



Academy of Peer Services (APS)

Term 2 is now open!

For more information about the Academy of Peer Services view the **Course Catalog** posted on:

www.academyofpeerservices.org

APS Virtual Community News Digest

May 7, 2018

Welcome to the APS VC News Digest, a regular summary of job openings, events, research opportunities, and announcements for the peer workforce in New York State.

This news digest is developed as part of the APS Virtual Community project.

www.aps-community.org

Featured Event – Today!

Ask the Certification Board Live!

Monday

May 7, 2018

3:00 - 4:00 PM



Join Tara Davis with the New York Peer Specialist Certification Board in a presentation on the certification process, what's needed to renew certification and much more. She will answer questions live.

Tara will be joined by Rita Cronise with the Academy of Peer Services and Denise Ranaghan, the Director of Peer Services for NYAPRS.

[Register Now](#)

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What's New?

Academy of Peer Services

Term 2, 2018 launched this past Wednesday and we're in full swing for the next 12-week term. A few quick updates.

New Elective Course: Supporting Veterans and their Families:

Seat time: 4 HOURS

Prerequisite: NONE

Those who have served our country, whether in combat or through other kinds of deployments, deserve the best we have to offer. But all too often, they and their families receive little or no support after discharge. In this course we explore common issues faced by those who have served in the U.S. military and their families, resources that are available to help, and ways supporters can help those who are impacted in negative ways by service in the military to overcome those challenges and find greater peace at home.

APS Mobile Use Survey:

A recent upgrade in the authoring software has enabled mobile functionality, which we are in the first stages of trying out. For those of you using smart phones or tablets, you can now access courses in the Academy. **At this point, smart phones and tablets are not supported by the APS technical team, but we'd like your feedback if you try out the courses on your mobile devices about how well it is working. Your feedback will help us to continue to improve the courses.** Click to complete the survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/APS-Mobile_Q

Virtual Learning Community (VLC) Q&A Session

There are a lot of questions about the Peer Specialist certification, which is administered by the New York State Peer Specialist Certification Board – a separate organization from the Academy of Peer Services. APS provides the training and testing. The Certification board establishes the qualifications and reviews applicants to ensure all qualifications for certification have been met. We have an open dialogue session, live with Tara Davis, the Administrator for the NYPSCB on May 7 at 3:00 pm. Click [Register](#) and join us if you can or watch the VLC for the recording.

We hope you have a productive term! Please visit the APS list of [frequently asked questions \(FAQ\)](#) or contact technical support team at academyofpeerservicesnyomh@gmail.com with any course enrollment questions.

Articles

May is Not Only Mental Health Month, it is Wellness Month

By Howard Diamond

May is Mental Health Month, but that does not only mean Mental Health but physical health, also. Most of the time, we take our health for granted. We eat and drink what we want, when we want, etc. People like myself are overweight but do little to make any changes in this area. Some of us are afraid and believe that this is the way we are, and nothing can be done to significantly show a difference. Still others, don't care. Remember folks, this is about our overall health. Wellness, by definition, means "the state of being in good health, especially as an actively pursued goal. Also, it measures our progress both qualitatively and quantitatively".

Peer Specialists are quite unique. Practically every day, we work on our Mental Health and often share this with other individuals, but we fall very short when it comes to other wellness focuses. Dr. Peggy Swarbrick, Rutgers University Director of Practice Innovations and Wellness wrote that there are eight dimensions of wellness whereby each goes hand and hand with the other to shape a person. No, not round or square. This of course doesn't mean we are always at our best, but it is something we can strive for each day. My day is broken into segments, so it does not become overwhelming. Not to say that it always works, but it is in the attempt. Ultimately, it is up to all people to do their utmost.

There are other techniques that one can use to attain wellness. Examples include, but not limited to, Progressive Relaxation, Visualization, Thought Stopping and Assertive Skill Building. Each one has advantages and disadvantages. By virtue of being Peer Specialists, and the core value of mutuality --- assisting others and they assisting us, we all gain and get ahead. Sounds very good to me. Personally, in my recovery toolkit, I have used all the ones mentioned with various degrees of success. The Recovery Toolkit is designed to support everyone through all the stages of recovery. This is from planning to stay well to coping with a crisis and learning from our experiences.

Mary Ellen Copeland, PhD, Author, Educator, Mental Health Advocate and Mental Health Survivor designed the "Wellness Recovery Action Plan, (WRAP)". What WRAP is, an Evidence-based, mental health recovery program based on her study of the coping and strategies of people who have experienced mental health challenges. In 2005, Dr. Copeland created the Copeland Center for Wellness and Recovery which continues her training around the world. Due to her extensive work with people in crisis, we know each individual learns ways to deal with their symptoms differently and focusing on their strengths. Lift one, two, lift, repeat; however, don't strain oneself.

