



**“I Did It, You Can, Too” is Message  
 of MHA’s Luis Rosa**

*Thanks to the Spanish language skills of Luis Rosa, a Certified Peer Specialist trained in Recovery Coaching and a Certified Mental Health First Aid trainer, 74 Spanish-speaking participants got connected to resources during the Mental Health Association’s last fiscal year.*

Learning has always been important to Luis Rosa, and he has learned in many places.

Raised in the Bronx, Luis returned to his native Puerto Rico to graduate from high school. With the closing of the air base where he later worked, he went back to New

York and studied accounting at Columbia University. Now a certified peer specialist also trained in recovery coaching and a SMART (Self Management and Recovery Training) facilitator in both Spanish and English, he went to New Orleans to become a Mental Health First Aid trainer.

It was friendships and the city’s lower cost of living that lured Luis to Jamestown in 2006. After working seven years at one local retailer, his decreased hours and subsequent unemployment resulted in depression that led to drinking and smoking pot.

Luis’s turning point came when he met Mental Health Association (MHA) Associate Director Steven Cobb at an AA meeting. Coming for several peer support group meetings each week, he found the MHA to be “like a family” and eventually participated in the work experience program at the MHA while on public assistance. He excelled at his work experience and was subsequently hired as a full-time recovery coach .

Now instead of living with depression, anxiety and alcohol, Luis’s days are spent helping others through their challenges: encouraging them to seek counseling, finding shelter for the homeless, keeping safe those with thoughts of suicide, and sometimes meeting them in the E.R. in the middle of the night.

To Luis, mental health and substance use disorders come from trauma in one’s background (see “What’s Your ACE Score” on page 3). “It’s like we ‘nurse’ the trauma, taking drugs to ease the pain,” he says, noting, “All substance use disorders come from mental health problems – we’re not born with the desire to become addicted.”

Despite his father’s death possibly being related to alcohol, Luis doesn’t blame anyone else for his problems. He recognizes they may have started during the years when he worked as a disc jockey at bars and parties. Though he now has a good relationship with his former wife, he takes responsibility for his divorce. His two adult sons live in Texas, and he is excited about recently becoming a grand-father. Luis is relieved his many family members in Puerto Rico, including his mother, are safe and well in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

As the MHA’s bilingual peer specialist, Luis helped 74 Spanish-speaking participants get connected to resources this past year and offers the only Spanish language peer support group.

MHA Executive Director Kia Narraway-Briggs receives very positive feedback from Luis’s assistance to other community groups. After his presentation to Erie 2 BOCES Learning Zone about programs offered by the MHA, former Learning Navigator Joyce Golden observed, “He presented in both English and in Spanish and did an excellent job. Luis...not only brought the facts but he also brought empathy and encouragement.” As one of Luis’s colleagues voiced, “He’s awesome!”

Of the Mental Health Association, Luis says, “If I had to start all over again, I would start here.” Pointing out that participants come back even after they are out of a crisis situation, he concludes, “I like this place because I’m helping others. I encourage them: ‘I did it, you can, too.’”

The MHA will welcome you back no matter what circumstances have occurred. We love to hear the successes people experience after receiving support through difficult situations.

From the brochure describing the many services of the Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County:

***We’re here because we’ve been there!***

## What's Been Happening at MHA



**U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand**, D-N.Y., visited the Mental Health Association on July 24, 2017, to announce her co-sponsorship with Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., of the Opioid Addiction Prevention Act. The legislation would limit a patient's opioid prescription supply to seven days for short-term pain; it does not apply to chronic pain, cancer treatment, or end of life care. Gillibrand is calling on medical professionals not to over-prescribe for broken bones or teeth extraction. "Every year we have thousands of men and women going in for routine treatments that require no more than a small dose of pain medication and they're leaving with far more medicine than they need. And then they become addicted, or they give the extra pills to a friend or family member who misuses the medication, or they leave it in their medicine cabinet where a younger person may see it and steal it and bring it to a party."

The MHA worked with the **Community Alliance for Suicide Prevention** and was the location for several events for Suicide Awareness Week, September 18-23, 2017: Poetry Slam, SafeTalk training, Tie Dye for Hope, and Rock Painting. Other sponsors were Chautauqua Tapestry, The Resource Center, Chautauqua County Department of Mental Hygiene, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Fredonia State University of New York, Jamestown Community College, Chautauqua Mall and KidX Club, United Christian Advocacy Network, BestSelf Behavioral Health, CATTOOS, Raynor Memorial Golf Tournament, Randolph Peaches N Cream, Nite-Line Magazine, Northwest Arena, Media One Group LLC, and Wegmans.



