

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



A Message from our President



Statistics, the news, social media and hushed conversations we have with only those closest to us confirm something most of us already know: everyone grapples with mental

health challenges in one way or another. Whether we're living with a serious mental illness, coping with wellness challenges that come and go through life's circumstances, have lost someone to mental health struggles, or find ourselves trying to support someone toward recovery, the common thread is clear: we all need understanding and support.

I am proud of the many ways that Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri (MHA-EM) meets these basic needs, creating a safe place and forum to have authentic conversations about mental health across the full spectrum, from wellness to serious mental illness. Since our founding in 1945, we have been elevating the conversation about mental health by leading advocacy efforts, giving voice to those with lived experience and by simply educating the rest of the community toward a place of compassion and action. Many people still consider mental health a personal matter best addressed behind closed doors. Fear of judgment and discrimination is what drives this notion, and unfortunately, the results can be tragic. By making it acceptable to talk

about mental health, we can improve and save lives. Many of those we serve at MHA-EM reach out to our team when they are at their most vulnerable and are met with a level of personalized care that is unmatched.

Callers to our HelpLine get a real voice on the end of the line ready to help navigate toward the best-possible resources. Our Representative Payee clients trust us to help them meet their financial obligations and maintain the level of dignity they deserve. Our BRIDGES support group participants credit the program for providing much needed purpose and community. We're the go-to resource for hundreds of area nonprofits and businesses tending to wellness education for their teams. I'm thankful to all of those who support us with their talents, commitment and financial support as we forge new paths that bring mental health out from behind closed doors and into the open. As we move into our next 75 years, let's all join together and fight in the open!

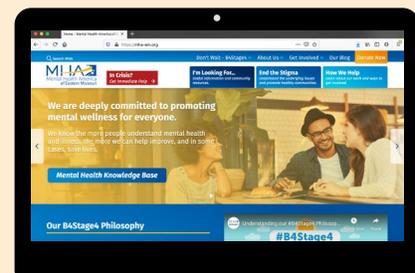
Sue King
President & CEO



A New Website Launched!

Looking for information on mental health? Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri launched a new website in December 2019! This easy-to-navigate, mobile-friendly resource is a great place to find out more about our programs, as well as in-depth articles and blogs on mental health topics, advocacy opportunities and events. This project was made possible with generous support from The Foundation for Barnes-Jewish Hospital, and Mont and Karen Levy.

Check us out at www.mha-em.org!



Someone You Can Trust

Representative Payee Program Celebrates 20 Years and Counting

Tyrone T. is confident his rent and other bills are paid on time. He's made room in his budget to purchase a life insurance policy and is pleased to pass along some words of wisdom to his young daughter about saving for a rainy day. Reaching this level of assurance is no small thing for Tyrone, who lives with schizophrenia, and needs ongoing support from someone he can trust.

He's found just that, and a little more, with Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri's **Representative Payee Program**. "Staying on top of things like my money is hard for me, and the stress of trying to do it on my own can make my symptoms tough to manage," says Tyrone, who has been with the program for 15 years, and describes the guidance he receives with one word: beautiful.

"At a time when many organizations have opted to eliminate rep payee services, we're still here and thriving," says Darren Stotler, program director.

The Representative Payee program is made possible with generous support from The Sidney R. Baer, Jr. Foundation. The late Sidney Baer accumulated great wealth during his lifetime, but also lived with schizophrenia. He turned to his lawyer and friend, George B. Handran, for help establishing the Foundation.

"Sidney said something I'll never forget," says Handran. "He said, 'George, you're the only person in my life who has treated me like a human being.' To me, Sidney was brilliant and fascinating. He was a human being. He trusted me with not only all his wealth, but his legacy. That's no small thing."



Tyrone T. (left), shown here with MHA-EM's Darren Stotler, is among the estimated 2,500 people served by the Rep Payee Program since 1999.

The Power of Peer-to-Peer & Purpose

BRIDGES Program provides sense of community and support for those living with serious mental illness

A former radio personality and grandmother of two, Cindy D. is living life on her own terms these days. For years, Cindy's struggles with mental illness were a barrier to living the kind of life she wanted, but that changed once she discovered Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri's **BRIDGES Program**.

A peer support program designed to combat social isolation often experienced by people living with mental illness, BRIDGES helped Cindy with her own recovery and led to a newfound role she loves leading three support groups each week. For Cindy and others who serve as facilitators, the role is an opportunity to re-enter the workforce.

"I didn't really know what my purpose was until I found BRIDGES," says Cindy. "People are counting on me, and I like that."

There is no cost to participants or the organizations that host the program. One of those organizations is Adapt of Missouri, a psychosocial rehabilitation program for adults with mental illness, which has offered the program since 2011.

"BRIDGES is a favorite activity for many of our clients," says Kim Brower, program director for psychosocial rehabilitation. "One of the neatest aspects of the program is when participants decide to become group facilitators. Having meaning and purpose through work is an important part of recovery."

Made possible with generous support from the **Missouri Department of Mental Health**, BRIDGES reaches people in 13 locations throughout Missouri.



Cindy D. leads three BRIDGES support groups each week.

2019 PROGRAMS

169



In 2019, 169 people living with serious mental illness found financial security with support from the Representative Payee Program.