Keep in mind that everyone has their own way to cope and I am not going to say that one idea is better than another. All this piece is stating that there are many ways to help each other in recovery and definitely to try to use one to aid ourselves. Don't we want that for personkind? For me, this idea is wonderful, but I am just one distinct individual. Let me know how this works out for each person out there by sharing your thoughts and comments. Anxiously, awaiting the responses? Breathe, Howard, Breathe! Ah, that, better. Make every month Wellness Month, not just May. Happy Mother's Day. See you in the Newsletter.

Howard, New York State Certified Peer Specialist from Long Island

**Send personal articles or blogs about
your life as a Peer Specialist or Supervisor for inclusion in the VLC to:**

academy.virtual.community@gmail.com

The deadline for the next publication is June 1, 2018.

Upcoming Events

Visit our Virtual Learning Community Calendar for a list Upcoming Events

<https://aps-community.org/calendar/>



**What's new in your region?
Is there an event that should be listed but isn't?**

Send your Announcements for the Virtual Learning Community to:

academy.virtual.community@gmail.com

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Resources

National News for the Peer Support Workforce (in alphabetical order)



Copeland Center for Wellness and Recovery

[Newsletter](#)

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)

Peer Leadership Center [Newsletter](#) | Take the PLC video [3 minute tour](#)

Intentional Peer Support (IPS)

[Newsletter](#)

International Association of Peer Supporters (iNAPS)

[Newsletter](#)

Mental Health Recovery (WRAP)

[Webinars](#)

National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse

[The Key Update \(Newsletter\)](#)

What are the trends in peer support and supervision?
Is there a publication, webinar, website, or national newsletter that
should be listed here but isn't?
Let us know...

Send recommended Resources for the Virtual Learning Community to:

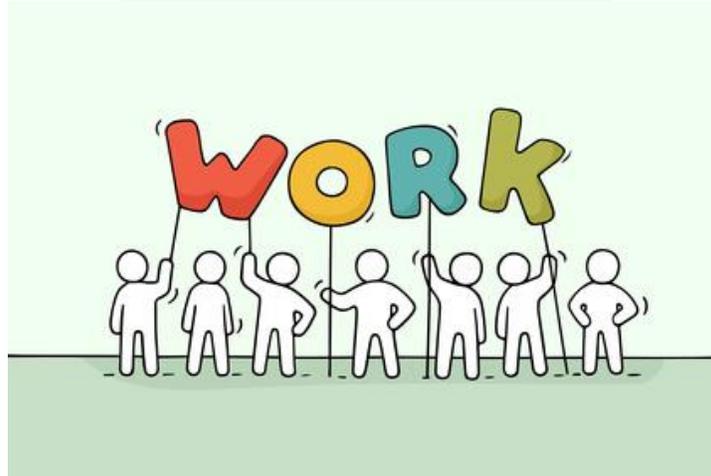
academy.virtual.community@gmail.com

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Job Listings

Visit our Job Bank for a list of recent openings

<https://aps-community.org/job-bank/>



If you live in or near New York City, you can also look up the Peer Job Board on the Coalition for Behavioral Health site: http://www.coalitionny.org/the_center/jobs/

Employers – are you seeking qualified candidates?

If you have not already done so, register your business with the New York State Department of Labor and submit your job opening to the [Dept. of Labor Job Bank](#) before submitting it to the Academy of Peer Services Virtual Community. The Governor's [Employment First](#) initiative is tracking the number of people with disabilities who are being hired, and openings for Peer Support positions should be counted in this initiative. Once you have created a business account and submitted the job to the Dept. of Labor Job Bank, you can send the job description to us to be posted.



Submit your job openings for peer specialists or other roles in the peer workforce to:

academy.virtual.community@gmail.com

We will post your openings in the Virtual Learning Community Job Bank (website) and in this newsletter.

Virtual Learning Community



We are a network of peer specialists working together to plan ways to provide support, education, and advocacy for the peer workforce in New York State.

Join us!

Sign up for the Virtual Learning Community listserv:

<https://groups.google.com/d/forum/aps-virtual-community-e/join>

(The moderator will approve your request to join.)



Supervisor Network

Are you a supervisor of peer specialists looking for a network of supervisors?

We are a network of those who supervise peer workers who are supporting each other and learning together what it means to be a supervisor in the peer workforce.

Join Us!

Sign up for the Supervision listserv:

https://groups.google.com/d/forum/aps-ps_supervision_list/join

(The moderator will approve your request to join.)

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.

Reminder – Join Us!

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