

The ANSWER

Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration Newsletter

SUMMER
2021



COMMUNITY RECOGNITION
AWARD

DENNIS MARION IMPACT
AWARD

HIGHER STANDARD

BOARD MEMBERS

10 YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

GOODBYE

RETIREMENT

MUNCH, MINGLE
& MOVE

EMERGENCY RENTAL
ASSISTANCE

POOL SAFETY

AVOID AND TREAT
SUNBURN



Office Hours
8:30 AM-4:30 PM

Office Closures
9/6/2021 — Labor Day



*Pictured from left to right:
Commissioners Dave Lohr
and Scott Dunn, FCBHA
Advisory Board member-
Andrew Boni, Recipient
Senator Richard A. Kasunic,
Senator Pat Stefano,
Commissioner Vince A.
Vicites and County
Controller Scott Abraham.*

Each year Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration (FCBHA) Advisory Board acknowledges an outstanding Fayette County resident and community leader who has made a difference in the lives of people in recovery, children and adults with mental health needs, individuals with intellectual disabilities and/or on the Autism Spectrum. The Community Recognition Award (CRA) honors an individual or organization associated with significant positive outcomes in the lives of Fayette County residents or community systems of care.

The 2019 recipient, Senator Richard A. Kasunic was nominated by Andrew Boni and presented his award at the February 18, 2021 Fayette County Commissioners Meeting. Senator Richard A. Kasunic acquired seed monies to help bring the Regional Center for Autism to Highlands Hospital in affiliation with Cleveland Clinics Children's Hospital. Highlands Hospital is only one of five hospitals to mirror Cleveland Clinic's autism program. The Highlands Hospital Center for Autism successfully serves students ages 5 to 21. It opened with four students and is now able to accommodate 70. The Center offers state-of-the-art educational and behavioral treatment for individuals with autism in Southwestern Pennsylvania. It adheres to the principles of Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) in a center-based, year-round educational treatment program to provide children the highest likelihood of success.

The development of the center was made possible by the hard work and dedication of Senator Kasunic and many others who have compassion and feel a personal obligation to make life better for others.

FCBHA Advisory Board is proud to present Senator Richard A. Kasunic with the 2019 Community Recognition Award. Due to the pandemic, Senator Kasunic was presented his award earlier this year.

Nominations for the 2021 CRA will be taken later this year. Nominees should be a Fayette County resident with a direct linkage to the system of care and have contributed significant positive outcomes in the lives of Fayette County residents and/or community system of care. For more information on this award and past winners, please visit our website, www.FCBHA.org.

FCBHA MISSION: To enrich lives by providing choice and access to resources that encourage hope, independence and recovery.

Local Leader Receives Distinguished State Award

More than one year after being named an honoree, Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration Chief Executive Officer Lisa Ferris has finally received her 2020 Dennis Marion Impact Award.

Established in honor of former Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) Deputy Secretary Dennis Marion, the award recognizes local and state government employees whose initiatives, processes and projects have led to significant improvements in Pennsylvania's behavioral health service delivery system.

"Just like Dennis, you have demonstrated strong leadership, passion for public service and commitment to the people you serve," current OMHSAS Deputy Secretary Kristen Houser wrote to Ferris in her award letter. "Your contributions are not limited to the boundaries of a single county or agency, but like Dennis, you have bridged disparate missions and pushed toward the single goal of excellence in public service."

Ferris was slated to receive the award during a traditional ceremony in Harrisburg last year, but the event was canceled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

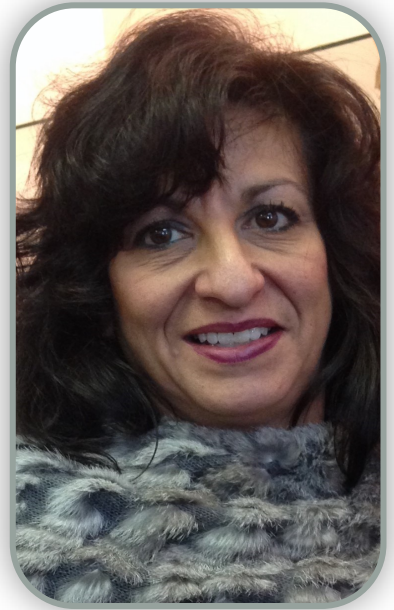
DHS representatives and Ferris both recently recorded their respective award presentation and acceptance videos for a virtual ceremony, to be held later this month. "To be selected to receive this award out of 67 counties is just overwhelming for me. I'm very humbled and so proud of it," Ferris said. "Outside our county, people sometimes only focus on anything negative that might happen here, but those aren't reflective of Fayette County as a whole. We do great things here in Fayette, and this is the county's award just as much as it's mine. It takes much more than just one person to make the changes and do all the things that led to this award."

