Connecting and Presenting the Vision of Leadership Council 
Across Keystone and Beyond

Throughout this past Spring Leadership Council co-chairs and members have had a variety of opportunities to increase the understanding of Leadership Council across Keystone and in Pennsylvania.

February 2017 Leadership Keystone and Keystone Management spoke with directors across Keystone on how Leadership Council demonstrates the Value and Vision of Keystone. There was much discussion about the assets that Leadership Council has brought to Keystone.

March 2017 HACC Presentation. This class for the Human Services Department is done by Leadership Council co-chairs with vibrant discussion and excellent questions.

April 2017 Mission Focus

Karl Schwartz, Linda Thomas, Kim Morrison & Kathyann Corl did a virtual presentation across all of Keystone describing how they have grown and discovered meaning and value in their lives and in their giving back to the community. There was a vibrant question and answer period as members discussed our detours and growth over the past ten years.

During April, Keystone Human Services Mental Health was proud to do a showing of the art work of Karl Schwartz. Above is the picture selected after much discussion on the power of all of his pieces and how much he has been increasing his skills as an artist. Way to go Karl!!
Spreading Wings of Recovery: Leadership Council Co-chairs planned with Temple University Collaboration on Community Integration presentation on building community relationships. The virtual training was attended by over sixty participants from across Keystone Mental Health with guests from the Keystone Institute. Over lunch the Volunteer Recognitions for 2017 were awarded to peer leaders in Harrisburg, Lancaster and Delaware County. Linda Thomas and Kathyann Corl presented a two hour workshop on Community Integration at the Dauphin Cumberland CSP Conference.

Living through Transition: Members celebrated with Keystone the impact that Mike Grier had on creating Recovery opportunities at Keystone and supporting Leadership Council over the past ten years. Mike received a framed piece of Karl Schwartz’s art and a string art piece by Linda Thomas to remember his Leadership Council days.

May 2017 PAPRS Conference and RESPECT Poster Contest.

Art Work by Anne Strausser

Art Work by Gerald Curylo

This year we had a significant number of art pieces submitted by the Rose Garden Center for the annual RESPECT Poster conference. Here are a few of the pieces that will be in the October edition of Faces of Recovery.

Change is a process of actions that lead to results!
In the beginning of May a group from Keystone attended the PAPRS Conference where many individuals were offering workshops. Leadership Council Co-chairs presented a workshop on “Embracing the Key Concepts” of WRAP. Co-chairs, Linda Thomas and Kim Morrison, worked with the participants to brainstorm what a “Wellness Festival” could look like in their program. Linda Thomas shared her Wall of Hope and after the conference members of the Challenge Center in Franklin PA shared photos of their Wall of Hope that was created out of 222 boxes.

In June we were proud to announce that over 50% of the peer editing for “Recovery In Our Words II” book has been completed. The remainder of the Recovery stories that are based on the SAMHSA Domains and Principles of Recovery have been distributed to our peer editors. Thank you to all of you who have volunteered for this stage in the development of the book.

As transitions have been occurring at Pine Street as well there may be additional opportunities to be involved in the Recovery book’s development as we continue to move forward. Currently we have approximately 25 photographs of nature and art work for the Recovery Book and we are looking for additional pictures.

Summer 2017 Keystone is preparing to send 9 members of Leadership Council to the Recovery Works Summit to be part of the discussions on how Mental Health and Addictions can work together and learn from each other.
How can I promote Leadership Council in my Program??

While I would like to say there is one way to talk with people about Leadership Council, there is not.

Leadership Council is a very organic, growing group of peers learning from each other to discussing the daily issues of living with Mental Health challenges surviving, growing and giving back to Keystone as we as an agency continue to learn and grow.

Over the years we have worked to create a variety of tools to support individuals in talking about Leadership Council.

This year the Leadership Council Co-chairs created a common purpose statement specifically for Leadership Council:

*Leadership Council is a group of individuals who meet to discuss living in recovery, services at Keystone and process together issues that are beneficial to our lives.*

Other resources include: A brochure handout about Leadership Council, a yearly handout with a listing of Leadership Council dates for that year, and those dates are also on the Professional Development Calendar. In some programs Leadership Council Co-chairs have been invited to a program to talk about what Leadership Council is in their own words.

A tool that was created by members is: Leadership Council. *An Opportunity for Individuals in Services and the Management Team at Keystone Human Services to Grow Together.*

This book of 15 stories are written by individuals in services about the value that they have found in their own lives since being involved with Leadership Council. These stories are located on the Keystone, Harrisburg L Drive.

Below is a sample:

**Leadership Council Empowerment Story**

**What Does Leadership Council Mean to Me?**

"Leadership Council offers me a chance to be empowered and to become assertive in decision making conversations and activities."

"I have a voice that is valued and a chance to express what I feel in terms of my Recovery."

"At a time when I have been dealing with the challenges of homelessness and poverty, Leadership Council has helped me change my problem thinking, to being able to focus on possible solutions I can use and steps I can take to get there."

