



PRO BONO COUNSELING®

Your Mental Health Connection

THE CONNECTION | MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | JUNE 2024

Working to Remove Mental Health Care Barriers

June is Men's Health Awareness month, which includes physical and mental health. It's important to recognize the impact of gender when addressing mental health care concerns and to encourage men to take proactive steps to improve their well-being.

Men can face many barriers to seeking mental health care, such as financial barriers, and also societal stereotypes and social stigma associated with talking about their mental health and how they're feeling.

Pro Bono Counseling's mission is to remove barriers and provide relief by connecting Marylanders to the mental health support they need.

"We recognize that one of the most difficult things anyone can do is pick up the phone and ask for help," stated PBC Clinical Director Sherri Bloom. "Our goal is to make sure we make that process as easy and comfortable as possible for the person reaching out."

That process starts with participating in a confidential phone interview with a trained mental health professional. During the interview, we get to know you as an individual. Our questions are personal but



not intrusive so we can assess your mental health care needs and ensure we find the right resource or counseling match for you.

Recently a man in his early 30's called PBC to process grief related to his parent's deaths, both from COVID-19 complications. During his phone interview, it was also determined that he wanted to explore his sexuality and manage thoughts of depression and anxiety.

PBC matched him with a therapist who he connected well with and though their counseling sessions together, the man experienced relief as well as personal growth.

"My therapist is amazing," he reported. "It really has put me in the position that I'm comfortable, but I'm challenged, and I see growth."

This client specifically wanted to express his gratitude to PBC for connecting him to a skilled and empathetic therapist.

"I'm always telling everyone I know in Maryland about Pro Bono Counseling," he stated. "I don't know how to describe what my therapist does, but I can have the same conversation that I've had so many times with close friends and family one time and can now unpack so much that was never there when I talked to them."

Pro Bono Counseling is your mental health connection -- If you or someone you know is experiencing stress, anxiety, grief, or a life transition, call us today at 410.825.1001.

Welcome New PBC Volunteers

The volunteer clinicians enrolled with Pro Bono Counseling (PBC) are the driving force that enables us to connect Marylanders to quality mental health resources at no cost. We sincerely thank the thousands of mental health professionals who have given their time since our inception in 1991.

Please join us in welcoming the following mental health clinicians who enrolled as PBC volunteers last month:

- Krista Bajgier, LCSW-C
- Jenna Ferri, LCPC
- Brandon Reyes
- Arelie Robles, LMSW
- Sara Samedi, LCSW-C

Have you considered volunteering with PBC? It offers many benefits, including thoroughly screened clients matched based upon your experience and preferences, free continuing education workshops, case consultations, and networking opportunities.

To learn more about volunteering or to enroll, email PBC Outreach Coordinator Yolonda Nelson-Swain or click [HERE](#).

Mental Health GameChanger

Congratulations to Pro Bono Counseling Executive Director Amy Greensfelder, who's featured as a GameChanger in the June edition of Baltimore magazine.

The publication acknowledged that through Amy's leadership, the organization has grown its volunteer base and capacity and has added new services to support Marylanders in need. Amy stated that despite this growth, there is much more work that needs to be accomplished.

"We want to continue to be this resource in the community for people who have nowhere else to turn," Amy said. "But we have the bigger goal of raising awareness of how large an issue there is around gaining access to mental health care."



Amy Greensfelder, LCSW, pictured in Baltimore magazine June issue

Silent Auction Success

Pro Bono Counseling's May 2 Gratitude Gathering celebrated the impact of volunteers for their donated time and services, recognized the generosity of donors and supporters, and honored community members. It also served as a fundraiser for the organization, raising more than \$28,000. Many organizations and individuals sponsored the event as well as donated to the silent auction.

The silent auction was a success thanks to everyone who donated items and services: Alex Ebstein, Annette Saxson, Baja Tap, Baltimore Pickleball Club, Bar Cocina, Bmore Art, Codetta Bake Shop, Dear Globe Coffee, Derrick Adams, Ed Croft, Elizabeth Sieber, Everyman Theatre, Jessie and Katey, Jungle Room, Kramon & Graham, P.A., Last Resort Artists Retreat, Le Comptoir Du Vin, Lisa Shifren Photography, Lord Baltimore Hotel, Motzi Bakery, Red Door Escape Room, Reflex Functional Fitness, and Tracie Sturgill.

One item up for bid was a cupcake party. If you didn't win, there's still time for a sweet treat! Codetta Bake Shop is offering an exclusive discount for PBC volunteers — *20% off any online or custom order*. Just use the code **PBCMD** at checkout to apply the discount. Visit their [website](#) for more info.

PBC Resource Corner: The Frederick Center

June is PRIDE Month, a time to celebrate and recognize persons who identify as LGBTQIA+, so the PBC Resource Corner is highlighting The Frederick Center this month, which provides and maintains resources and advocates for LGBTQIA+ persons and families in the Frederick area.

The Frederick Center offers nine support groups on a variety of issues, including but not limited to partners of transgender and nonbinary persons, parents and guardians of transgender and nonbinary young people, and those who came out later in life. The Center hosts more than 500 events each year where people may meet others and build a supportive and caring community.

The Frederick Center also works via task teams to fight for greater support for LGBTQ+ students, increased awareness of healthcare disparities for LGBTQ+ persons, and other issues. They are located at 322 W Patrick Street in Frederick.

For more info, call 301.383.8787 or visit their website at thefederickcenter.org.

