

### Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County Names Nordin Executive Director

Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County (MHA) Board President Sarah Tranum announced the board’s decision to make Interim Executive Director Michael Nordin the organization’s executive director.

"We are thrilled to welcome Mike Nordin as the MHA’s new executive director," said Tranum. "Mike brings a wealth of experience to this role, having served as the Program Director of MHA since 2018. His commitment to mental health advocacy and his vision for growth and collaboration will strengthen our work to support individuals and families in our community."

A graduate of Warren (Pa.) Area High School and Jamestown Community College’s Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program, Mike is a Licensed

Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant. After working at Lutheran Social Services, he was part of JCC’s OTA program staff, where he first became connected with the Mental Health Association.

Mike and his wife live in Warren and have three children and two grandchildren.



“I am excited to be in a new role with the great group of people at the MHA,” Mike said. “We are committed as a team to our mission of radical acceptance, empowerment, and advocacy for community members who struggle with mental health and substance use.”

#### MHA on Erie News Now

On January 21, MHA staff were treated to a visit by Erie News Now Warren Bureau Reporter Jackie Palmer. Her story “Jamestown Organizations Collaborate to Support Homeless During Cold Snap” was broadcast that evening.



Jackie described visiting St. Susan Center, Jamestown’s soup kitchen and certified warming station that provides hot meals and a safe space for those seeking relief from the cold, and speaking with MHA Executive Director Mike Nordin and Grant Manager Michelle Colaiacovo. She reported that the MHA, St. Susan Center, and Community Helping Hands have partnered to address other critical needs, offering mental health support, housing assistance, and resources to help individuals regain stability. “The collaborative efforts of these groups highlight the community’s commitment to combating homelessness and ensuring that support is available for anyone who needs it.” *(Photos courtesy of Erie News Now.)*

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 Chautauqua Co. ♡ United Arts Appeal of Chautauqua Co. ♡ WNY Integrated Care Collaborative ♡ and others, like you....

## Monthly Recovery Luncheons at the Jamestown Recovery Center



At the MHA's **November Holiday Recovery Luncheon** staff from the Salvation Army described some of the services they provide including shelter; working with sexual assault victims, court advocacy, help finding housing, referrals and more. Goodskills Career Builder Community Outreach Liaisons Francisca Wallen and Jackie Greene described their four-week program at Jamestown Community College that pays students while they prepare for a job in manufacturing. Pictured from left are Salvation Army staffers Jennifer Rolfe, Asia Leonard, Joathylet (JoJo) Ruedas, Scotlynn Fegley and Goodskills' Francisca and Jackie.



Staffers Michelle Colaiacovo (left) and Jessica Crooks (2nd from right) assisted volunteers Diana Bloom, April Trotman and Diane Lamfer to serve the turkey dinner prepared by Bonnie Weber of Be The Change You Want to See in Jamestown.



At **December's Holiday Recovery Luncheon**, Santa Claus (AKA Dave Kohler, the father of MHA Board Treasurer Jake Kohler) volunteered his time to hand out candy and brought over 30 bags of personal care products to pass out as well.

William Matteson, Executive Director of C.O.P.E. (Children of Opioid Parents and Empowerment) and owner of Fredonia's Family Martial Arts Center dojo, spoke about Pride of Lions, the group he plans to facilitate that will incorporate martial arts to help men over 18 in their recovery.



Also in **December**, Dereck Taylor, pictured with Finance Director Jill Marsh, received a certificate for his community service: helping with the homeless outreach, Be The Change You Want To See In Jamestown, at the MHA, and more.



St. Luke's Episcopal Church members (left to right) Brian and Sandy Kearney, Sandy Harle, and Linda McCallum served the delicious holiday meal prepared by the church.



*Because celebrating positive milestones increases long term recovery, the Mental Health Association has monthly recovery luncheons that provide positive reinforcement to those in addiction and mental health recovery.*

At the MHA's **January Recovery Luncheon** participant James Coon was recognized for his success in completing the four-week Goodskills Career Builder program on Jamestown Community College's campus. He received certification in cybersecurity and OSHA 10 in this program that provides free targeted skills training. He also completed the 12-week, in-person, hands-on Industrial Maintenance Technician program at the JCC North County campus – all while being homeless. He is pictured receiving a certificate from Activities/PR Coordinator Dianne Valvo.