By MB, Keystone Residential Services, Harrisburg PA

If you are interested in sharing more of these stories with your individuals please contact Kathyann Corl.
How Does the State Create a Disabilities Budget & How Can I have a voice in the process?

Please Note that this article is based on a training that was previously offered by DASH (Disability Advocates Support Hub) that Leadership Council members participated in.

Every year the topic of Advocacy becomes important, but this only once a year and what difference can it make when it seems legislators do what they think is good for them.

These were some of the questions that people wanted to gain a greater understanding of and how there voice mattered.

Creating a Disability Budget

The Governor introduces the budget in January and sends it to the legislature. The Disability Advisory Committee begins meeting with the Governor and the Legislatures to do discussions on priorities for funding in the next fiscal year. During this time the Disability Advisory Committee hears testimony from provider organizations. The budget is presented to the legislature in April. Then negotiations review the income and expenditure documents and the legislators work to compromise and create a budget that both sides of the legislature can pass.

The budget that Pennsylvania passes is dependent on the dollars that are awarded from the Federal budget where services such as Human Services is based on dollar matches.

Your Voice Does Matter!!!

You do have a voice in this process!!! You can invite a legislator to your program so that they can see why the budget dollars are important and what these services mean to the community. These invitations should come from the leader/co-chairs of the group.

Throughout this process you can request a personal meeting with your legislator (or their aid), send a one page letter where you bullet your concerns and why you feel that they are important.

Emails and phone calls to your legislator are effective especially when multiple letters are received.

What is important when talking with a legislator/aide is to remain positive and to have individuals share stories from the heart. Communication is all built on relationships and even when budgets are tight it is important to maintain a positive relationship.

You can practice a head of time with a friend role playing your key points that you want to communicate with a legislator. Remember that sometimes all we can do is to slow down the process and that is significant.
Help Hints When Communicating With An Elected Official

I. Be authentic and passionate but professional.

II. Make sure you identify who you are and who you represent.

III. Make sure you know and understand your issue.

IV. Present accurate facts and statistics that are relevant to your area.
1. You can find this kind of information at the Mental Health Association’s website at http://www.mhapa.org/mental-illness/fact/.

V. If you are asked a question and you do not know the answer, tell them you will research the question and will get the answer back to them.

VI. Tell your story, but BE BRIEF and make sure to relate it to the issue.

VII. When contacting an Elected Official via mail or phone make sure you:
1. If writing a letter, try to make it only 1 page and do not write on the back of the page. Also, make sure it’s legible.
2. Make sure you find out who the Legislator of your district is and clearly state you are a resident of the district. They will not respond to someone outside of their district.
3. Identify who you are and who you represent.
   *If you are registered in his/her political party, you should mention so. Then they will know that you share similar political view and have power to vote for them in the primaries. If you are not registered in the same party, it is best not to tell them which party you are with.
4. State your purpose for contacting them.
5. Refer to legislation whether or not you for or against it.
6. State why you are concerned.
7. Explain how it will affect your local community.
8. State the facts and statistics.
9. Ask if they support your view.
VIII. When contacting an Elected Official via e-mail make sure you:

1. Try to keep it one typewritten page.
2. Use proper net etiquette (example: avoid using all upper case letters as this connotes shouting, do not use “slang”, etc.)
3. In a brief paragraph, state your purpose. Stick with one subject or issue and support your position with the rest of the letter.
4. Be factual and support your position with information about how legislations is likely to affect you and others.
5. Ask for the legislator’s views but do not demand support. Remember that Senators and representatives respond to views and even if they don’t support your position on one issue, they may support it the next time.

Legislators know who votes in elections. Make a point of marking where the elections are and getting a ride if needed to the polling booth. If you cannot find a ride the political party that you are a member of may be able to help you with a ride to the polls.

If you have questions about Voting in PA you can watch a power point “Everyone Votes PA”:


Submitted by Karl Schwartz

Artwork by, Karl Schwartz

_When desire overcomes fear, change happens._
Changing My Life Perspective Through Using WRAP

Before I go into my experience as a recipient of the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), I wanted to go over a brief explanation of what the WRAP is. WRAP can help almost everyone accomplish goals due to its stellar organization. WRAP is specifically set up to accomplish wellness and organization in almost any plan. It will easily compliment situations with mental health, alcoholism, and serve as a daily living guide, too, in addition to helping out in other numerous disciplines.

The WRAP was a big help to me in my struggle with Bipolar Disorder, in that it thoroughly organized me, significantly. People with Bipolar D/O need to be well organized in order to deal with everyday life. Also, my daily living became a lot more pleasant, and easier to manage.

The organization mainly came from writing things down in the booklet, such as wellness tools, triggers, and other things such as early warning signs, and crisis plan. Where I really got to apply WRAP was by my adding new things to each section and reading it numerous times, so that it would stick in my mind.

Thanks to WRAP I started to become a more positive person. I am happier when I wake up in the mornings, because I am living things from the plan, such as greeting each day with a smile, and having a happier and more productive day at work. Also, I am learning to like myself better by nurturing myself with positive self-talk. Also, I try to interact with people more (this is easier at work, but where I live it is much harder). I am definitely in a happier place since I have been able to use my wellness tools and carry-out the plans that are written down.