A close collaboration is being established between **A Fresh Start** volunteers and the MHA's certified peer specialists/coaches. The MHA presented a Community Education session that included information on community resources and appropriate ways to help an individual seeking help for family or friends who are experiencing mental health or substance use disorder problems. The primary goal was to help individuals know that a listening ear can be the first approach in getting someone to the help they need. For more information about A Fresh Start, visit [afreshstartny.org](http://afreshstartny.org)



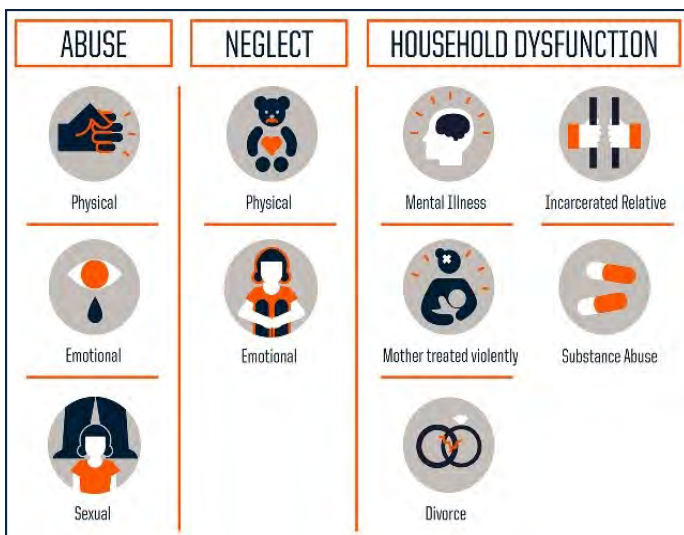
**MHA Executive Director Kia Narraway-Briggs** was one of only three Western New York applicants to be accepted for the New York State Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors Youth Mental Health First Aid Instructor Training held in late October in Albany.

A partnership between **Jamestown Community College's Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program** and the Mental Health Association is paying big dividends for both: The MHA's services are enhanced while the students gain valuable experience and community engagement requirements.

It was almost a decade ago when the first OTA intern came to the MHA. Since then, these bright and motivated students have made significant contributions. The OTA department developed the sensory room where participants can learn how to utilize different sensory skills to help with daily living skills. They started planning evening activities which developed into a coffee house theme that became Monday Night Open Mic. They organized the overhauling of the common area to provide a sense of community when folks enter the MHA. Pictured are some of the students and a participant who worked on the common area; Occupational Therapy Assistant Program Senior Project Manager Mike Nordin is on the right.

A recent Appalachian Regional Commission grant will increase the cooperation between JCC's OTA program and both MHA and Aspire. MHA envisions Level 2 students working with participants on career skills, eating, sleeping better – the basic daily living skills we all need for success.





### What's Your ACE Score?

An ACE score is a tally of different types of abuse, neglect, and other hallmarks of a rough childhood. According to the **Adverse Childhood Experiences** study, the rougher your childhood, the higher your score is likely to be and the higher your risk for later health problems.

Examples of adverse childhood experiences are physical, sexual and emotional abuse, as well as physical and emotional neglect. They also include having a parent who is mentally ill, an alcoholic or substance abuser, in jail, or a victim of domestic violence, as well as the absence of a parent through divorce, death or abandonment. These are all ACEs.

Research has shown that traumatic or stressful events in childhood (ACEs) injure a child's brain, impairing the brain's physical development and function. ACEs may cause kids to have difficulties learning, making friends, and trusting adults.

As adults, these experiences don't go away. The ACE Study found a stunning link between multiple stressful events in childhood and chronic diseases, as well as social, emotional and behavioral problems. These included heart disease, lung cancer, diabetes and many autoimmune diseases, along with depression, mental illness, suicide, and being a victim of violence.

Where people in helping situations use ACEs science, instead of asking "What's wrong with you?," they ask "What happened to you?"

Substance abuse disorders correlate with adverse childhood experiences. Do we ask a person with a bleeding arm to "get over it"? Do we deny life-saving treatment to diabetic or cancer patients?

To learn more, visit [buncombeaces.org](http://buncombeaces.org) (from which much of this information was taken) as well as [acestoohigh.com](http://acestoohigh.com). To take the ACE Quiz, google "Take The ACE Quiz — And Learn What It Does And Doesn't Mean - NPR."

## 2nd Community Education Forum OUR COMMUNITY STANDS TOGETHER The Many Faces of Addiction: No One Cause, No One Solution

Wednesday, November 15, 2017  
6:30 p.m., JCC's Scharmann Theatre  
Co-sponsored by the Health Care Action Team (HCAT), the American Association of University Women (AAUW), and the Mental Health Association (MHA)

### Mental Health First Aid Training

The difference between crisis and recovery or life and death for someone facing a mental health or substance use challenge can be one person who knows how to notice and respond to the warning signs. You can be the difference in someone's life. Are you trained in Mental Health First Aid?