A lifelong Fayette County resident, Ferris earned her bachelor's degrees in psychology and rehabilitation from West Virginia Wesleyan College in 1985. Following a brief stint working for the Fayette Community Mental Health Center, she returned to school and obtained a masters of public administration degree from West Virginia University.

She began working for Fayette County in 1989 and by 1994, was tapped to take over as county administrator of the Behavioral Health Administration and its new HealthChoices Program. Under Ferris' leadership, the program has successfully allowed for the reinvestment of millions of dollars back into community services and programs.

Ferris was previously honored with the 2008 Behavioral Health Best Practice Award for all of Western Pennsylvania, and has long been recognized for her dedication to collaborative and innovative approaches to various projects. She has also served on many committees and boards throughout her tenure, including California University of Pennsylvania's Social Work Board and the Executive Board of the Miracle League of Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands.

Over the last 30 years, Ferris, who is also the first woman to hold the CEO position, has most enjoyed working directly with Fayette County's citizens. "When I run into someone out in public and they tell me they had a positive outcome from our services - that's the best part of the job for me. I don't always get to see the fruits of our labor, but finding out later on that they're doing better and enjoying their lives and things the rest of us take for granted, that's the number one thing that matters," Ferris said.



"It makes all the hard work we've put into creating new programs and contracting with great people all worth it for me. It's just a wonderful feeling, because I was born and raised here; so I was determined to come home after college and make Fayette County better somehow. I love the work, and it's never a dull moment."

Fayette County Commissioner Scott Dunn congratulated Ferris for receiving the award.

"It's always great to see our employees get recognition," he said.

Commissioner Vince Vicites said Ferris' decades of extensive experience working hard for the Behavioral Health Administration led to this accomplishment.

"She has earned this honor, and we are very proud that she's receiving this award," Vicites said.

Commissioner Chairman Dave Lohr said Ferris has a long history of service to Fayette County, and her dedication is noteworthy.

"How appropriate that she is receiving the recognition she deserves. With their focus on growth and recovery, Lisa and her staff are striving to provide the very best of services to those in need in our community," Lohr said. "For Lisa, it's not just about providing services, but improving quality of life for those who are served. Our community is fortunate to have someone with Lisa's skills and experience at the helm of our Behavioral Health Administration."

The 2021 Dennis Marion Impact Award recipient is Ms. Barbara E. Durkin, Director of Lackawanna/Susquehanna Drug & Alcohol Programs. Just like Dennis, the 2020 and 2021 recipients have demonstrated strong leadership, passion for public service and commitment to the people they serve. Their contributions bridge disparate missions and push toward the single goal of excellence in public service.

Please join us in recognizing these outstanding individuals and the impact they have had on behavioral health in Pennsylvania.

To learn more about the Dennis Marion Impact Award, visit www.dhs.pa.gov.



A Higher Standard

On a triennial basis, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania contracts with Mercer Consulting Inc. to complete a review of Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration (FCBHA) Medicaid managed care contracts in the State of PA. The purpose of the review is to promote and ensure access, quality and cost effectiveness of services delivered through the program. This review occurred over three days from March 30 to April 1, 2021.

FCBHA, as the primary contractor, received feedback from Mercer which was positive. FCBHA has no required Corrective Action Plan and all requirements were met. Also we earned Best Practice Status in four areas: Care Management during the Covid Pandemic, FCBHA Unique Care Management Structure, Evidenced Base Practices (EBP) trainings, and County oversight of the Behavioral Health Managed Care Organization Beacon Health Options.

