



The Bell

MHA
Mental Health America
of Colorado

Fall 2009

TRIBUTE 2009

Thank you to our guests, sponsors and our terrific Honorees, Lyndia and Cy Harvey

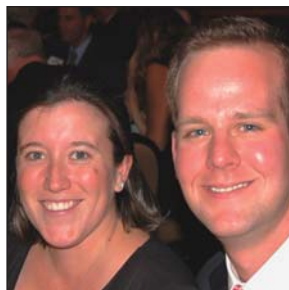
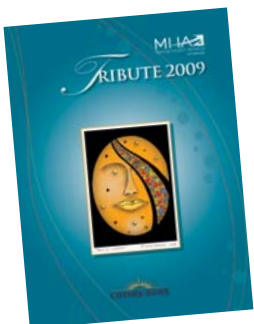


Jeanne M. Rohner, President & CEO of MHAC with Tribute 2009 Honorees, Cy & Lyndia Harvey.

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Pictures from the event are on page 4 >>>



SAVE THE DATE: Friday, February 5, 2010
Colorado History Museum

Keynote Speaker: T.R. Reid, journalist and author of *The Healing of America: A Global Quest for Better, Cheaper, and Fairer Health Care.*

Invitations will be mailed soon!

Leadership

Honoring Two Generations of Philanthropy

Patty Cook and **Sarah (Cook) Schnabel** will be honored on November 13 as Outstanding Volunteer Fundraisers as part of National Philanthropy Day in Colorado. The mother-daughter fundraising duo has donated countless hours to MHAC and they deserve many accolades for their fundraising work.

Patty joined the MHAC board of directors in 2002 to advocate for mental health and to diminish the stigma associated with mental health disorders. During her board tenure, she implemented the successful silent and live auction portions of the annual Tribute event. Patty now serves on the MHAC honorary board of directors and continues to fundraise on behalf of the organization.

Through the leadership of her mother, Sarah began volunteering for the Tribute event auction in 2007. That year, she increased the value of items donated and applied her merchandising and display talents to make the silent auction event appealing and financially successful.

In addition to Patty's significant fundraising success and enthusiasm, it is truly important that she has bestowed the value of philanthropy onto her daughter. MHAC has been lucky to have their support and congratulates them on this honor!



Sarah (Cook) Schnabel and Patty Cook at Tribute 2009.

National Philanthropy Day
celebrates individuals,
organizations, foundations, and
businesses for their exceptional
philanthropic and volunteer
contributions in Colorado.

Volunteer Spotlight

By Diane Wheeler

For 15 years, I suffered through my bipolar illness as it evolved into something that I could not control. The days were long and full of pain. I am blessed that I have a supportive family who have been very caring and loving through all my ups and downs.

When faced with adversity, many choose to become isolated and lonely as I did. My isolation led to years of darkness, thoughts of suicide, worthlessness and sadness. After encouragement from my psychiatrist, my choice was to donate my time as a volunteer with MHAC. I found that the organization is filled with individuals who are dedicated, caring, friendly and very supportive to all. In 1997, I started volunteering my time licking envelopes and stamps for Tribute and trying to answer phones. Sometimes I found that hard because I could not remember which extensions everyone had! I have also been involved with the Speakers' Bureau and recently WE CAN! I decided I enjoyed the many people who were there and I started hanging out at the office. I loved the many small jobs and activities I was doing, so I started working more days. I loved the friendly and secure place. The jobs I was given brightened my life and every day I come to the office I find myself safe and happy.

My dedication to give as many hours as I can to MHAC has become the guiding force to all my volunteer work. It is such a joy to work with the staff at MHAC and to see their caring and warm smiles for everyone who enters the office.



I-r: Hilary Olsen, MHAC VISTA, Jillian Mukavetz, WE CAN! Coordinator with Diane.



Diane helps build a "What's Your Mood?" puppet at a health fair.