The MHA has three certified trainers of Mental Health First Aid and is co-sponsoring a course at **Jamestown Community College on November 14 and 15**. MHA can offer this training to interested parties, including workplaces. Just contact us at (716) 661-9044 or [chautauquamha@gmail.com](mailto:chautauquamha@gmail.com) for details, and check out [MentalHealthFirstAid.org](http://MentalHealthFirstAid.org).

As a follow-up to Winged Ox Players' recent production of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, **St. Luke's Episcopal Church** hosted a Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training in mid-October. Led by MHA's certified MHFA trainers, the eight hours of training with text was provided free by the Chautauqua County Department of Mental Hygiene.



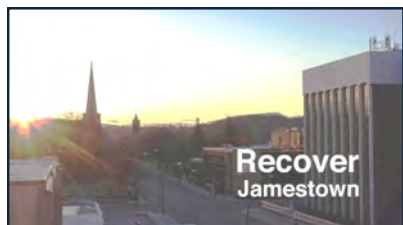
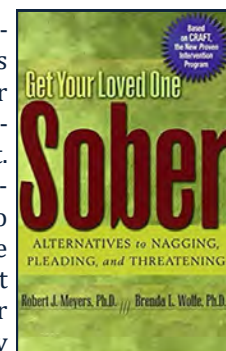
## Worth Reading/Worth Watching

**“There’s No One Story of the Opioid Epidemic in America.”** At OnBeing.org, writer Ruth Stender shares her experience of returning home to the outskirts of Huntington, W. Va., for the funeral of her 27 year old niece, the mother of two little boys. You can find at [onbeing.org/blog/ruth-stender-theres-no-one-story-of-the-opioid-epidemic-in-america](http://onbeing.org/blog/ruth-stender-theres-no-one-story-of-the-opioid-epidemic-in-america).



**Hope & Healing for Chautauqua** is an 11-minute video that describes the variety of services available in Chautauqua County to treat substance abuse. In addition to service providers, you will hear from heroin users, a veteran who suffered from alcoholism, and the wife of an addict. Produced by Kranky Plate Productions, this inspiring work debuted at the 2016 Hope & Healing for Chautauqua forum with its message: “Prevention works. Help is available. Recovery is possible.” MHA was part of the planning committee for both that and the 2017 Hope & Healing event. *Hope & Healing for Chautauqua* can be seen on YouTube.

**Get Your Loved One Sober: Alternatives to Nagging, Pleading, and Threatening** co-author Dr. Robert Meyers spent ten years developing a treatment program that helps Concerned Significant Others (CSOs) both improve the quality of their lives and learn how to make treatment an attractive option for their partners who are substance abusers. *Get Your Loved One Sober* describes this multi-faceted program that uses supportive, non-confrontational methods to engage substance abusers into treatment. Called Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT), the program uses scientifically validated behavioral principles to reduce the loved one’s substance use and to encourage him or her to seek treatment. Equally important, CRAFT also helps loved ones reduce personal stress and introduce meaningful, new sources of satisfaction into their lives. Proven successful for numerous addictions, not just alcoholism, it contains simple exercises readers can practice at their own pace, with no costly or heart-breaking interventions. This approach is employed by some therapists at the Chautauqua County Department of Mental Hygiene.



Sheridan A. Smith created **Recover Jamestown**, the 60-minute video that tells stories of addiction, recovery, and loss, and explores what hope lies in new solutions and community efforts. It opens a conversation that includes the effects of drugs on the community from the inside out and seeks to confront a growing issue plainly and uniquely. *Recover Jamestown* can be seen on YouTube.

In the summer of 2012 a woman named Eva was found dead in the London townhouse she shared with her husband, Hans K. Rausing. The couple had struggled with drug addiction for years, often under the glare of tabloid headlines. Now Hans’s sister, the editor and publisher Sigrid Rausing, tries to make sense of what happened. In **Mayhem, A Memoir**, she asks the difficult questions those close to the world of addiction must face. “Who can help the addict, consumed by a shaming hunger, a need beyond control? There is no medicine: the drugs *are* the medicine. And who can help their families, so implicated in the self-destruction of the addict? Who can help when the very notion of ‘help’ becomes synonymous with an exercise of power; a familial police state; an end to freedom, in the addict’s mind?” *Mayhem* is available through the Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System.



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**Chautauqua County Crisis Hotline:**  
**1-800-724-0461**

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:**  
**1-800-273-8255**

**For Human Services info**  
like emergency shelters, food pantries, clothing closets,  
**anywhere in the country, dial 2-1-1.**