My wellbeing is significantly higher due to what I have written above. I am not in a gloomy place anymore. This does not mean that I still do not struggle with things. I still struggle with keeping my anger under control. However, since my overall wellbeing is good, I can control it most of the time and the amount of times that I lose my temper are significantly lower. I credit this to good doctors balancing therapy and medication, and significantly to the WRAP. The WRAP has really changed my life, in that I have something in writing (with my attorney’s help: put together a contract for my parents to handle things in a crisis) that I can always refer to and change. The beauty of it is that I can use it for almost anything (such as anger management).

By Mike Pivar

Small steps....are still steps.
Using my WRAP Facilitation Skills

This past April-May 2017 was my first time to co-facilitate a Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) class for the whole Group WRAP process. I was excited to do this because it allowed me to interact with others and help the promote empowerment for the participants using the training that I received.

WRAP is an individual plan and the participants were encouraged to share their ideas as they developed their WRAP while feeling comfortable in a safe environment. I found all the participants were willing to do this and that encouraged me knowing that the knowledge I was giving was helping them.

In facilitating this class I gained new wellness tools that I can use in my own Wellness Toolbox. I look forward to continuing to use my training and my knowledge in the near future with facilitating another WRAP class to aid others to see how important a tool WRAP is in staying well.

By Gerald Curylo

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Next class for "WRAP Seminar One" is on August 28-30, 2017 at
Keystone Human Services 8182 Adams Drive Hummelstown PA 17036

You can register for this class by contacting Chris Whitmer at the office (717)482-8500

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Artwork from Chambersburg Mall event promoting Mental Health Awareness
Artwork by Karl Schwartz

Taking the First Steps

While I was hospitalized with mental illness issues I realize that my life had lost purpose. There was no reason for me to wake up in the morning. If I was going to work on recovery this would have to change. It was also at this time that I decided that recovery would have to be a series of small steps not one large leap. One of these steps would be volunteering.

The first way I chose is to volunteer was at the library. I started working with a group of people who put on a monthly event. We would have an artist with their works on display. Also there would be different activities for children and refreshments. I did a variety of tasks; my primary responsibility was doing crafts with the children and their parents. The happiness, joy and thanks they would express made me feel a sense of purpose and involvement in the community.

I also started to shelve books and outside trimming bushes and taking care of flowers and weeding. At the library I would have a lot of contact with people from the community. Helping people and hearing their thank you add some purpose to my life.

I’ve also volunteered to do some speaking engagements. I’ve spoke at a lot of events, all dealing in some way with recovery from mental health issues. Passing along the knowledge I’ve gained on this topic, with hope of helping others. It gives me great joy and a sense of purpose. Adding purpose to my life is one spoke in the recovery wheel, but it is a strong one. It is my responsibility to keep adding spokes until I have strong wheel to keep riding on the recovery road.

By Karl Schwartz, Lancaster

The path to a brighter tomorrow begins with a single step.
Parenthood: Full Time

Parenthood is a blessing for some people who can’t have kids or have lost custody for them over the years.

From time to time it feels like a puzzle, a challenge that’s mind boggling, exciting, and a thrill to do. Slowly a puzzle piece begins to fill on the puzzle board. There was no handbook on parenting when I grew up as a child nor was I taught any classes on parenting when I was in school.

Like an owl, I always observed the family structure and traditions. So my instincts took over. I wanted to demonstrate kindness, love, support, nourishment, and these became my tools as I began to practice personal responsibility and sacrifice. My tutor was learning from the life experiences that I had seen growing up and now being able to practice them.

A Handy Man at heart, I am teaching my children and I am learning from them. Certain tasks in life and parenting are still difficult, kind of like learning algebra, this is especially true when I am separated from my kids.

For today I am blessed because God has left me in charge of Daddy Day Care and when it feels like I can't hold on, I know that I am not alone.

Things to Know

- Kids are not bad, it’s their behavior.
- Parents and kids need time outs.
- Discipline and Punishment are not the same.
- Model the behavior you want to see.

By Basil "Boo bee’ Talib, Harrisburg
Art Work in the Community at Chambersburg Mall
Using the Arts to Promote Understanding of Mental Health

The Art Show was sponsored by CSP, Community Support Program and the Mental Health Association of Franklin and Fulton Counties. It was held at the Chambersburg Mall Friday May 19th to Sunday May 21st 2017.

The show contained a variety of Paintings, Drawings, Arts and Crafts, Needlework, Mixed Media, Photography, and Written Works. People that entered the Artwork either have a Mental Illness or have a family member with a Mental Illness.

The highlight was the amazing Artwork of everyone that participated this year. All the artwork was so good that people had a hard time choosing whose art work to vote select.

It is a viewer’s choice and the public gets to vote. In addition to the community voting, there are also invited community artists who also judge the art work.

The winners will be announced July14th, Friday at the Christmas in July picnic.

By Bernadette Lonzo, Chambersburg PA

Positive thoughts lead to Positive Actions.