Board of Directors 2009

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President's Letter



Dear Friends,

We began the year with an unstable economy that sent out ripples of concern about provisions for mental health care in the state of Colorado. This concern was not unfounded as thousands of dollars have been cut from the state budget that were used to support mental health services. Most notably, nearly one-third of the beds at the Colorado Mental Health Institute at Ft. Logan have been eliminated.

It is in these lean times that Mental Health America of Colorado is more important than ever. Rather than cutting programs, MHAC is stepping in to provide more access to mental health services. This fall, the Pro Bono Outreach Program is launching an expansion initiative that will refer individuals and families to Pro Bono mental health professional volunteers who have agreed to provide services at their private practice locations. Now more individuals and families who need mental health care but cannot access it because they don't have insurance or don't qualify for Medicare or Medicaid will be able to access care.

Additionally, MHAC is looking forward to statewide expansion. Through the Pro Bono Outreach Program expansion and other initiatives, we will be able to recruit volunteers from throughout the state to provide these services both in Denver metro area and around the state.

While the beginning of 2009 introduced many challenges to our work, we are ending the year with many successes. Our Tribute event, which honored Cy and Lyndia Harvey for their commitment to mental health issues, raised over \$400,000 for the organization. Over 600 individuals gathered to celebrate the Harveys and to commit to making a difference on mental health issues.

As we approach 2010, we look forward to all of the possibilities with optimism and resolve to make real changes in Coloradoan's lives regarding mental health and wellness. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to this goal!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeanne".

Jeanne M. Rohner
President and CEO



Tribute 2009

The Night in Pictures

Tribute was a huge success this year, raising over \$400,000 to support the programs, education and resources MHAC provides to thousands of Coloradans each year. "We are so appreciative of the support for this year's event! We have heard first-hand about the impact the economy has had on the mental health of our friends and neighbors. Tribute's success ensures that we can continue to meet the increased need in our state," said Jeanne M. Rohner, President and CEO.

TRIBUTE 2009



Honorees Cy & Lyndia Harvey with event co-chairs, Terry Biddinger (2nd from left) and Jeanne & Dick Saunders.



Cheri Jacobs and emcee, Gloria Neal.



Patricia & Jim Smith, Republic National Distributing Company. RNDNC provided the vino for dinner!



Board Member and dinner committee volunteer, Pegi Touff and Tara Kill, auction co-chair.



Deana Mainord, Trish Ponder, Itha Gabriel, Leanna Hale and Dana Brooks.



Jim Shmerling, President & CEO of The Children's Hospital; Dr. Jennifer Hagman, The Children's Hospital and Debbie Wagner.



Zeik Saidman, Senator Moe Keller & Alana Smart.



Marty Schmitz, Citywide Banks and Megan Walsh.

Many thanks to Pamela Cress for taking photos of the event.



Sharing Hope

By Amanda Kearney-Smith



The Entertainment Industries Council (EIC) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to provide information, awareness and understanding of major health and social issues among the entertainment industries and to audiences at large. EIC recognizes and promotes accurate portrayals of individuals who have experienced a substance use disorder or mental health condition. Together with AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals they sponsored my participation in the Prism Awards Capitol Hill Showcase, September 15, 2009. I gave a brief talk about my experiences living with bipolar disorder and how I found treatment and started on the path to recovery. What an empowering experience!

The event took place in the Congressional Ballroom in the Capital Building, which is in itself an amazing experience. I was among Senators and Representatives from all over the country who inspired us all with their commitment to mental health and substance use policy reform. I represented the “patient” advocate and was there to provide a “real life story” about my battles with mental illness. However, my focus was on providing hope, the effectiveness of treatment and the importance of taking personal responsibility for your health.

