Thankful for 30 Years of Pro Bono Counseling Project

“Thank you for listening to me.”
“I really appreciate everything you have done for me.”
“T1 am so grateful for the service you provide.”

Individuals recently shared these statements with Pro Bono Counseling Project (PBCP) about their experiences with the organization. Callers most commonly express appreciation for the compassion with which staff and volunteer therapists treat them, and report finally feeling “heard.” PBCP goes to great lengths to respect each caller’s individual circumstances and match callers to therapists who are a good fit based on the caller’s presenting symptoms, therapeutic goals, and characteristics they seek in a provider. As a result, clients report back to us everyday how much their lives have changed as a result of the counseling they receive.

PBCP could not accomplish our mission without the partnership of our constituents. To provide counseling access at no cost to the recipient requires the commitment of volunteer mental health professionals. We appreciate our volunteers dedicating their time, skills and knowledge to help improve the lives of people throughout Maryland. To date in 2021, PBCP volunteers have donated more than 6,200 hours to 1,482 people currently in therapy.

PBCP also could not accomplish our mission without supporters. PBCP relies on your generous contributions to allow us to continue our services to clients in need. The individual donors who choose to give the gift of therapy to individuals who otherwise would not access mental health services in any other way. In addition, we recognize the invaluable support of public and private foundations who choose to fund our initiatives and programs.

Pro Bono Counseling Updates Organization Statements

One of the strategic priorities of the Pro Bono Counseling Project (PBCP) for the current year was to review our guiding statements to ensure they are clear and fully representative of the organizations goals. The staff and board of directors recently worked together to revise our Values Statement.

PBCP’s new Values Statement is:

The work of Pro Bono Counseling is guided by our dedication to regard all people with the utmost respect and dignity and conduct ourselves with honesty, compassion, and empathy. We are committed to social justice and equity as we support and serve the needs of Maryland’s diverse communities. The culture of Pro Bono Counseling is collaborative, and we strive to provide the highest quality services through continual growth, education, and improvement.

The staff and board also worked together to create a new Equity Statement:

The Pro Bono Counseling Project (PBCP) strives to apply principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all that we do. We acknowledge that racism and systems of oppression impact access to, and delivery of, mental health services. PBCP commits to being part of the solution and works to actively dismantle these structures and systems in order to help build a more equitable society.

Both of these organization statements can be found on PBCP’s website.

PBCP Resource Corner: Postpartum Support International

Postpartum Support International (PSI) is a home to free and virtual peer support resources for those navigating adjustments to parenting, pregnancy or postpartum depression and anxiety, and related stress. Groups meet at a variety of times and include both peer-led and facilitator-led options.

General peer support groups are available for people with fertility challenges, people experiencing pregnancy and postpartum mood changes, birth moms who placed a child for adoption, parents of babies currently or formerly in the NICU, parents recovering from infant loss, and mothers who had to terminate a pregnancy for medical reasons.

There are also culturally and situationally specific groups. For those looking for a culturally similar community, PSI has Apoyo Perinatal (for Spanish speakers), Black Moms Connect (for Black mothers during the perinatal period or up to two years postpartum), and Desi Chaat (for South-Asian moms).

For those looking for a community with similar life experiences, PSI has Military Moms (for military spouses, active-duty personnel or veteran moms), and Queer & Trans parent support group (for queer community members who are expecting, adopting or parenting babies up to age two).

To connect, visit their website or call the PSI HelpLine at 1-800-944-4773 to discuss which resources are the best fit.

Party for a Purpose

Statistics show that fall tends to be the most popular season for birthdays. Looking for a way to celebrate your birthday and/or commemorate the 30th anniversary of Pro Bono Counseling Project (PBCP)? Follow the lead of one PBCP supporter who contacted us with a birthday surprise: he held a party and requested that guests donate to PBCP in lieu of giving him birthday gifts.

Mental health care is very important to this party organizer who is why he chose to fundraise for PBCP.

PBCP provided the host with flyers for distribution during the party and personalized an online donation page to reflect the party invitation. There were also donation cards on each table with QR codes to simplify the donation process for party guests.

The party host invited PBCP Executive Director Amy Greensfelder to attend and share an overview of the organization and how Marylanders in need are provided access to licensed mental health professionals and other necessary supportive services.

“This event was a wonderful way to celebrate a birthday and we are grateful to the generosity of the host and party guests,” stated Amy. “We appreciate all of their support.”

The birthday party raised over $1,600, with that number continuing to grow as several guests pledged ongoing support as monthly recurring donors.

If you are interested in holding a fund-raising event or online fundraiser in honor of PBCP, please contact Tina Fleming for more information.

Upcoming Workshop Dates

Mark your calendar to attend PBCP’s upcoming continuing education workshops in December:

December 1 - Introduction to Pro Bono Counseling: Clinical Applications for Volunteers
Presenters: Amy Greensfelder, LMSW, and Sherri Bloom, LCSW-C

December 8 - Intimate Partner Violence and COVID-19: The Evolution of Service Delivery
Presenters: Beth Webb, LMSW, and Eliesabt Martinez, LCSW-C

December 10 - After Delivery: Diagnosing and Treating Postpartum Mood and Anxiety Disorders
Presenters: Ilana Jackson, PsyD

For more information or to register, visit https://probonocounseling.org/training/events/.

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