Bonnie Weber of Be The Change You Want To See In Jamestown and her volunteers prepared and served a delicious chili lunch. Servers included, from left, Jayne Carlson, Bonnie Weber, Diane Lamer, George Brightman, Bill Schmidt, and Robert; not pictured is Dereck Taylor.

After welcoming guests at the **February Recovery Luncheon**, Executive Director Mike Nordin congratulated a participant who recently secured housing and introduced MHA's newest employee, Danny Rosario, a bilingual peer specialist who will divide his time between Jamestown and Dunkirk.



The Italian dinner was prepared by Finance Director Jill Marsh and Activities/PR Coordinator Dianne Valvo (right). Volunteer Diana Bloom (left) assisted with serving.

### Can Your Business, Church, or Group Support Recovery Luncheons?



Recognizing positive milestones is widely accepted as significant to long-term success in mental health and substance use disorder recovery. MHA's monthly luncheons celebrate these milestones and, like all MHA services, are free for guests. The MHA is seeking help in providing these lunches to upwards of 80 visitors.

If you are part of an organization that has the capacity to make a meal or share in its cost – or could do this on your own – please contact Activities/PR Coordinator Dianne Valvo at (716) 720-8098 or [Dianne.Valvo@MHACHautauqua.org](mailto:Dianne.Valvo@MHACHautauqua.org). In addition to the good feeling you'll get, you will be recognized in a newsletter and a widely-distributed news release.



## Major Programs of the Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County

### Personal Coaching

Individual peer support, recovery coaching, access to care, referrals, advocacy, and community support for individuals & their families affected by mental health & substance use issues

### Peer Support Groups

A variety of groups take place at the MHA supporting multiple pathways of recovery and support.

### Treatment Court Navigation

Support toward following the guidelines of and completing treatment court, as well as access to video conference court attendance.

### Family Support

A peer coach meets with parents and guardians to help them navigate issues with CPS and meet goals to keep or return their children.



A cooperative endeavor with a local network of organizations to provide peer support and connections to resources for moms, moms-to-be, & all new parents dedicated to building bright futures for Chautauqua County children and their families.

### Peer Training

Training, support, and resources to help people use their experiences to help others and join the growing professional peer community.

### Transportation

Provides participants with free transportation to medical, court, employment, or treatment-related appointments.

### Student Activities

Internships and project support for students from JCC, Fredonia State, St. Bonaventure, PennWest Edinboro and more.



### OCCUPATIONAL PEER EMPOWERMENT NETWORK

A career-focused support system providing education, resources, advocacy, & encouragement to attain, retain, and maintain stable employment.

### Advocacy and Community Outreach

Offers groups at other locations in the community; holds events to educate, advocate, and connect the public; supports positive and healthy activities.

### Better For Families Program

Offers guidance, encouragement, and resources for individuals engaging with the family court system in partnership with the Chautauqua County Department of Health & Human services.

### Treatment Connections

Peer advocacy in the hospital Inpatient, Outpatient, and Emergency Departments, as well as rehab centers, to provide guidance to individuals with mental health and chemical dependence issues in stressful situations, as well as educate staff on resources and techniques available for treatment.

### Overdose Recovery Support

Connect with individuals and their families shortly after an overdose event to provide comfort, support, education, guidance, resources, and encouragement toward safer habits and practices with cooperation from area law enforcement and critical responders.



### Narcan Training

Individual and group training for identifying an overdose in progress and the proper steps for administering Narcan and getting help, as well as free Narcan doses to keep on hand.

Scan here to get



trained for Narcan

Scan here for



the MHA website

Scan here for our



current schedule

## MHA Support Groups

### Anger Management

Working to develop skills for dealing with anger.

### Art in Recovery

An artistic expression of your personal recovery.

### CRAFT Community Reinforcement And Family Training

Support for families and friends of those in recovery.