FCBHA unique care management structure assigns care managers to members as opposed to level of care. The Care Manager assists the member with referrals and supports while addressing Social Determinants of Health (ie. housing, employment, etc). The Care Manager coordinates with Physical Health Managed Care Organizations (PH-MCO) and participates in the development of Integrated Care Plans (ICP). Care Managers are required to be Master level social workers and Bachelors level nurses with licensure.

The Commonwealth set benchmarks to the number of ICP's to be developed focusing on wholistic approach to care while ensuring quality and positive outcomes for the consumers. Fayette County exceeded the required standards. As an incentive for quality coordination of care, the State provided financial incentives. Proud to report FCBHA met every standard.

Board Members



Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration Advisory Board Members

Dr. Denise Martin-Chair
Andrew Boni-Vice Chair
Carol Warman-Secretary
Robert Behanna
Karen Blocker
Dr. Paul Hartley
Harry Joseph
Dr. Joseph Labuda
Shannon Muma-Wallace
Jeffrey Myers
Hillary Redman
Joseph Segilia
Commissioner Vincent A. Vicites

HealthChoices Advisory Board Members

Lance Winterhalter-Chair
Vincent Weaver-Vice Chair
Carol Warman-Secretary
Andrew Boni
Dr. Denise Martin
Jana Kyle
Matthew Crutchman
Marilyn Calloway
Dr. Joseph Labuda

What Dedication Looks Like

congrats!

10-Year Service Award Recipients

2020-2021 Recipients

FCBHA

Missy Bartock
Richard Capuzzi
Christine Cramer
Stacey Evans
Jeremiah Johnson
Dale Lemon
Donald Nemchik
Ruth Patterson

Fayette Resources, Inc

Shelley Abel
Mike Brennsteiner
Rachel Frye
Lisa Gunnoe
Corinne Holley
Shannon Joseph
Thomas Nickelson
Melanie Radolec

Mental Health Association

Nicole Doss
Charles Gray
Dustin Murray

Chestnut Ridge Counseling Services, Inc.

Sandra Adkins
Robert Breakiron
Dr. Shirley John
Jody Johnson
Erin Lohr
Leslie Myers
Miranda Savage
Scarlett Wable

SPHS Behavioral Health

Gilbert Coles
Dr. Scott Cook, MD
Janice Everly
Recardo Hall Sr.
Sharon Hixson
Matthew Tutay

Twin Trees, Inc.

Janet Savage
Tina Sechrist

congrats!

Diversified Human Services, Inc.

Suzanne Baker
Charles Byrne
Tanya Coleman
Dawn Fleming
Deana Hill
Candice Kupperman
Joseph Monack
Ann Prentice
Billie Tyree
Colette Veschio

Passavant Memorial Homes

Margaret Blosser
William Fronczek
Kelly Hlebinsky
Darcele Mason

Goodwill Industries

Regina Ford
Crystal Kuhns
Nadeen Rhodes

Laurel House

Brenda Johnson

congrats!

Goodbye Friend



Barbara Ann Petzel, 78, formerly of Mount Pleasant died peacefully on Friday April 23, 2021 at St. Anne's Hone in Greensburg, where she had resided as a resident for the last two years. She was born August 1, 1942 in Canonsburg, Pa., a daughter of the late Martin and Stella Olinzock Honeychuck. Barb was a graduate of the former Ramsay High School, Class of 1960. She retired after 20 years of employment at the Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration. She belonged to Visitation Roman Catholic Church, where she was a member of the Christian Mothers. Barb greatly enjoyed playing bingo, poker/cards, going to the casinos and mostly being active with her grandchildren. As we know her as BJ, she is sadly missed by the Human Service Community.

Happy Retirement

After 19 years of service at FCBHA, Faith Sible retired from employment. Faith began her journey at FCBHA in October 2000 as an Administrative Service Manager in the Intellectual Disabilities Children's Unit and in 2002 transitioned to the Mental Health Unit as a Case Manager. In 2006, Faith was promoted to MH Program Specialist and in 2016 assumed the role of System of Care Coordinator/Advocacy Specialist. This proved to be an excellent fit for Faith as she has and continues to be a strong advocate for children, youth and family voice. Faith's belief that families and youth, who share their experiences with system partners, have an equal role at the table and use their voice to have a positive impact toward system change.



