

Hope All Year



Whether celebrating Christmas or the New Year, perhaps no word gets more traction than “hope”. It’s a word that leads us to look back in wonder and forward with expectation. For those walking with mental illness, it’s a word with implications

far beyond its seasonal significance. Hope isn’t just a holiday hashtag but a recovery value; something as relevant to growth as good treatment and a support network. This news should cause the ears of those in faith communities to perk up. What might you and your faith community do in 2020 to bring the hope you celebrate into the lives of those with mental illness?

Contact Dave Eckert, Chaplain and Director of Intersect (215) 540-2150, x1286 DEckert@accessservices.org

Why Access?

We asked a few of our staff, supporters, business partners and friends this question. One response, from our local police: “Very often police officers are called upon at all hours to respond to people who are in crisis and in need of help. Having Access Services staff who are willing to respond not only helps free up officers for service, it provides professional and caring support for the

consumer.” You can read how others answered the question in the Access Services fiscal year 2019 annual report on our website in the ‘About Us’ section. A printed copy of the annual report is available upon request. Please share your answer to the “Why Access” question with us!

Contact Linda Wasilchick, Director of Resource Development (215) 540-2150, x1357 LWasilchick@accessservices.org



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Creating better ways to serve people with special needs

500 Office Center Drive, Suite 100
Fort Washington, PA 19034

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Job Opportunities

Full Time Direct Support Staff in
Freemansburg, PA

Support adults with Intellectual Disabilities living in a group home setting.

Contact Joyce (610) 866-6667, x1272
JMoeller@accessservices.org

Program Highlights

Always Part of the Family



Jennifer and Tonia have been together for 20 years. Jennifer and her wife Diana are Lifesharing providers through Access Services, but their relationship with Tonia goes far beyond a caregiver role. Jennifer shares, “Tonia will always be part of our family.”

When you visit their home, you can see the everyday life that Jennifer and Tonia have built together. They enjoy playing with their two German Shepherds, gardening together, watching scary movies and going to church together. Tonia also loves cooking with Diana, “Me and mom make meatballs together. It’s our tradition.”

Tonia shares that she felt like part of the family from day one. Today, she is even looking ahead to change her last name because she identifies so closely with Jennifer and her family.

If you are interested in providing Lifesharing to someone, please contact:

Sam Ochse, Director for Lifesharing
(610) 866-6667, x1265
SOchse@accessservices.org

Experiencing Homelessness with Stage 4 Cancer



A few months ago, Homeless Street Outreach received a referral for Alex. Alex has stage four melanoma. When I met Alex, he was still recovering from a recent surgery, with a wound that needed to be cleaned. I volunteered to get him the supplies he needed for this. Heavier cases like this can be hard to handle, knowing that there is not an immediate solution to their situation, and I was feeling the weight of this

case that day. When I went out to meet Alex, I was blown away by his positivity about the circumstance he was in – being homeless, how he got there, and his cancer diagnosis. He approached it with the mindset of, “Right now I have to focus on my housing. But then I’m going to beat this. I’m going to survive. I’m going to be that one in a million.” And his positivity is what got him into housing so quickly. Alex came onto our caseload and less than two weeks later - by partnering with Your Way Home – we were able to get him inside. It was just in time, because four days later he was scheduled to start chemotherapy. It was really amazing to see Alex’s positivity towards the situation, and to see multiple programs and providers work together cohesively to get his housing situation resolved. It was an example of the system working as it should.”

Contact Danielle Trunk, Street Outreach Worker
(215) 540-2150 DTrunk@accessservices.org



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Access Services, a 43 year-old nonprofit organization, operates in ten Pennsylvania counties, offering services for children, adults, and families. The mission of Access Services is to empower and serve people in need of specialized supports by providing innovative services that improve their ability to live fulfilling lives in the community.

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Visit <https://www.accessservices.org>

The Road Ahead



It is hard to believe that it is 2020! When I was a kid, TV shows like Flash Gordon talked about 2020 as a futuristic time when living on Mars would be common place. Well we aren't living on Mars, but the change has been significant. Access Services

has worked hard, and at times struggled, to keep up with all the change impacting human services. All indications tell me this struggle will continue into the foreseeable future.

We strive to meet the demands of the future so we can continue to be a light to those in need and a significant change agent of our own in our communities and social service system. Hellen Keller said, "Once I knew only darkness and stillness...my life was without past or future...but a little word from the fingers of another fell into my hand that clutched at emptiness, and my heart leaped to the rapture of living."

What a beautiful thing to help another find joy and happiness in their lives. We want this to be our core motivation as we move forward.

In beginning a new year and decade, we look to all those individuals that partnered with us and helped us accomplish so much. To those we serve, our staff, host families, partner organizations, funders, donors and supporters, we give you our sincerest thank you. I look forward to going with you down the road ahead.

Contact Rob Reid, President & CEO
(215) 540-2150
RReid@accessservices.org

A Brighter Future for Schuylkill County Youth

"We are creating better futures for the community one child at a time," shares Kathy Hoffmann, Director of CYS Rebound. Kathy has been involved with the program since shortly after its inception in 2010, "This program empowers at-risk youth. Through mentoring, counseling and life skills we offer them what they need so they can have a better future and be empowered to make better decisions."



Kathy shares how this program opens new doors for youth in Schuylkill County, "We provide so many first opportunities. For some, it's the first time they've ever been to the movies. Others have had opportunities to go fishing or receive help with their homework. One of our clients, who was ten years old, rode in a car for the first time with one of our mentors!" She explained that providing these opportunities, which many of us take for granted, helps youth identify their interests and goals.

A recent experience really highlighted the impact that this program is having on youth for Kathy. "I was at a local restaurant having dinner and as I was checking out at the register this young man, around 18 years old, came up to me. He realized I didn't recognize him, but he introduced himself, sharing that he had worked with Frank McCarroll, one of our Mentors in the CYS Rebound Program. The young man asked me to share a message with Frank, "Could you let him know I am really well? That I went into the service." I called Frank so that he could share that himself."

Frank shares how he works with youth to position them for a better future, "As a mentor it's our responsibility to put these youth in a situation to be successful and achieve their goals." These goals can include going to school every day, understanding the importance of academic success, and growing social skills. Each youth is encouraged in their goals, regardless of how challenging they might be. Kathy shares, "We encourage them to be the best that they can be. We encourage them whatever their goal is. If they say they want to be a doctor, we tell them that it will take a lot of hard work, but you can do it. We work to help them identify how they can achieve these goals, providing encouragement along the way."



Contact Kathy Hoffmann, Director of CYS Rebound
(800) 200-7701, x1264
KHoffmann@accessservices.org