

The Bell

News from Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri

WINTER 2020



Nat Walsh (left) accepted the **2019 Silver Bell Award** from past MHA-EM President Mark Utterback. The Silver Bell Award is presented each year to recognize individuals or organizations that provide outstanding community service, leadership, vision and values to mental health advocacy.

SNOW BALL 2019: An Evening to Remember!

Snow Ball 2019 was a memorable evening, offering supporters and friends of Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri plenty of cause to celebrate.

Held December 6th at the Four Seasons St. Louis, the event featured dinner and dancing to The Fabulous Motown Revue, silent and live auctions, a record-breaking Partner For Change portion of the evening and an opportunity to hear from President and CEO Suzanne King. Sue announced the launch of two new programs and brought the entire room to their feet with moving remarks that demonstrated just how impacted most people are by mental health concerns.

Three individuals were recognized for their commitment and contributions to mental health advocacy in the community. Congratulations and thank you to Nat, Gary and Katie! We are thankful to our generous sponsors and everyone who made this event such a success!



Gary Morse, PhD, Associate Executive Director and VP of Places For People, (center) accepted the **2019 Silver Key Award** from MHA-EM President and CEO Suzanne King (left) and MHA-EM board member Karl Wilson, PhD. The Silver Key Award is presented annually to individuals or organizations whose contributions in the mental health field demonstrate a devotion to the eradication of stigma that often prevents people from seeking treatment.

2020
Snow Ball Gala
SAVE THE DATE!

The 2020 Snow Ball Gala will be extra-special, as we celebrate our 75th Anniversary! Mark your calendars today and plan to join us Friday, December 4, 2020 at the Four Seasons St. Louis!

Longtime Gala chair, Katie Schankman (shown here with Nat Walsh) was honored with the establishment of a new award: **The Katherine Schankman Volunteer Leadership Award**, to be presented annually to individuals who follow her example of volunteer service specifically to Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri.





CEO Column

This is an exciting time for Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri. As we celebrate 75 years leading mental health advocacy in the region, I am humbled by our history and even more energized by what is possible for the future. We have an opportunity to create meaningful change by collaborating with partners who share our commitment to reduce the stigma that is often a barrier to treatment and wellness. It was so gratifying to announce the launch of two initiatives to a roomful of some of our most committed supporters and friends at the Snow Ball Gala, and the response since then has been galvanizing! Our **Ambassador Program** and the **Greater St. Louis Collegiate Mental Health Innovation Council** will empower those living with mental illness to find their voices, tell their stories and create a community that fosters acceptance, empathy and support. This is work worth doing. Thank you for sharing our belief that there is no health without mental health!

Sincerely,


Sue King, *President & CEO*



Great Music, Great Cause

A great big thank you to **Peter Kastaris and his fellow Phi band members** for choosing Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri as the designated recipient of proceeds from a concert held December 22, 2019 at Off Broadway in St. Louis. The event generated great conversation about mental health



awareness and a generous donation over \$1,400 to support our programs and services. Thank you!

On The Move

NEW BOARD CHAIRMAN

Congratulations to **Mike Sigmond**, who started his term as MHA-EM's Chairman of the Board of Directors in January 2020. Mike is Principal at Edward Jones. Mike and his wife, Stephanie, live in Ellisville with their two children. Thanks to past Board President Nat Walsh for your service and leadership!

VICE PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT

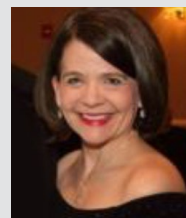
Anne Shaw Heinrich joined MHA-EM as Vice President of Development in October 2019. Anne previously served as National Director of Communications at The Oasis Institute and has more than 25 years of experience in nonprofit communications and development. She and her husband, Bret, live in Kirkwood. They have three children: Eleanor, Harrison and Charlotte.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

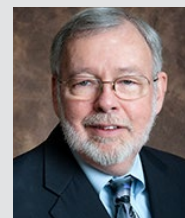
Longtime board member and mental health champion **Karl Wilson, PhD**, is receiving the National Council for Behavioral Health's Lifetime Achievement Award at the NatCon20 in Austin, Texas, on April 6, 2020. Congratulations, Karl!