After the event came to a close, a tearful mother approached me and thanked me for being willing to share my experiences. Her daughter was also diagnosed with bipolar disorder and she was just hospitalized for a suicide attempt. It saddened me to see the pain in her eyes as she spoke, but it’s definitely not the first time I’ve heard a story like hers. Countless others came up to me afterwards and thanked me, congratulated me and praised me for my “bravery” and “courage.” I have a difficult time accepting myself as courageous. I don’t see how I could live any other way. I want to share my hope with others and maybe reach someone, even just one person.

I am honored to have had the opportunity to share the stage with some of the most influential leaders in Congress. I left Washington, DC, feeling (a little) more hopeful about the future of our healthcare and mental healthcare system.



Amanda entered the AstraZeneca "Speak and be Heard" essay contest where her story of recovery and hope was voted the most inspiring by people all across the country. This month she will take part in a recovery panel in New York City.

**Amanda Kearney-Smith
Director of WE CAN!**

Healthy Brain = Healthy Body *Contributed by Nancy Charles, LPC* *Connecting Mental Health and Chronic Illness*



First Lady Jeannie Ritter graciously accepted my invitation to speak at my work about the current state of mental health affairs in Colorado and the nation. What struck me, outside of the fact that she is a charming woman and a wonderfully funny and witty speaker, is how she portrayed the mind and body link that exists in all of us

humans. Mrs. Ritter stated that “our heads are attached to our bodies and we can’t separate the two.” What a simple and amazing way of bringing to light that our emotional and physical selves are connected. I’ll admit that I’ve completely adopted her statement and use it often, without giving credit (sorry, Mrs. Ritter).

The illustration is a correct one, our minds and bodies communicate, relay information and have a significant impact on one another, so it goes without saying ... our emotional health affects our physical health and vice versa.

What we know with regard to the negative effects of depression and anxiety on physical health are proven time and again. Depression affects blood sugar, blood pressure, cholesterol, heart rate and the immune system, all of those, the big players in the safeguarding of good physical health. Depression also comes out physically in the body as pain, since it comes from the same part of the brain and so the old saying “it’s all in your head,” is actually true, pain comes from the brain, but it doesn’t mean that it’s not real.

Anxiety is extremely destructive to the health of the body as well. It shows up as headaches, stomach aches and can cause gastrointestinal trouble. This heightened state of worry is like a constant flow of adrenaline in the body and is extremely exhausting. It’s a lot like starting your car in the driveway, leaving it in park and pushing the gas pedal to the floor. The end result of all that high speed running is a lot of damage to the body. It’s clear that our emotional state plays a huge part in the development of disease and illness.

For those with a chronic illness, mental health becomes an even more important piece in the complex human machine. Research studies vary greatly and state anywhere from 15-33 percent of people with chronic illness, also have depression and/or anxiety. Regardless of the actual number,

the meaning here, is that the link between the emotional and the physical is vital.

Those with chronic illness often face many hardships. They must deal with a diagnosis that often changes their ability to work, take care of their home, be physically active, participate in social activities and recreation and can affect their relationships with others, and their finances. It’s easy to see how a person with a serious illness can become anxious, stressed, have low self-esteem and feel hopeless. It is difficult to separate the physical symptoms from the emotional ones and easy for doctors to overlook the indicators of depression and anxiety, when a more obvious physical illness exists.

A chronic illness poses additional challenges with regard to mental health. Some of the symptoms of various diseases often mimic those associated with depression and anxiety,

Prevalence of Depression and Other Illnesses

Stroke and Depression

- **Depression occurs in 10-27 percent of stroke survivors and usually lasts about one year.**
- **An additional 15-40 percent of stroke survivors experience some symptoms of depression within two months after the stroke.**

National Institute of Mental Health, “Co-occurrence of Depression with Stroke,” accessed July 1999.

