

Winter, 2023

# VOICES



## Happy New Year 2024!

Happy New Year from all of us at CMHA-CEI,

"It's an honor to support our community by offering a comprehensive range of behavioral health and wellness services. To all those we serve, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for entrusting us with your care and journey towards recovery.

We at CMHA-CEI cherish the important bond we share with you. Your ongoing support continues to motivate us to enhance and broaden our service offerings. Your resilience is truly inspiring, and we deeply appreciate your trust in us.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the ongoing collaboration in the upcoming year! On behalf of our dedicated Board of Directors and our entire team, we wish you a year filled with renewed hope and joyous celebrations.

Warm regards,

Sara Lurie, CEO



## Save the Date:

You are invited to the 2024 CMHA-CEI Annual Community Event on Tuesday, April 2, 2024, at the Lansing Convention Center, downtown Lansing, MI, from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm.

Event Highlights:

- 2023 Report to the Community
- Live Entertainment
- Open to the public
- Validated parking
- Live ASL Interpreters
- Free Breakfast

Register via Eventbrite at

<https://bit.ly/2024CMHA-CEIAnnualEvent>.

This event will be recorded and broadcasted on a later date on WILX. More details to come.



Keynote speaker:  
Tonya C. Bailey, Ph. D

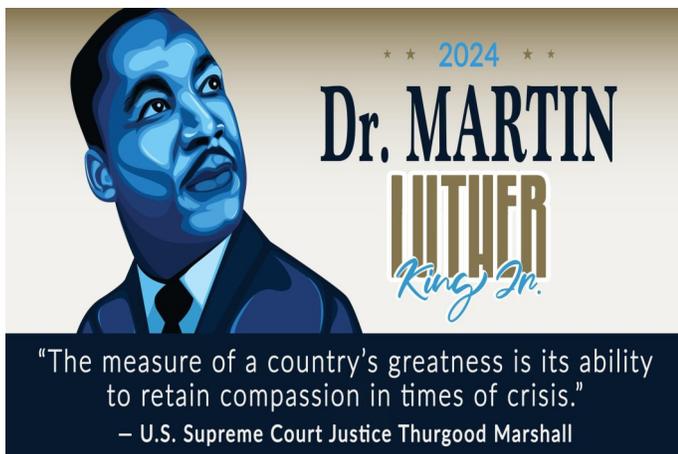
# 2024 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY OF CELEBRATION

The 39th Annual Greater Lansing Area, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "A Day of Celebration" Holiday Commission luncheon was held on Monday, January 15, 2024 at the Lansing Center, Lansing, MI. This signature event has been the place to be on Dr. Luther King's Holiday due to the caliber of speakers and entertainers that have been showcased.

This year's special guest speaker was Ruby Bridges. Ruby is a Civil rights icon, she made history as the first African American child to integrate an all-white school in the south, playing a pivotal role in desegregation of public education.

Ruby has continued to be a civil rights activist and author of *Through My Eyes*; *This Is Your Time*; *I Am Ruby Bridges*; and *Dear Ruby, Hear our Hearts*. She travels around the United States as a public speaker, sharing her remarkable story of courage, resilience, and the pursuit of equality.

Many CMHA-CEI employees, persons served, community partners and stakeholders were in attendance at this year's event, and are looking forward to attending next year's luncheon.



The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Commission of Mid Michigan is a non-profit, elected body comprised of volunteer representatives dedicated to preserving the legacy and teachings of Dr. King by supporting community agencies, and empowering youth to achieve educational goals.

To learn more about the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Commission of Mid-Michigan, please visit <https://mlkmidmichigan.com/commission>.

# SALLY COOKIE & MEILI THERAPY DOGS



Meili (right) & Sallie Cookie (left)

In celebration of Sally Cookie's 13th birthday, we are featuring her in this issue of the VOICES Newsletter. We would like to show our appreciation for the 350 pet therapy visits that she has made with CMHA-CEI and Michigan State University (MSU) over the past 11 years. You may have seen her and her niece, Meili, walking around the building while they are visiting the different programs, creating a calming and relaxing atmosphere.

Sally Cookie and Meili are both Golden Retrievers that have been trained to provide pet therapy. Sally's first pet therapy visit was

to provide comfort to consumers in the Bridges Crisis Unit. Over time, she was invited into additional offices and suites to share her love with staff and consumers. Meili initially worked as a Leader Dog for the Blind for a couple of years, and is serving as a therapy dog in her retirement.