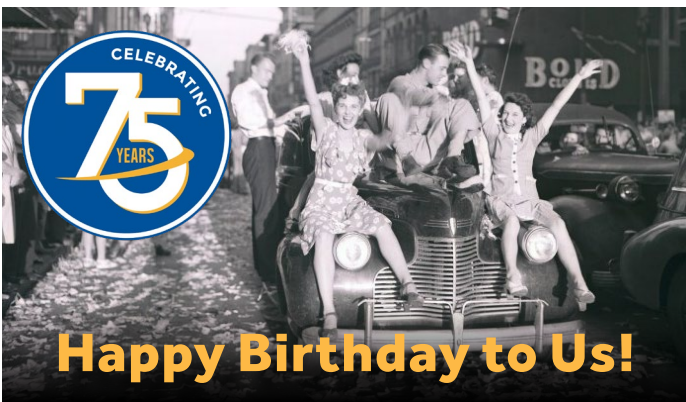
Mike Sigmond



Anne Shaw Heinrich



Karl Wilson, PhD



We're 75! Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri was founded in May 1945, as The Saint Louis Society for Mental Hygiene, with Dr. Edwin F. Sassin serving as the first acting president. Other things happening in the news in 1945? The St. Louis Browns signed one-armed replacement outfielder Pete Gray and Germany surrendered, signaling the end of World War II.

Interested in helping us celebrate with a special gift? Contact Anne Heinrich, VP of Development, to discuss the possibilities! Anne.Heinrich@mha-em.org.

Mission Moment

She's Found Purpose

A former radio personality and grandmother of two, Cindy 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.

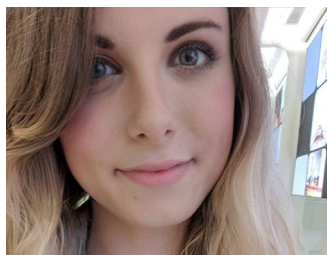
"I didn't really know what my purpose was until I found BRIDGES," says Cindy. "Many of the people who come to BRIDGES groups are in a pretty bad place in the beginning, and I know what that feels like. But I see them changing before my eyes. It's really amazing. You can feel the love in the room. People are counting on me, and I like that."

The BRIDGES program reaches over 300 people each year with more than 5,000 hours of peer support. To find out more, contact Ramona Taylor at bridges@mha-em.org or 314-773-1399.



Calling All College Students!

Today's college students experience record-high levels of stress, depression and anxiety. Early signs of mental health conditions like bipolar disorder and schizophrenia often strike during young adulthood, and early detection is key to recovery. But often, stigma and shame serve as barriers to treatment.



Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri is addressing this challenge by launching the **Greater St. Louis Collegiate Mental Health Innovation Council** in 2020. This initiative will provide a unique opportunity for students from 10+ St. Louis-area colleges and universities to collectively organize to address stigma and to advocate for improved services on college campuses. Council participants will learn about advocacy, volunteering and community-based organizing.

To generate excitement and recruit students for this new initiative, MHA-EM is pleased to present **Stop Hiding, Start Talking**, a free evening of learning, inspiration and empowerment to be held from **6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 18, at City Museum.**

This event will feature nationally recognized mental health advocates **Cecilia McGough and Nathan Shuherk**, both leaders of the nonprofit Students With Psychosis. Cecilia founded the organization, and currently serves as Executive Director. She has schizophrenia, but does not let it define her. She emerged onto the mental health advocacy stage after a TedX Talk that has received over 3 million views and co-organized the *I'm Mentally Ill, And I Don't Kill* protest in New York City. She is content creator for the *I Am Not A Monster Schizophrenia* project.

Nathan was diagnosed with schizophrenia in college, and currently serves on the Executive and Advocacy Boards of Students With Psychosis.

We are thankful to our sponsors:

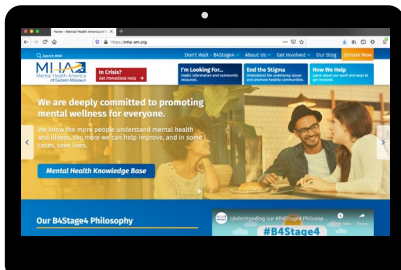


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Check out our New Website!

Looking for information on mental health? Look no further than our brand new website, which was launched in November 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 on mental health conditions, advocacy opportunities and more. Check us out at www.mha-em.org.

TALK ABOUT WELLNESS!

We have a sold-out crowd for a new CEU class offered February 28, 2020: Working with LGBTQIA+ Clients, presented by Kathryn Stinson, LPC. Designed for school counselors, nurses, case managers and other professionals interested gaining new skills needed to navigate gender issues, this new offering equips participants with up-to-the-minute standards of care and practice guidelines for gender non-conforming clients.

For more information about our Wellness Seminars and CEU's, contact Connie. Fisher@mha-em.org or 314-773-1399.

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