and a third is not well. So, I try to take my life one day, or even, one hour or minute at a time. This helps me get through the rough patches and there are too many to mention.

Of course, I spend a lot of my non-working time dreaming or perhaps day dreaming of Maureen, my significant other. On December 11, it would have been our 12th anniversary. Happy Anniversary, Maureen! The next day makes two and a half years since she left the earth and went to heaven. Enough sadness and self-loathing. Time to think positive, she would want that. As I conclude this article, I wish everyone a happy holiday season and a healthy and safe 2018. Always remember and never forget, Maureen, My Sweetie, I love you, I miss you and after two and a half years, I still wish you were here! See you in the newsletter. --

Howard, a New York State Certified Peer Specialist from Long Island
Peer Research

New Study!

Calling Peer Specialists:
Research Volunteers Needed Nationwide!

Do you currently work as a peer support provider? If so, your perspective on work-related stress is needed.

Learn More

In the next issue of the News Digest!
You will have an opportunity to access and take the APS Sense of Community survey and enter a drawing for a gift card!
Research Articles and Reports

Links to abstracts or summaries of the following 2017 journal or research articles have been posted on the Virtual Community in the Research section: https://aps-community.org/research/

- Defining Peer Roles and Status Among Community Health Workers and Peer Support Specialists in Integrated Systems of Care
- Connections to Care (C2C): The Perspectives of Leaders at Community-Based Organizations that are Integrating Mental Health Supports
- Establishing a Research Agenda for Understanding the Role and Impact of Mental Health Peer Specialists
- An update on the growing evidence base for peer support
- Peer support services: state of the workforce-state of the field in the USA
- Mutuality and shared power as an alternative to coercion and force
- Why not a peer worker?
- The growing pains of peer support
- Provision of Peer Specialist Services in VA Patient Aligned Care Teams
- Bridging Gaps in Mental Health Care: Lessons Learned from the Welcome Back Veterans Initiative
- Essential Nontechnical Skills Service Members Gain During On-the-Job Experience: A Resource for Leaders and Hiring Managers
- The Promise of Community Citizen Science
- Web-based survey data collection with peer support and advocacy organizations: implications of participatory methods

Communities of Practice

The Sense of Community survey (previous page) is aimed at understanding the current state of peer support workforce in New York State. Some of the data will help us connect people in different areas of the state that have existing peer networks while also supporting those with an interest in developing new communities of practice in local, regional, and statewide groups or projects.

Earlier in the month, we held two meetings with people interested in networking and further exploring the development of communities of practice with peer specialists. At the meetings participants started the process of indicating what they most need and want in further education, collaboration, and support. Additional planning meetings will be held in January 2018. If you have an interest in joining the effort and being added to the listserv, send email to academy.virtual.community@gmail.com.
Supervisors of Peer Specialists

Recently, the APS team held two focus groups in White Plains, New York (October 27, at the New York Peer Specialist Certification Board conference). Following those focus groups, several supervisors indicated that they wanted to continue to meet with other supervisors to share ideas and common interests. As a part of our project to develop communities of practice, the APS virtual community team is exploring ways to keep the conversation going, to schedule learning opportunities on topics that are important to supervisors, and to create a repository of resources for supervisors of peer specialists.

The APS team is scheduling additional focus groups (upstate) and a series of meetings for supervisors to continue to connect in 2018. If you (or someone you know) have an interest in getting connected with this group, or, if you have suggestions for topics that would be applicable to supervisors of peer specialists, send email to academy.virtual.community@gmail.com.

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Job Listings

Click the job title for a description of the job.