Diabetes and Depression

- **People with adult onset diabetes have a 25 percent chance of having depression.**

L.Lamberg, “Treating Depression in Medical Conditions May Improve Quality of Life,” *JAMA* vol. 276, 857-858 (1999).



such as insomnia or oversleeping, appetite changes, weight fluctuations, and fatigue. In addition, when depression and anxiety are at work, the motivation to visit the doctor regularly, stay on medications and follow diet and exercise recommendations can become very low. And, not following guidelines that are necessary to help control an illness leads to further health risks.

So, how does an individual dealing with a chronic illness know when their emotional health is having a detrimental impact on their body? By plugging into their feelings and looking for the signs. Outside of the physical symptoms of depression and anxiety, the emotional ones occur for a period of two weeks or more and include: feeling persistent sadness or guilt, anxiety or worry, and a

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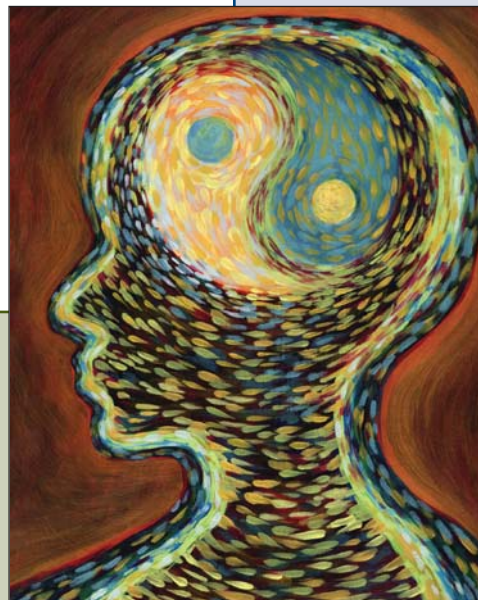
Chronic Care Collaborative

MHAC recognizes the mental health strain individuals face when they have a chronic illness. Often the emotional and financial stress of having a chronic illness can induce mental health issues that must be addressed. Because of this, MHAC is a part of Colorado's Chronic Care Collaborative.

There are 24 partner organizations that make up the Chronic Care Collaborative, and together, advocate for those living with chronic illness, a population of 1.2 million or one in four Coloradoans. This summer, the Chronic Care Collaborative has hosted Health Care Forums across the state to discuss the issues that face those living with chronic disease. MHAC has been involved with these efforts and recently hosted a Health Care Forum in Glenwood Springs with State Senator Al White. The event was a success and there was lively discussion about budget

cuts, access to psychiatric medications and long-term care efforts in the state. Constituents from Colorado West Regional Mental Health Center, Grand River Hospital District, Multiple Sclerosis Society and various concerned citizens were there to hear Senator White's positions on these health care issues.

For more information on the Chronic Care Collaborative, please visit: www.nationalmssociety.org/chapters/COC/takeaction/chronic-care-collaborative/index.aspx



Cancer and Depression

- **Depressive symptoms can be mistakenly attributed to the cancer itself, which can also cause appetite and weight loss, insomnia and loss of energy.**

National Institute of Mental Health, "Co-occurrence of Depression with Cancer," accessed July 1999.

- **One in four people with cancer also suffer from clinical depression.**

Heart Disease and Depression

- **Depression occurs in 40-65 percent of patients who have experienced a heart attack, and in 18-20 percent of people who have coronary heart disease, but who have not had a heart attack.**

National Institute of Mental Health, "Co-occurrence of Depression with Heart Disease," accessed July 1999.

Announcing New CEO

Following an extensive nationwide search, the board of directors at Metro Crisis Services is pleased to announce that **Daniel G. Ward** has been selected as the chief executive officer for the organization.

Daniel has significant professional experience in establishing and managing behavioral health access and crisis centers, including designing and planning a state-of-the-art behavioral health facility in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Michigan State University and a master's degree in psychology from West Georgia College. He is also an experienced leader of several nonprofit health care organizations.

