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A MESSAGE
FROM
OUR CEO

As Mental Health America of Southeast Florida closes the books on 2020 and embarks on 2021, we have much to reflect upon as many of us have suffered losses, experienced challenges and our lives have changed dramatically. However, I want to take a moment to go to a different view; one of optimism and hope.

MHA has survived a very challenging year as an organization, probably one of our most challenging in the 64-year history of our existence. Our survival occurred due to the people who serve MHA capably and professionally while ensuring that the people we serve get the services they needed throughout this year-long ordeal. Our staff are who we are; their dedication to the work and to our community is what has allowed us to continue to thrive.

I am so proud of how our entire organization pivoted in a very short amount of time, creating and organizing our services in a completely different way than we are used to conducting our business. From peer services being delivered via a new medium, the art center creating online instruction, parenting services providing zoom groups and socially distanced events, children services being delivered remotely despite more restrictive guidelines, or our financial department creating new ways to ensure accurate billing and applying for and successfully being awarded much needed CARES Act Federal funding, all

happened because everyone exceeded the expectations of their job.

The people we serve worked with us in recognizing the need to keep everyone safe and have been beyond cooperative. It takes all of us working together to make sure we can be successful in making sure everyone feels supported and valued.

Over the past year, we have seen many achievements despite the overwhelming odds. We have successfully linked up with Florida Initiative for Suicide Prevention FISP. FISP is now part of MHA and we are so proud to join forces with such a highly regarded organization. Our Community Foundation grant was awarded to produce one of our finest projects, the PRIDE Grant, and the staff including Chris, Nicole, and Laura successfully pulled off a remarkable program that was beyond expectations. The Kinship program continued to provide quality respite services to the kinship families in a socially-distanced manner which presented itself to be a unique challenge. Our Listen to Children programs struggled due to the school lockdowns but Helen kept her operations going.

We continue to move forward as an organization and as a well-regarded provider in this community. We were reviewed by CARF in December 2020 for our three-year accreditation and our services were commended by the surveyors as high quality and highly-respected by others in our community. They know this because they spoke to other stakeholders who could not have been more complimentary to the many services provided, AND to the staff.

As we continue into our next year, we have learned that nothing is guaranteed and we can only proceed one-step at a time. I know that with the continued support of our board, our staff, and the community stakeholders, we will continue to thrive and provide.

Be safe and be well.



Exceptional People Impacting the Community (EPIC) 2020 would have marked Mental Health America's 25th annual celebration of EPIC. For the health and safety of our community, we will celebrate with our 2020 EPIC Honorees

virtually on May 12, 2021.

Since 1996 MHA has honored close to two-hundred community leaders who have made a positive contribution to the mental wellness of others in our community.

Event sponsors opportunities and ticket sales are also available. In addition to the awards, the event will feature a silent auction. Proceeds will benefit the programs and advocacy of MHA including the 9Muses Art Center; the Thumbbody Programs; Listen to Children; Parenting Education/Parent Support (PEPS); and the SETH Line Warm Line. For more information, feel free to call our offices at (954) 746-2055



IRIS Year: A 2020 Retrospective



Despite the multitude of challenges faced by everyone during the onset of the pandemic, 9Muses Art Center is proud to announce that our IRIS Year initiative was a success! IRIS Year was developed as part of the Broward Community Foundation’s PRIDE grant with the goal of providing LGBTQ+ inclusive programming. This grant allowed us to retool existing programs and add new events that celebrated LGBTQ+ contributions and provide inclusive education.



We kicked off the year with *Glitter Night*, an art sampler with LGBTQ+ themed art lessons. Our “It’s My Life” course turned into “It’s My Life: Queer Edition,” with the addition of inclusive language and discussion topics to the program. In community education, we executed two new CEUs for our professional members: “The Negative Impact of Conversion Therapy for

LGBTQ+ Individuals” and “Addressing Workplace Inequity for LGBTQ+ Individuals,” both of which were well attended and received.



Finally, we ended the year with our dynamic art exhibition *302.0*. This exhibit explored the intersections of LGBTQ+ identities and mental health. We were very pleased with the diversity of the *302.0* submissions and implore you to watch our Exhibit video.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our programs and events! And a hearty thanks to the Community Foundation, whose support made **IRIS Year** possible.



MUSE NEWS



Welcome to 2021: CONTAGIOUS!

It is 9Muses Art Center's pleasure to introduce our 2021 theme, **CONTAGIOUS!** Our tongue-in-cheek homage to the pandemic unpacks the history of depictions of illness in art to reframe our current situation. **CONTAGIOUS!** will include a call to artists to "stay inside" the boundaries of a very specific color palette that aligns with our theme. In our wellness courses, we will explore how intergenerational and collective trauma is "contagious" and how it gets passed from one person to another.

We are excited to indulge in this theme with our trademark sensitivity-tempered cynicism and hope you will join us in our programming this year.

If you'd like to keep up with our programs in real time, make sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#). More to come!



Required Courses for License Renewal 2021

LIVE VIRTUAL TRAINING ON ZOOM

[Click Here for Info and Registration](#)



The **Parent & Family Department** has successfully transformed to a completely virtual platform to provide services during the pandemic. **PEPS** continues to offer an array of services, including Parenting Education, Anger Management, Supervised Visitation, Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), Circle of Security, Co-parenting, and "24/7 Dad" Fatherhood classes; as well as classes for parents and/or children with developmental delay. Classes are offered in English, Spanish, and Creole. In

addition, we have collaborated with local drug treatment facilities to provide fatherhood and anger management classes via Zoom to their residents while they are receiving substance treatment.

Our **Kinship Cares Program** has provided families needed supplies, food, and household items, offered zoom support groups, on-line respite care, and activities for the Kinship children. Some of the favorites have been a virtual African Safari, Bingo, Uno, scavenger hunts, movies, and more. We have incorporated drive-thru events like Lion Country Safari, Holiday Parades, and Tradewinds Holiday Lights. Families were invited to a private Facebook group for added support and information sharing. Emails go out several times a week to keep families informed about resources in the community during the pandemic. We have also partnered with MHA's Children's Department to offer Listeners to our Kinship kids. Future ventures are on-line cooking classes and possible art lessons to integrate all of MHA's programs.



The **Children's Department** has gone through a number of exciting changes this year! This is all due to our devoted, wonderful volunteers. First and foremost, we would like to thank them for their flexibility and adaption during this difficult time.

We have moved our **Listen To Children** program virtually to accommodate safe practices. Our Listen To Children Program pairs up trained volunteers with at-risk children in need to engage and educate in good mental health practices. Our volunteers use several evidence-based practices to increase emotional well-being and growth. Listen To Children has been and continues to be well-received by the community.



Our unique **Thumbody** program is also going digital and with greater accessibility. We are creating a series of videos, for Kindergarten and Second Grade, that follows the Thumbody curriculum. Thumbody teaches children basic, mental health self-care and emotional intelligence. These will be available as a ready resource through our school members portal, and it is a great time for educators

and school districts to get in early!

Thank you all again for your continued support!

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