*Every week my highlight is seeing Sally Cookie and Meili. I can hear them come in, Sally sometimes like to make herself know that she is in our unit and any rough day is worth it when I get to love on them. "A therapy dogs love is healing balm for the soul" - Sandra D., AMHS Secretary*

A special shout out goes to Amy Schupska, for the love and care that she provides to Sally Cookie and Meili as well as her commitment to volunteering not only at CMHA-CEI but within the community. Thank you, Amy for your dedication to pet therapy; we at CMHA-CEI are very fortunate to benefit from your visits.

*"Sally Cookie and her person Amy have been providing supportive visits to our staff for quite a few years. The addition of Meili has been wonderful because that makes double the cute faces, doggy hugs and smiles. Staff tell me how much they look forward to and enjoy their visits and I know I certainly do as well" - Deb S., CSDD*

If you happen to see Sally Cookie, Meili and Amy, feel free to say hello, and give them a little love.

You can follow Sally Cookie Therapy Dog on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/sallycookitherapydog> and Meili Therapy Dog at <https://www.facebook.com/FLDMeili>.

## CONSUMER ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

The CMHA-CEI Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) is fortunate to have Luna as a member, for she brings so much knowledge and passion for advocacy for those we serve. She has been a member since January 2022.

Luna is passionate about community education and advocacy for those with mental illness, for persons who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and more (LGBTQ+ ) and in protecting the rights of persons with a developmental disability.

Luna is very involved in the community and keeps herself busy with so many worthy causes:

- Leads a coalition called “A Place For Us” and is a support group facilitator for queer people with disabilities.
- Strong advocate in fighting for more inclusive shelter options for homeless LGBTQ+ people. She works with the “Rent Is Too Damn High” coalition that advocates for renter’s rights and investments in social housing.
- Part of a peer recovery group called “Rise From Your Graves” with The Satanic Temple (TST) Sober Faction.
- Participates in the annually American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) Out Of The Darkness Walk in Lansing/Capital Area, to support those that have been affected by suicide.
- Attends the Walk-a-Mile in My Shoes Rally, at the State Capitol, to support behavioral health, substance use, and developmental disabilities.



“The council allows me to have a voice within CMH to advocate for myself and others who share in my struggles”, Luna Brown

## CONSUMER ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Luna Willow's Story:

"I was twenty (20) when I was first hospitalized and entered the mental health system. At the time I was a student at Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) working towards a degree in elementary education, but had to drop out of college in 2021 due to my declining mental state.

A few months or so after dropping out of SVSU, I got involved with Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton and Ingham County (CMHA-CEI) because I couldn't afford my appointments on my own.

My first caseworker recognized that I had been undiagnosed with Autism in addition to my mental illnesses. At twenty-three (23) I was officially diagnosed with Autism and was transferred from receiving services from Adult Mental Health Services (AMHS) to the Clinical Services for Developmental Disabilities (CSDD) services.

I struggled with my mental health for many years and was hospitalized over thirty (30) times since I entered the mental health system. During that time I began to understand that I was transgender.

Years of trying to deny it and hiding who I was while in public made my mental health decline and it became harder and harder to keep living a lie. Eventually, I got to a point where I simply couldn't deny who I was anymore and knew if I kept trying I was going to do something horrible.

After years of hiding, I finally started to transition publicly and it likely saved my life. Finally being my authentic self helped more in my recovery journey than all the meds and therapy combined. I still struggle with many aspects of my life in relation to being autistic and having multiple mental illnesses but finally being myself and advocating for others has given my life new meaning and a reason to keep going."

Luna is a true inspiration in sharing her journey in recovering from a mental illness that includes not only getting better, but achieving a full and satisfying life. Her advocacy efforts are admirable and helps bring awareness of important issues that affects many with similar life experiences. She is able to provide a voice for those who are unable to do so for themselves.

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If you would like to share a story, poem, or photo of your art in a future newsletter, please contact Customer Service at 517-346-8244 or via email at [customerservice@ceicmh.org](mailto:customerservice@ceicmh.org).

# Join the Consumer Advisory Council



The Consumer Advisory Council is recruiting new members. If you would like to have an opportunity to help improve our services and share your voice with lived experiences or advocate for individuals with mental illness, substance use disorder (SUD) and/or intellectual and developmental disability (CSDD).

The council gives you the opportunity to meet with members of the Board of Directors and the CEO, Sara Lurie, as well as the chance to meet staff from various departments. The council has provided input on a variety of topics.