Mental Health America of Colorado has been instrumental in leading and facilitating all phases of the ambitious Metro Crisis Triage Project. The project's mission is to create a 24-hour, year-round, community-based system of crisis intervention services for people experiencing a mental health or substance abuse crisis in the Denver metro area. The goal will be to safely and effectively stabilize these crises and link those who access the services to appropriate follow-up care.

Over 100 community leaders, advocates and experts have contributed to the research, design and plan for the Metro Crisis Triage Project. The project is now incorporated as Metro Crisis Services, Inc., and has submitted an application to become a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, charitable organization. The Metro Crisis Services Board of Directors represents the region's and the project's key constituents, including:

Councilwoman Carol Boigon, At-Large Member, Denver City Council

Carl Clark, MD, President and CEO, Mental Health Center of Denver

Carla Cowan, Founder, A Mother's Wings, a program of MHAC

Gail Finley, Vice President of Policy Analysis & Strategic Planning,
Colorado Hospital Association

Julie Holtz, CEO, Behavioral HealthCare, Inc.

William Kent, PhD, TK Associates

Chief Bill Kilpatrick, Golden Police Department.

Robyn Loup, Mental Health Advocate

Pat Noonan, Arapahoe County Commissioner, District 4

Sheriff Joe Pelle, Boulder County Sheriff Department

Jeanne M. Rohner, President and CEO,
Mental Health America of Colorado

Bill Wendt, CEO and Chief Counsel, Signal Behavioral Health Network

Together, Daniel G. Ward, the board of directors and staff members will bring the Metro Crisis Triage dream to fruition. They are working to secure a combination of public and private funding needed to launch and sustain the crisis system. They plan to launch a Crisis and Access Hotline in early 2010 and open the first of three crisis centers in 2011.



Daniel G. Ward

For more information about Metro Crisis Services, check out
www.mhacolorado.org > Programs > Metro Crisis Triage Project

Around the State



MHA of Pikes Peak Region

MHA of Pikes Peak Region is part of the El Paso County Co-Occurring Collaborative (The Collaborative), which was formed in 2006 and includes leadership from fifteen local organizations. The Collaborative is committed to increasing access to integrated care for uninsured adults with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse conditions.

In the past year, The Collaborative has served 54 individuals through the Resource Advocacy Program. Accomplishments include:

- 100% of the individuals have reported reductions in substance use and psychiatric problems;
- 90% are consistently participating in either substance abuse services, mental health services, or both;
- 78% have not had a new encounter with the criminal justice system;
- 60% are maintaining stable housing;
- 40% have reestablished contact with family members.

In addition to the successes of The Collaborative, MHA of Pikes Peak Region has secured funding to reinstitute the Family & Children's Mental Health Matters program.



MHA of Pueblo

MHA of Pueblo helped host a community event for the release of the *Preventing Suicide in Colorado Progress Achieved & Goals for the Future* (full details on page 10) in September. **The Pueblo Suicide Prevention Center, Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado** and **MHAC** were co-hosts. More than 40 people attended to obtain the report and learn from local suicide prevention experts.

Suicide prevention and awareness is an issue that affects everyone and it was evident by those in attendance: mental health professionals, law enforcement officials, educators, foundations and recovery centers. A journalist from *The Pueblo Chieftain* attended and gained insight to the issue of suicide awareness in Pueblo county and produced a great article about the report.

Giving

Leaves are changing, the temperature is dropping and autumn officially has officially begun.

Every season has its own rhythms and traditions—things we can count on, things we share, things that help us feel like we are a part of our community. At MHAC, autumn has special traditions like our annual Tribute event, the celebration of another school year with the Check Your Head Program and an opportunity to plan for the year ahead.

As we look ahead, we see challenges as well as new opportunities. Although mental health issues are not going away, the state budget cuts will decrease access to mental health services for some of the most vulnerable people in our community. MHAC continues, in good financial times and bad, to provide mental health resources through education, advocacy and outreach.

