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3400 Lincoln Ave., Evansville, IN 47714 | 812-469-6800 | Vol. 15 Issue 3, May/June 2022

Initiative benefits patients

Submitted by Donna Mesker, Rehabilitation Therapy Director



Through the Eco-Access Initiative, Wesselman Woods has developed an agreement with Evansville State

Hospital which will allow the patients in rehabilitation therapy community awareness programs to walk the trails for free. The focus of Eco-Access Initiative is to connect you with the resources necessary to make informed, eco-friendly decisions. Wesselman Woods' goal is to be radically accessible, and this is one of those instances.

The agreement will save our donated Patient Recreation Fund dollars by providing free admission. The primary users are patients working with rehabilitation therapy staff to improve community awareness.

"...we want to be a support cushion for your team."

The program goals include, but are not limited to, education about community resources, volunteer opportunities and purpose, and development of social, leisure, relaxation and coping skills.

"You do great work, and we want to be a support cushion for your team. We are happy to partner with ESH in the spirit of the Eco-Access Initiative," said **Executive Director Zach Garcia, Wesselman Woods.**

The staff and patients at Evansville State Hospital want to thank Wesselman Woods for their commitment in helping us connect with nature, enhance transitional skills, and gain a new understanding of protecting our environment.

Welcome back volunteers!

The hospital welcomed back volunteers in April after a two-year lapse through the pandemic. Friend to Friend program sponsors visited with their friends in the River Birch dining room for a nice social hour. **Fr Ted Tempel** returned to help with weekly worship services. Volunteers **Diane and Chuck Hirsch** visited the units to distribute peppermint patties. Six volunteers through the Spring Day of Caring hosted by the United Way came out on Friday, April 22 to help beautify the campus. Employees from Enterprise Holdings, Atlas World Group and South Western Communications spent the day helping pick up tree branches from the courtyards and laying mulch in the front hospital garden beds. National Volunteer Week was celebrated by goodie bags for our returning volunteers.



Pictured are United Way volunteers Jackson Bard, Steven Villines, Tim Ferguson, Ellie Weber, Laura Rush and Mike Turnbaugh.



Evansville State Hospital is a public behavioral health facility operated by the state of Indiana and one of six state psychiatric hospitals within the Family and Social Services Administration Division of Mental Health and Addiction.



Mental health – it’s important

By Theresa Woerz, Community Services Director



May is mental health awareness month. With nearly 450 million people worldwide living with a mental illness, it is important to remember that our mental health affects our overall well-being. There are many community options and resources to help one live a healthy and fulfilling life. If you or someone you know is struggling, take action today to feel better. Please know that recovery from mental health disorders is possible.

As a board member of the National Alliance on Mental Illness Evansville, I want to draw attention to this local organization which offers educational programs and support resources for family members, relatives, friends, and people living with mental illness. NAMI Evansville has kept up with the virtual world and now has two options for those interested in attending support groups. Their open family support group meetings are held in person at 410 Mulberry (downtown Evansville) and virtually. The group meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 6-7:30 p.m. For persons living with mental illness, NAMI’s Connections support group is held virtually on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 7-8:30 p.m. NAMI requires a one-time only registration for virtual support groups by contacting namievansville@gmail.com.

NAMI Evansville supports Crisis Intervention Team training for law

enforcement, mental health workers, and first responders. The program promotes effective interactions during a crisis and reduces the stigma of mental illness. Over the first quarter of 2022, 39 local officers were trained in the 40-hour CIT class which involved a panel of NAMI members answering questions. Be sure to ask for a CIT officer if you need to call 911 for a mental health emergency.

“it’s a big deal as we have been able to continue to provide reliable and consistent programs.”

NAMI is well-known for their family-to-family classes which are detailed classes designed for persons who want to better understand and help a loved one who lives with mental illness. Topics covered include effective communication skills, empathy, responding to psychiatric emergencies and an overview of mental health disorders such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, and anxiety to name a few. The classes are held each week for eight weeks and are offered in the spring and fall, with the next session beginning in September. There is no cost to attend the support groups or educational programs as NAMI Evansville offers these as a community service.

NAMI Evansville continues to grow in membership and trains members to

facilitate groups and present educational programs. Go to www.namievansville.org to find out how you can become involved with NAMI Evansville training, support groups and advocacy efforts.