While Faith fondly looks back on her past work and accomplishments, she believes her position as System of Care Coordinator/ Advocacy Specialist has been the most impactful. What started as a personal advocacy journey for her son in 1994, has brought her full circle in her role to advance family, caregiver, and youth voice in our community. Although she plans to volunteer and stay involved with several advocacy ventures, as a retiree, Faith plans to focus on learning new things, traveling, sitting on her porch drinking her morning coffee and spending time with her husband, children and grandchildren. Faith will be greatly missed by the families, peers, agencies and coworkers, who have had opportunity to work with and know her.



Munch, Mingle & Move

The Early Intervention program participated in Head Start's Munch, Mingle, Move event held in May. This is an annual event. This year it was virtual. Each session held throughout the day had an activity paired with an array of community partners presenting on their program.

Activities included handwashing, nature yoga, food mapping, bunny hop, bicycle safety and fruit puppets. Head Start families were given their choice of activities and were provided with the Zoom links to participate in the activity with Head Start staff. There were over 20 activities families could choose from. If the activity involved any type of props, such as hand sanitizer and glitter, those items were sent to families prior to the event so that it was an interactive activity between Head Start staff and the children.

Community partners included FCBHA, Dad's Matter, UPMC for You Kids, Fayette County Library, CareerLink, Salvation Army, Connellsville Counseling, Gateway Insurance, United Way, Early Learning Resource Center 4 Kids, UPMC Dental, Pathways and Fayette County Community Action. There were over 500 families who participated.

Head Start is currently taking applications recruiting children for the new program year. Families can apply online at www.privateindustrycouncil.com or by calling 724-430-4818.

Emergency Rental Assistance Program

The Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) is available for renters of residential properties who are at risk of eviction or utility shutoffs due to hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Residential tenants may apply for themselves, or a landlord may apply on behalf of a current tenant and receive assistance directly if the tenant is eligible. Households may be eligible for up to 12 months of assistance to cover past-due or future rent and/or utility payments.

ERAP can also help cover rehousing costs for someone who is currently experiencing homelessness or in unstable housing. The amount of a household's monthly rent or utility bills does not preclude eligibility.

Pennsylvanians can learn more about how to apply in their specific county at www.dhs.pa.gov/erap. **If you are in need of assistance, don't wait. Apply today.**

Pool Safety



- * **Swim lessons**—People who know how to swim have a better chance staying above water if there is an accident.
- * **Fencing**—Put a barrier around pool to avoid unsupervised children and pets from getting in. Check your state laws for fencing specifics.
- * **Cover/Monitor**—Cover pool when not in use or use a pool alarm. Secure cover to prevent children and pets from slipping under it. Pool alarms detect disturbances in the water surface.
- * **Supervision**—While in use, assign someone to watch your children. Make sure this person is focused on supervising alone. It only takes moments for a child to get into a drowning situation and often do not scream for help.
- * **Life Jackets**—Make sure you have enough life jackets for everyone.
- * **CPR**—Get CPR training and have a CPR guide handy near the pool. Death can occur in minutes without external assistance. CPR can quadruple a person's chance of surviving.



To avoid sunburn, always wear sunblock even in the shade and reapply regularly. Avoid going out in the hottest part of the day. If possible, sit in areas with shade. Wear a wide-brimmed hat and protective sunglasses.

To ease sunburn, apply moisturizer with aloe or soy to skin. This will ease the sting. Avoid products containing petroleum which traps heat. Drink plenty of water to replace fluid loss and prevent dehydration. Take a cool, not cold, bath or place a wet cloth on affected area. Do not pick or pop skin blisters. They serve as a natural band aid.

Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration
215 Jacob Murphy Lane
Uniontown, PA 15401

24/7 Crisis Hotline
(724) 437-1003

FCBHA Fraud and Abuse Hotline
866-275-6467



**Fayette County
Behavioral Health
Administration**

(724) 430-1370

Lisa A. Ferris
Chief Executive Officer

www.FCBHA.org



**Fayette County
Board of Commissioners**

Dave Lohr, Chairman
Vincent A. Vicites, First Vice Chairman
Scott Dunn, Second Vice Chairman

The ANSWER is a publication of the Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration.
Comments, questions or suggestions may be submitted to the Newsletter Editor at www.fcbha.org or
Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration, 215 Jacob Murphy Lane, Uniontown, PA 15401.