Mental health issues affect one in five people in Colorado. This year and this season, MHAC and the people whose lives we touch need your help more than ever. Whatever you can give—whether it's a financial gift or a gift of time—please give generously. Your gift will help ensure that our traditions and our work continue long past this season.

Prevention

Report Shows Slight Decline in Suicide Rate

Overall, Colorado's Rate Remains above National Average

Preventing Suicide in Colorado Progress Achieved & Goals for the Future, a report updating the state's 1998 Suicide Prevention and Intervention Plan, was released in May. Funding for the report was provided by The Colorado Trust.

The report shows that while Colorado's average suicide rate has declined by 6.5 percent in the past decade, our state still has the 9th highest suicide rate in the nation. In fact, mortality statistics show more lives are lost each year in Colorado to suicide—805—than in motor vehicle accidents or from illnesses such as

diabetes, pneumonia or breast cancer. And suicide remains the second leading cause of death among teenagers and young adults in Colorado.

In addition to the updated research findings, the report includes input from mental health professionals, consumers, researchers, suicide survivors and family members and others gathered through multiple community meetings, which were conducted in cities and towns across the state over the past two years. MHAC facilitated the collection of the community input.

Successful Outcomes since 1998

- Many communities have developed stronger suicide prevention and awareness efforts and training.
- Education and information is reaching more diverse populations and in culturally appropriate ways.
- Suicide prevention partners are working together more closely and with other systems including mental health, substance abuse and primary care.
- State policy changes have increased insurance coverage for mental health and substance abuse conditions.

Recommendations for the Future

- Continue developing the full potential of the Office of Suicide Prevention.
- Address and support the needs of a growing Latino population, especially the high-risk age groups of single Latino working age men and teenage girls.
- Develop solutions to address limited access to mental health services in rural and mountain communities, as well as low-income populations in all areas of the state.
- Better focus on special populations including veterans, the elderly and sexual minorities.