Lastly, you might not have heard but NAMI Evansville recently received special recognition by NAMI Indiana and was named *Affiliate of the Year!* Board President Kent Kunce says “it’s a big deal as we have been able to continue to provide reliable and consistent programs.” NAMI affiliates over the state continue to come *Together for Mental Health* as they advocate for mental health agendas including access to quality care. NAMI Indiana represents the interest of family and those living with serious mental illnesses by helping to shape legislation which has a direct impact on members and their quality of life. A quarterly zoom meeting “Ask Me About NAMI” can help you get acquainted with NAMI and their programs. Request the zoom link for the June 16 session through williams@namiindiana.org. For more information, go to www.namiindiana.org
Mental health matters – it’s important, be well!

Governor's Long-Term Employee Reception

The Governor's Long-Term Employee Reception was held on Tuesday, April 19 at the Indiana Statehouse Atrium in Indianapolis. **Governor Eric Holcomb** was on hand to congratulate employees for celebrating anniversaries of 35, 40, 45, 50, 55 and 60 years of service. 591 state employees marked a milestone workplace anniversary in 2020 or 2021 including Evansville State Hospital employees **Rene Gibbs, Jolene Hines, Donna Mesker, Sharon Pfau, Brenda Plump, and Theresa Woerz.**



Pictured are reception attendees from Family & Social Services Administration. Standing directly to the left of Governor Holcomb is Donna Mesker, Theresa Woerz, and Jolene Hines. Brenda Plump is pictured in the back row, 6th from the right.

Retirement day

By Terri Morris, Vocational Rehabilitation Director



Transitional Care Specialist Robert Jenkins is pictured on his last day with a retirement memento.

Robert Jenkins left the hospital at the end of February after 36.6 years of service and was a dedicated and loyal employee. He began his career in the old hospital and helped patients transition to the new building.

Robert later worked in nursing service as an attendant and then moved to transitional care specialist teaching life skills to ready our patients for discharge.

He could always bring a smile to your face with his antics and tall tales and will be missed.

Donations

In the past quarter, the hospital has received greeting cards, magazines, books, journals, writing paper, birthday gifts, calendars, international phone cards, personal care products, new clothing, ball caps, socks, crocheted hats, CD music and alarm clock radios. Thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity. Items requested for transition programs are Visa or Ruler Foods gift cards (\$10 cards). Amazon gift cards are also being used to download newer music onto mp3 players. Contact Community Services at 812-469-6800, ext. 4972 if you can help.



Welcome new employees



Kiona Alvis, Nursing Service
 Alma Bernardo, Nursing Service
 Lisa Brown, Rehabilitation Therapy
 Clarissa Burt, Nursing Service
 Janver Canillas, Nursing Service
 Melvina Drake, Nursing Service
 Tanya Drake, Nursing Service
 Martin Glenn, Nursing Service
 Natalie Jeffries, Nursing Service
 Lisa Joest, Nursing Service
 Ain Johnson, Nursing Service
 Stacey Johnson, Nursing Service
 Stevie Johnson, Nursing Service
 Emma Lagac, Nursing Service
 Gracile Mabutas, Nursing Service
 Julius Mabutas, Nursing Service
 Tammy Marshall, Nursing Service
 Riza McMillan, Nursing Service
 Yradel Morgan, Nursing Service

Shannon Martin, Nursing Service
 David Osborne, Nursing Service
 Ellen Raymond, Nursing Service
 Rafael Rodriguez, Nursing Service
 Cicely Sandoval, Nursing Service
 Kim Shoulders, Nursing Service
 Bruce Smith, Maintenance
 Krisna Solayao, Nursing Service
 Samuel Springer, Nursing Service
 Sierra Tipton, Nursing Service
 John Trotter, Nursing Service
 Curtis Turney, Nursing Service
 James Vance, Nursing Service
 Alanna Warfield, Nursing Service
 Richard Weber, Nursing Service
 Ryan Wharton, Nursing Service
 Melissa Williams, Housekeeping
 Marissa Worster, Warehouse



Goodbye

Shayne Gonzalez, Continuum of Care
 Chase Hinton, Information Technology
 Robert Jenkins, Vocational Therapy
 Carole Johnson, Nursing Service
 Dale Rhoads, Nursing Service
 Macie Uplinger, Nursing Service

In memory of...

We remember our volunteers, retirees, and friends who have passed away in the past year:

Dean Abney
 Jim Burns
 Mary Earley
 Betty Ann Foster
 Barbara Goedde
 Helen Hampton
 Susan Herrin
 Oliver Hodge
 Marti Kello
 Jim Millard
 Deborah Mitchell
 Carole Murray
 Dorothy Posey-White
 Brenda White