244



In 2019, 244 people living with serious mental illness found a path to recovery through peer support provided by the BRIDGES Program. More than 400 meetings were provided.

Prioritizing Mental Health and Wellness

MHA-EM Puts Mental Health Matters Front and Center

Most people embrace the notion of prevention for physical health, but applying that early intervention mindset to mental health can still be a leap. Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri (MHA-EM) is committed to changing that.

"The first step is remembering the mind/body connection," says Connie Fisher, LCSW and director of mental health promotion.

"By taking care of our mental health, we actually are also tending to our physical health," Fisher says. "That's how closely they are linked. Treatment for mental health conditions can involve not only medicine and therapy, but also arming ourselves with good techniques that can prevent reaching a crisis point. By teaching ourselves to think and behave differently, we can manage things like anxiety and stress."

In 2019, 3,018 people discovered strategies for achieving personal wellness and mental health by participating in Wellness Seminars.

Fisher empowers hundreds of people with this message through **MHA-EM's Wellness Program**, which includes 10 research-based, interactive seminars that are also offered in a virtual format. *Address Stress, Managing Everyday Worry and Anxiety, Busting Burnout* and *Compassion Fatigue* are just a few of the seminars that area companies and nonprofits offer to their employees to encourage mental health and wellness. One of those nonprofits is Gene Slay's Girls and Boys Club of St. Louis.

"Our team had great feedback after participating in MHA-EM's Wellness Seminars," says Prescott Benson, former executive director. "It was a great moment for everyone on the team to pause and reflect. I could tell by their body language that people appreciated it. At any given moment, you have staff members who are going through stress related to loss and transition, and this laid the groundwork for some bigger, healthy conversations."

Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri is committed to increasing the professional skills of those working directly with people living with mental health conditions by providing **Professional Development** resources.

In 2019, 520 professionals gained new skills needed for working in the mental health field by participating in Professional Development presentations.



In 2019, more than 70 businesses and nonprofits turned to Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri for help providing their employees with skills and knowledge about mental health and wellness.

Supporting B4Stage4 with Our Free, Online Mental Health Screening Tool

At the first sign of troubling symptoms, most seek help to stop the progression of medical conditions like cancer, heart disease or diabetes. Many adopt lifestyle changes to prevent these diseases altogether. Shouldn't we approach mental health in the same way?

Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri is proud to support the **B4Stage4 Philosophy** by offering an online mental health screening tool.

- It's free, confidential and convenient!
- In a matter of minutes, participants have screening results to help determine risk for a wide variety of mental health conditions that can be life-threatening if not treated.
- People who take the online screening results to a medical professional are 40 percent more likely to develop an action plan toward treatment and recovery!

Find our online screening tool at mha-em.org/dont-wait-b4stage4/get-screened.

593



In 2019, 593 people received personalized help finding local mental health resources by calling our HelpLine.

8,000+



More than 8,000 people had the opportunity to read the latest information on a wide variety of mental health topics by receiving our e-newsletter, *News You Can Use*, each week.

When Mental Health Crisis Requires Police Intervention

McAtee Awards Honor Hundreds of Officers Who Delivered Compassion

Law enforcement officers often encounter people who are experiencing a psychiatric crisis. It's been these quiet stories of courage and care that Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri (MHA-EM) has been committed to telling each year with the **John J. McAtee Police Recognition Awards**.

Over 33 years, more than 700 police officers have been recognized for demonstrating exemplary compassion and understanding of mental illness when assisting in situations so severe that police intervention was needed. Established to honor the late Judge John (Jack) McAtee, the awards mirrored his belief that those living with serious mental illness are better served with treatment rather than incarceration.

"Our father saw many defendants with mental illness, and he believed educating police officers so mental health conditions would be recognized for what they were could change the dynamics," says Jim McAtee, one of Judge McAtee's sons.

55 OFFICERS

In 2019, 55 law enforcement officers were honored.



Shown here (from left) are Jim McAtee, Officers Tim Swope and DeWitt Edwards from Florissant Police Department, and Steve McAtee at the 2019 awards luncheon.

Beginning in the 1980's, MHA-EM led police training in the St. Louis region and statewide for almost two decades. As law enforcement training transitioned to the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) model, MHA continues its work as an integral partner in the St. Louis program, one of the most innovative and successful nationwide. The last McAtee Awards were presented in 2019, passing the honor of recognizing officers to the CIT program going forward.

"It has been our privilege to honor officers for their fine work over the years," says MHA-EM President and CEO Sue King. "We are grateful to know that the spirit of the McAtee Award will live on as more officers are trained to recognize mental illness and respond with compassion."

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FINANCIALS



- Total Contributions **\$208,291**
- Total Government Funding, Private Grants & Trusts **\$151,429**
- Total Program fees **\$130,348**
- Special Events - Net **\$210,321**
- Other revenue **\$175,048**

- Program **\$599,982**
- Management **\$147,038**
- Fundraising **\$56,681**

INCREASE IN NET ASSETS
\$71,736

Net Assets, start of year
\$1,571,723

Net Assets, end of year
\$1,643,459

These figures are based on 2019 audited financials.

We are thankful to our sponsors:

