



# People & Possibilities

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## Feeling the Winter Blues?

**E**ach year, an estimated 10 million Americans suffer from the winter blues, known as “seasonal affective disorder” or SAD. SAD is a real mental illness and is more than just feeling sluggish when the days become darker.



In addition to other symptoms of depression, symptoms specific to winter-onset SAD, sometimes called winter depression, may include:

- Irritability
- Tiredness or low energy
- Problems getting along with other people
- Hypersensitivity to rejection
- Heavy, "leaden" feeling in the arms or legs
- Oversleeping
- Appetite changes, especially a craving for foods high in carbohydrates
- Weight gain, and, at times, feelings of suicide.

The good news about SAD is that it is a condition that can be managed with consultation of a behavioral health or primary care provider. For many of us, once we know and understand how SAD can be managed, we can take steps to help reduce its impact on our day-to-day lives. These steps can include changes in diet and exercise as the winter months progress, as well as making sure to get some time out of doors every day, even if it's only for 15 or 20 minutes. Exposure to light can be a very effective way to improve SAD.

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Some people experience SAD beginning in spring or summer, rather than fall or winter. Changes in seasons can also trigger mood changes in some people with bipolar disorder.

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### Tristan McNamara

Tristan McNamara, Clinical Manager based at the East Meadow School, was recently awarded a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. His dissertation was titled "Services for Youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Study of Educational Practices in Vermont."



### Laura Walker

In December, we added an additional adult therapist to our staff. Laura Walker, formerly a case manager in our adult division, is available to provide therapy to our Adult Outpatient consumers.



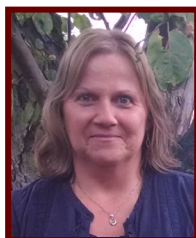
### Caitlyn Hartshorn

Caitlyn Hartshorn, a member of the Mobile Crisis Team, earned her master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Johnson State College in September.



### Sherry Jones

Sherry Jones, our Supported Employment Coordinator in our Developmental Services division, recently passed the National Certification Examination from the Employment Support Professional Certification Council. She is now a Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP).



## New Board Members

LCMHS welcomes its two newest board members, Will Angier and Nancy Durand.

Will Angier works in Human Resources at The Manor and is a native Vermonter. Will dedicates his time and energy to causes and organizations such as LCMHS in an effort to promote health and prosperity in the community. He graduated from St. Johnsbury Academy and has skills in business, marketing, and fundraising. He is also a proud member of the Morrisville Fire Department.

Nancy Durand, CRS, ABR, CBR, is the Managing Broker of the Pall Spera Company Morrisville office, and has over 14 years' experience in banking and real estate. Nancy's interest in the board of LCMHS stems from having a family member with a mental disability and recognizing that creating public awareness about this disease is important. In her role in the business community, she has the unique opportunity to "spread the word" of all of the great opportunities that LCMHS can provide to its consumers.

Cynthia Hennard, a long-time board member, resigned from the board for personal reasons in December. Her presence will be missed.



## Upcoming Events

- \*New Years' Day                      January 1
- Employee Gym Open                January 11
- \*MLK Day                                January 18
- Board Meeting                         January 20
- \*Presidents' Day                      February 15
- Board Meeting                         February 17
- \*Town Meeting Day                 March 1
- Board Meeting                         March 16

\*The Agency is closed on these holidays.

## Annual Meeting

The LCMHS Annual Meeting was held on October 21. As in past years, LCMHS focused attention on our consumers and their triumphs throughout the year. Several consumers shared their successes and talents, and the Agency recognized employees for their length of service. The 2015 Community Partner of the Year Award went to the Lamoille South Supervisory Union. LCMHS works extremely closely with LSSU on a daily basis, and we are thankful to have the honest and open communication that we have with them. Through our collaboration with LSSU, we are able to offer a comprehensive wrap of services to the students with the Lamoille County community, from both an educational and a mental health lens. We would not be successful in our services to our consumers without the collaboration of all our community partners, and we look forward to continuing all those collaborations.



In addition, Bryanne Castle, our Intake Coordinator, was the 2015 winner of the Shirley Hayden Award, which is presented each year to the employee who has made the greatest contribution to the Agency. Bryanne excels as both an employee and as a clinician. She has helped develop our intake process to allow rapid, smooth entry into clinical services. Her work as the Intake Coordinator has improved the quality of LCMHS services, our outcomes, our work processes, and our reputation in the community. Bryanne has also been active in expanding our care and services, and is dedicated to the improvement of the health of our community.



## Oasis House Update

LCMHS is in the process of getting approval for a third bed at Oasis House, our crisis facility, located in Hyde Park. Construction has been completed and the addition has been approved by the Fire Inspector. We are currently waiting for the Certificate of Occupancy; once we receive that, we will apply for the appropriate license from the State of Vermont.



## Training Models for Physicians

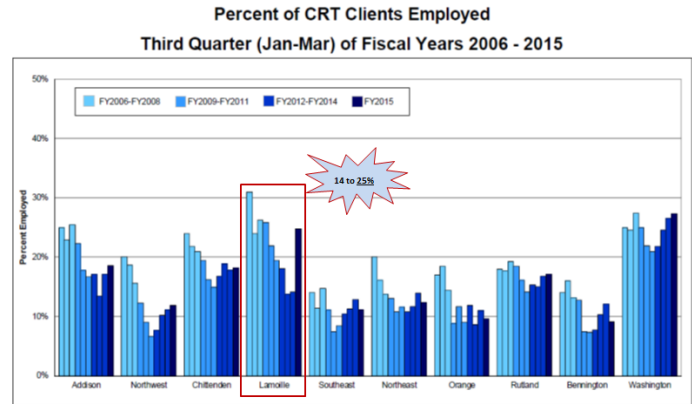
LCMHS and other state designated developmental services providers are working with a self-advocacy group (Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy or "GATSA") to develop a training model for physicians that will educate the physicians on interacting with and supporting people with intellectual disabilities. This training will center on the person-centered approach that is necessary to build successful relationships with our consumers and others with intellectual disabilities.

4.59% of Vermont adults reported having serious thoughts of suicide within a 1-year period. The national average is only 3.89%.

## State Gives Kudos to LCMHS

The State of Vermont congratulated LCMHS for having the highest percentage of CRT clients employed during the third quarter. In its December report, the state also noted the strengths of LCMHS' employment program for adults:

- Support by executive leadership and the CRT standing committee
- Inclusion of employment status in all clinical discussions of consumers
- Meetings with Employment Coordinator for new CRT consumers
- Support for employment across case management, residential and clinical programs
- Use of creative strategies and access to employment services, and
- Peer leadership in employment.



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### A Successful Thanksgiving Dinner

LCMHS served its fifth annual Thanksgiving Dinner to the Lamoille County community on November 24. Each year we open our doors to the community for a homemade Thanksgiving meal cooked by our employees. Members of the public are always welcome, and we prepare meals to-go for those who cannot join us for dinner. We also deliver meals to our consumers who are unable to come to the Agency.

This year, we served over 200 meals, including the to-go and delivered meals. Here are some of the numbers:

- |                        |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 19 turkeys             | 40 cans of cranberry jelly |
| 32 bags of green beans | 80 pounds of potatoes      |
| 32 boxes of stuffing   | 18 dozen rolls             |
| AND! 24 pies           |                            |

If you were unable to join us this year, please join us in 2016!

### NAMI WALK

The LCMHS team took part in the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Walk on October 3.



For the each of the past several years, an LCMHS team has participated in the walk to raise funds and awareness for issues around mental illness.

In 2016, LCMHS will celebrate its 50th year serving individuals with mental & developmental disabilities.





## Winter Blues (cont'd)

Julie Sullivan, LCMHS psychiatric nurse practitioner, sheds a bit of light (no pun intended) on the disorder: "It's fairly commonly seen in adults. Typically, an adult is able to give a historical perspective on how they fare in the winter months, and that gives a lot of information as to whether they become isolative, whether their energy is down in the winter months, or how their motivation is." It's important to recognize that while SAD is brought on by changes in the seasons, other situational factors may lead to feelings of depression as well, like associating winter (or other season) with being laid off from work in that season.



The symptoms of SAD are often treated with light box therapy, but it's important to have your physician or psychiatric professional monitor that use. Some individuals who start light box therapy can experience irritability if they get too much light too fast.

If you're concerned that you might be experiencing SAD, it is important to talk to your primary care physician or psychiatrist. SAD is a real medical condition that requires professional treatment, so be sure to consult with your medical provider.

Studies show that 1/2 of the individuals who will develop mental health disorders show symptoms by age 14.

*Nature Reviews Neuroscience, 2008, 9(12), 947-957; Arch Gen. Psychiatry. 2005 Jun;62(6):617-27.*

## Welcome New Employees

**A**mong our newest employees are several individuals who are filling key administrative and medical positions. Luciana Swenson, Phil Kaiser, and Mimi Bernier have all joined the staff at LCMHS and we are excited to have them here.



Luciana Swenson  
Executive Assistant



Mimi Bernier  
CPS Nurse Manager



Phil Kaiser  
Facilities Manager

**LCMHS  
Board of Directors**

Beverly Allen  
Will Angier  
Nancy Durand  
Michael Jansen  
Lori Jones  
Ted Lambert  
Sharon Menard  
Fred Ober  
Francinne Valcour  
David Vinick

**State Gives Kudos, cont'd**

LCMHS was able to accomplish this by adding staff to our CRT supported employment team and by providing additional training to all CRT staff regarding the importance of employment for our CRT consumers. The emergence of peer support groups have also help to create jobs for our consumers. This accomplishment reflects LCMHS' commitment toward its mission of enhancing the independence and quality of life of our consumers.



**Support LCMHS**

LCMHS serves children, youth, families, and adults, providing treatment and supports—at home, in school, and at work. No one is turned away, regardless of their ability to pay. However, the need for LCMHS' services continues to grow at a rate that outpaces the state's ability to fund them.

Support from our donors is absolutely vital to ensuring that LCMHS can continue to provide life-changing services and care to Lamoille County.

You can help by sending your gift to:

LCMHS  
Attn: Savi Van Sluytman  
72 Harrel St.  
Morrisville, VT 05661



Lamoille County Mental Health Services  
72 Harrel St.  
Morrisville, VT 05661

**LAMOILLE COUNTY  
MENTAL HEALTH  
SERVICES**

Phone: (802) 888-5026  
Fax: (802) 888-6393  
E-mail: [info@lamoille.org](mailto:info@lamoille.org)