The council participated in focus groups for the development of the upcoming Crisis Service Unit (CSU), provided input in making the Jolly Road lobby a welcoming environment and assisted in the renaming of the department that provides substance use services. The council also participates in advocating for behavioral health services, and stays up to date with legislation. Participation in the council allows you to share your input.

Members are made up of consumers and/or family members who are currently receiving or have received services from CMHA-CEI and live in Clinton, Eaton or Ingham Counties. The council requires a two-year commitment and members receive compensation for attending the meeting.

If you or anyone you know have an interest in becoming a member, consider attending a meeting. Meetings are open to the public and occur monthly on the 1st Thursday of the month from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm via phone or Zoom.



Consider applying if you would like to:

- Share your voice
- Get paid for your time
- Meet new people
- Learn about the agency and the service array

Contact Customer Service at 517-346-8244 or via email at [customerservice@ceicmh.org](mailto:customerservice@ceicmh.org) if you have questions or would like more information.

# ART CONTEST FOR TRAVELING ART SHOW

The Community Mental Health Association of Michigan (CMHA) is sponsoring a two-year statewide traveling art show featuring the work of artists who access community mental health (CMH) services statewide.



The tour has two goals:

- ◆ To help de-stigmatize mental illness, developmental disabilities and substance use disorders by showcasing the talents of people who use CMH services
- ◆ To highlight the recovery potential of the arts

In conjunction with CMHA, Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties (CMHA-CEI) is having an art contest for persons (ages 12 and up) who are currently receiving services at CMHA-CEI and reside in Clinton, Eaton or Ingham counties to be submitted into the statewide traveling art show, on behalf of CMHA-CEI.

Art submissions can be dropped off Monday-Friday from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm at 812 E. Jolly Rd., Suite 108. starting Monday, December 4, 2023 to Friday, February 2, 2024. All submissions can be viewed at CMHA-CEI at 812 E. Jolly Rd., Lansing, MI on the first floor, until the end of the contest and will be judged by CMHA-CEI staff members.

The 1st place winning art work from CMHA-CEI will be showcased in the State Wide Traveling Art Show at different venues (universities, convention centers, art museum, community mental health agencies) all around Michigan. Each piece will be priced individually and will be available for sale while on the tour or auctioned at the end. Proceeds will be used for future statewide art projects through the CMHA.

## 2-dimensional (2D) Medium Art Work Only

- Oil/acrylic/watercolor paint
- Pastels chalk
- Pen and ink
- Drawings
- Photography
- Fabric Art



1st Place: \$100.00 Check  
(travel in art show-auctioned)



2nd Place: \$50.00 Meijer Gift Card  
(art will be returned to artist)



3rd Place: \$25.00 Meijer Gift Card  
(art will be returned to artist)

**3D artworks such as sculptures, installations, and 3D paintings will not be accepted.**

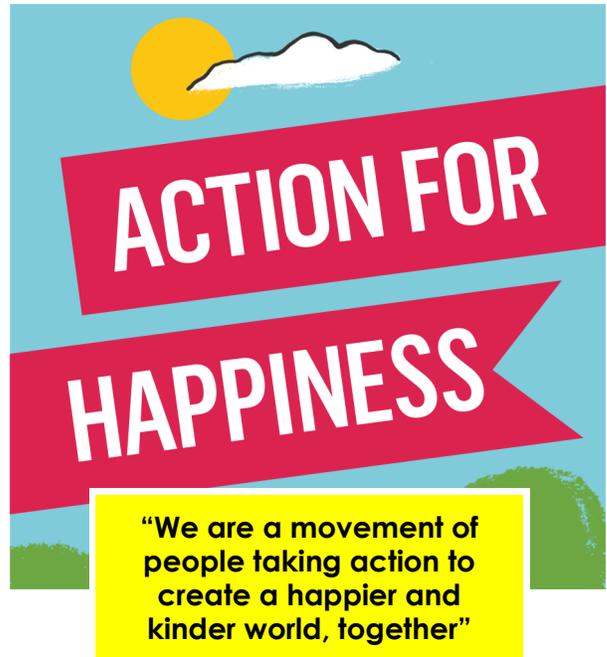
Contact Customer Service at 517-346-8244 or via email at [customerservice@ceicmh.org](mailto:customerservice@ceicmh.org) if you have questions or would like more information about the rules, conditions or guidelines of submitting your art.

# ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Prioritizing happiness and kindness influences how we approach everything - including our personal lives, families, communities, schools and workplaces. It shapes our views on public policy and helps us to consider the wellbeing of future generations.