**Steuben, Chemung, Schuyler Counties** *(multiple positions)*

- **Peer Specialist**
  Adult Behavioral Health Services in Bath, NY
- **Respite Worker-Skill Builder**
  OMH Waiver (Steuben, Chemung, Schuyler counties)
- **Parent Advocate Relief**
  OMH Waiver (Steuben, Chemung, Schuyler counties)
- **Peer Specialist Relief**
Adult Behavioral Services in Bath, NY  
*Waiver Service Provider-Relief*  
Bridges to Health (Steuben, Chemung, Schuyler counties)

Pathways, Inc.  
(Posted December 29, 2017)

**Onondaga County**  
*Peer Specialist – Short Term Crisis Respite*  
Liberty Resources  
(Posted December 27, 2017)

**Oswego County**  
*Peer Specialist – Short Term Crisis Respite*  
Liberty Resources  
(Posted December 27, 2017)

**Cayuga County**  
*Peer Specialist – MRT Supportive Housing*  
Liberty Resources  
(Posted December 27, 2017)

**New York Region**  
(multiple positions)  
*Peer Specialist / Wellness Coach*  
SUS: Services for the Underserved  
(Posted December 20, 2017)

**Staten Island**  
*Peer Specialist*  
Project Hospitality  
(Posted December 20, 2017)

**New York City**  
(multiple positions)  
*Peer Counselor*  
NYC Health+Hospitals  
(Posted December 20, 2017)
New York Region
Peer Support Specialist
Federation of Organizations
Suffolk, Nassau, Queens, Brooklyn, Bronx and Manhattan
(Posted December 20, 2017)

Rochester
Peer Support Specialist
East House
(Posted December 20, 2017)

New York City
(5 new positions)
Thrive Peer Trainer
Peer Support Specialist
Care Coordinator
Harm Reduction Coordinator
Coordinator of Education and Training (Peer Specialist)
Community Access
(Posted December 20, 2017)

Newark, NJ
Recovery Specialist (Peer Community Coordinator)
Beacon
(Posted December 20, 2017)

New York City
Peer & Consumer Education Specialist
Beacon
(Posted December 20, 2017)

New York City
Support Line Operator
Community Access
(Posted December 20, 2017)
New York City
Peer Counselor Level II, (15 Hours/Week)
NYC Health + Hospitals
(Posted December 20, 2017)

New York City
Facilitator and Program Associate (Part-Time)
Center for Rehabilitation & Recovery
(Posted December 20, 2017)

New York
Aging Services Peer Specialist
The Bridge
(Posted December 16, 2017)

Cortland
Peer Engagement Specialist (part-time)
To apply visit: www.ccsi.org/Employment/Careers-with-CCSI
(Posted December 7, 2017)

Madison
Peer Engagement Specialist (part-time)
To apply visit: www.ccsi.org/Employment/Careers-with-CCSI
(Posted December 7, 2017)

Oswego
Peer Engagement Specialist (part-time)
To apply visit: www.ccsi.org/Employment/Careers-with-CCSI
(Posted December 7, 2017)

Central New York
(3 positions)
Peer Specialist – Part Time – Madison County
Peer Specialist – MRT Supportive Housing
Peer Specialist – Onondaga County
Liberty Resources
(Posted December 5, 2017)
Interested in Working for Yourself?

Self-Employment Starts with You
Research Brief #3
- Planning for the Future: Growth-Oriented Entrepreneurship -

Learn More

Volunteer Opportunities

New Choices in Recovery
NYAPRS Statewide Peer-to-Peer Education Forum Presentations
(Ongoing Opportunities)
More Information

Program Directors:
Do you have volunteer opportunities?

Those with a provisional peer specialist certification are looking for a chance to gain experience and volunteering with a peer program is a great way to get started!
Wellness is a conscious and deliberate process, based on self-awareness and involving many choices daily, weekly, and monthly. This 2018 Wellness Calendar is designed to help you turn your attention to different aspects of wellness each month. You can use the calendar to set small achievable goals, to make plans, and to track what you do—or just as inspiration. To learn more about the calendar or Wellness and Self-Care, contact Peggy Swarbrick at pswarbrick@cpsnj.org

Spread the News!

If you have job openings, resources, or announcements of events to share, send email to academy.virtual.community@gmail.com.

Visit the Academy Virtual Community to learn more
https://aps-community.org