FIGURE 5

Colorado Suicide Rates by County: 1999-2007

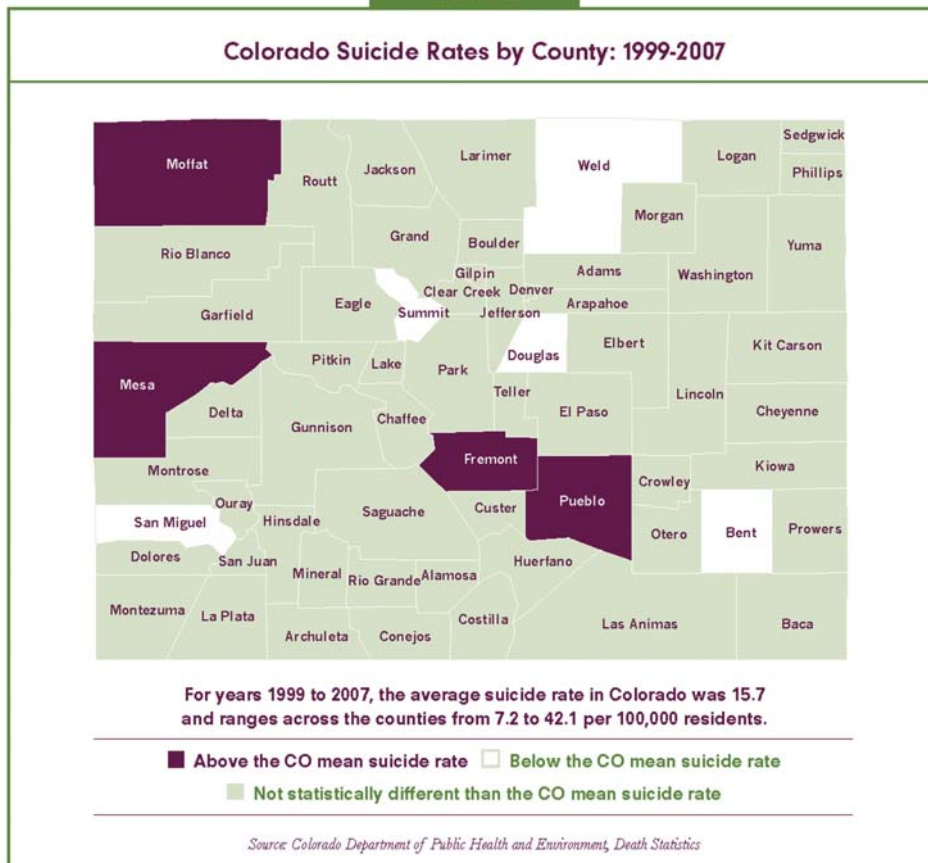


Figure 5 from the report illustrates suicide rate by county.

To request a copy of the report, contact **Jacy** at **720-208-2234** or download the PDF at mhacolorado.org > **Publications**

Bulletin Board

Healthy Brain = Healthy Body ...cont'd from page 6

loss of interest and pleasure in activities, and even thoughts of wanting to hurt oneself. It's necessary for individuals to pay attention to how they are feeling emotionally and bring it to the attention of their physician, who may not be asking those questions.

Depression and anxiety are highly treatable conditions, and when people attend to their emotional health, whether through medication, professional counseling or a combination of both, many find that their physical body feels better. They have energy to better take care of their bodies, manage stress and deal with issues at the speed of LIFE. The ability to live a physically healthy life, truly has its roots in the ability to live happily.

Nancy Charles, LPC, is a Clinical Program Consultant for Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield and works in a behavioral health program that serves to assess, support and educate members with chronic illness who may have depression and anxiety. She has a passion for educating people on various mental health topics by writing about it everywhere she can and talking about it to anyone who will listen.

New Staff Members

Welcome to new staff who have joined MHAC this fall.



Kerri Drumm,
Education
Coordinator



Cara Lazansky
Planning Council
Coordinator



Hilary Olsen
AmeriCorps VISTA

Stay in touch more often...

Sign up for our newsletter—*The Bell*—emailed the second week of each month. Keep up on the latest innovative programs, legislative news, volunteer opportunities and link quickly to all the resources on our website.

Go to mhacolorado.org and sign up using the 'Email Newsletter' button on our home page.

Contact Us

1385 S. Colorado Blvd., Ste. 610
Denver, CO 80222
Phone: 720-208-2220
800-456-3249
Fax: 720-208-2250
Email: mentalhealth@mhacolorado.org
Online: www.mhacolorado.org

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President & CEO

Malia Bohlin

VP of Development & Marketing

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Affiliates & Grassroots Coordinator

Jacy Conradt

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Alyson Fetherolf

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Amanda Kearney-Smith

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& Systems Advocacy*

Cara Lazansky

*Mental Health Planning
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Lauren Martin

*Pro Bono Outreach
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Jillian Mukavetz

WE CAN! Coordinator

Hilary Olsen

*AmeriCorps*VISTA Volunteer*

June Smigel

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Sarah Struckman

Grants & Publications Coordinator

Tim Webb

*AmeriCorps*VISTA Volunteer*

Metro Crisis Services, Inc.

Daniel G. Ward

CEO, Metro Crisis Services

Heather Cameron

Metro Crisis Services Project Director

Brooke Powers

Metro Crisis Services Project Manager

Newsletter Underwriting

Underwriting from individuals and corporations to assist in the printing and distribution costs of this bi-annual newsletter is welcomed.

For more information, please contact Jacy Conradt, Community Relations Manager, at 720-208-2234 or email jconradt@mhacolorado.org.

MHAC does not sell advertising space in this newsletter.

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A Publication of Mental Health America of Colorado



www.mhacolorado.org



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- **Mental Health and Chronic Illness**
- **New Report on Suicide Rate**
- **News from around the State**
- **Volunteer Highlights**
- **Metro Crisis Services, Inc. Names CEO**