There is a monthly campaign calendar that can be downloaded that is full of practical and actionable ideas to make a difference and help to achieve happiness all around you. It is available in a variety of different languages.

Do you want to help create a happier and kinder world? If so, join the movement by downloading the app, signing up for a monthly newsletter and by visiting their Facebook page.



## Download the FREE Action for Happiness app for iOS or Android

- > Gives you friendly nudges with an action idea each day
- > Sends you inspiring messages to give you a boost
- > Helps you connect & share ideas with like-minded people



[https://  
actionforhappiness.org/](https://actionforhappiness.org/)

[https://  
www.facebook.com/  
actionforhappiness](https://www.facebook.com/actionforhappiness)

# VOICES NEWSLETTER

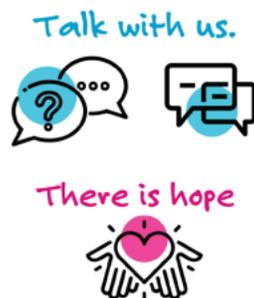
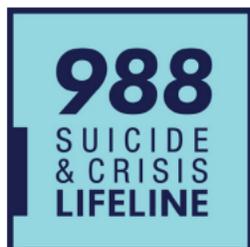
The Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) created the VOICES Newsletter to help CMHA-CEI consumers to stay connected to our agency and to the community. It provides consumers with agency updates, agency news/events, as well as consumer created poems, stories, and artwork. The newsletter is published three (3) times a year and can be found on the CMHA-CEI website, Facebook page, and posted around the agency.



If you would like to share a story, poem or photo of your art in a future newsletter, please contact Customer Service at 517-346-8244 or via email at [customerservice@ceicmh.org](mailto:customerservice@ceicmh.org).

## The 988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) is made up of an expansive network of over 200 local and state funded crisis centers located across the United States. When people call, text or chat, they will be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing Lifeline network, who can help, listen, offer support and provide resources if needed.



If you are or someone you know is having thoughts of thinking of suicide, or experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, call 988 for compassionate help.

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is available 24/7, free and confidential.

Veterans can also dial 988 and press "1" to reach the Veteran Crisis Line or Text 838255.

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SCREENING TOOL

Behavioral Health Screening which includes mental health, substance use, and more is a key instrument in assessing your overall well-being.

Brief screenings are the quickest way to determine if you or someone you care about should connect with a behavioral health professional.

Think of these as a checkup from your neck up.

This tool is completely anonymous and confidential. Immediately following the brief questionnaire you will see your results, recommendations, and key resources.

Visit <https://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/cei>

The logo for Community Mental Health, featuring a stylized globe icon and the text "Community MENTAL HEALTH CLINTON • EATON • INGHAM Together we can.".

**CURIOUS ABOUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING?**

Click here for an anonymous online screening!

# 2024 BLUE CROSS WINTER WARM UP! TRAINING PROGRAM

Kick off 2024 with a commitment to better health goals with the Blue Cross Winter Warm Up. The 5K training program is FREE and open to all ages and abilities (a parent or their designee must accompany children). Training begins on Monday, January 22, 2024.



This eight-week program involves attending two weekly one-hour sessions with certified Good Form Running and Walking coaches from Playmakers Fitness Foundation. Participants will also receive a weekly communication with additional training information and tips.

The virtual and in-person instructional sessions will lead to a free goal event the Blue Cross® Winter Warm Up 5K Walk/Run Celebration at Hawk Island Park in Lansing on Saturday, March 16, 2024.

Special Giveaway! The first 500 participants that register will receive a Blue Cross winter hat!

There are several training sites available:

- Charlotte at Charlotte Middle School on Tuesday & Thursday 6:00-7:00 pm
- Delta Township at Lansing Mall Food Court on Tuesday & Thursday 9:00-10:00 am
- Delhi Township/Holt at Holt High School on Monday & Wednesday 6:00-7:00 pm
- DeWitt at DeWitt Community Center on Monday & Wednesday 6:00-7:00 pm
- Lansing (IChD) at Ingham Health Department on Monday & Wednesday 12:00-1:00 pm
- Lansing (Schmidt) Schmidt Community Center on Tuesday & Thursday 12:00-1:00 pm
- Meridian Township at Meridian Food Court on Monday & Wednesday 9:00-10:00 am
- Michigan State University at Bessey Hall #108 on Monday & Wednesday 5:30-6:30 pm
- St. Johns at St. John's High School on Monday & Wednesday 6:0-7:00 pm
- Virtual Class (one time a week)

Registration is open and can be found at <https://runsignup.com/wwu>.