### Depression & Anxiety Support

For those facing depression & anxiety in their daily lives

### Grief Support \*

Discussion for those that have experienced loss of any kind.

### Knitting for Well-being

Use knitting to improve your wellbeing.

### OPEN for Work

Collaborative group to share work experiences and help each other overcome challenges we have already faced.

### Positive Parenting Program from

Free discussion workshops for parents of kids & teens.

### Recovery Dharma

Based on principles of mindfulness and meditation.

### Recovery Yoga by Jen Raines

Yoga techniques to support a healthy body and mind.

### Rockin' Recovery

Discussion on our favorite songs & how they make us feel.

### SMART Recovery

Self-Management And Recovery Training with secular and scientific motivational recovery methods.

### Suicide Loss Support

For those who have experienced the loss of suicide.

### Trauma Support Groups - Men, Women, Co-ed, & faith-based

Skills to heal trauma for people in recovery.

### Unwind Your Mind by

For those facing depression & anxiety in their daily lives.

### Veterans Group

Open support group for veterans and their families

### We Believe

12-Step recovery group based on biblical principles

### Wellness and Recovery

Peer support group focusing on mental health challenges and solutions for everyone

### Wellness Warriors

Exercise for healthy recovery. *Low-mobility accessible*

### Women's Group \*

Open topic support group for women.

### Writing in Recovery

Supportive writing group to encourage, share, & improve self-expression to empower recovery & personal growth.





## Featured Groups

### SUICIDE LOSS SURVIVOR SUPPORT

Volunteer Tina Morgan, who lost her son to suicide, facilitates this group that meets in Jamestown on Thursdays, 1-2 p.m. Participants recognize that suicide loss is a grief unlike any other and that those who have not been through it don't necessarily understand. The group is a safe place, where confidentiality is of the utmost importance. Whatever participants' beliefs, they are welcome to share without fear of judgment.

### RECOVERY DHARMA

A recovery program based on Buddhist principles of mindfulness and meditation, this group meets in Dunkirk on Wednesdays, 12:30-1:30 p.m. Not a religion, this recovery path is a philosophy that could benefit those of any faith, as well as those in 12-step recovery. The meetings are a safe place to address process addictions such as work, gambling, shopping and internet use. They are facilitated by Corey Krauss.

-  **12-Step** - Structured format
-  **\* Restricted** - Access only for certain people
-  **Classes** - Full attendance required for completion
-  **Unaffiliated** - Hosted at MHA by other organizations

### 12-Step Groups

#### AA Living Sober

12-step alcohol recovery group based on the book.

#### AA Look to This Day

Open meeting of the 12-step recovery group

#### All Addictions Anonymous

12-step recovery for all addictions

#### CMA Crystal Clear

12-step support for crystal meth.

#### We Believe

12 Step recovery group based on biblical principles.



For up-to-date info, find our calendars at [MHACHAUTAUQUA.ORG/groups](http://MHACHAUTAUQUA.ORG/groups).

#### Room for More

If you would like to see a group focused on a particular topic or for more information on our groups and other services, contact our Program Director at [programs@mhachautauqua.org](mailto:programs@mhachautauqua.org)

### How We Help



MHA is committed to helping families and children in need to celebrate the holidays. Peer coaches assisted MHA participants with filling out the forms from Chautauqua County Toys for Tots, then Finance Director Jill Marsh logged the information.

With the help of her husband, Jeff Marsh, Jill picked up all the toys, wrapped them, and brought them to MHA for pick-up by the parents. She is pictured in her dining room where she wrapped toys for 63 children, from newborns to 17-year-olds.



### Motherhood Program



In 2023, Start Strong Navigator Jessica Crooks received an Impact Award from the United Way of Southern Chautauqua County. A mother of two, in recovery since 2018, her experience with Child Protective Services, Family Court and the foster care system makes her eager to help mothers navigate the systems with success.

MHA's Start Strong Motherhood Program provides intensive support for pregnant women and mothers who have substance use disorder. Using a peer recovery model improves the health and wellbeing of mothers who use substances, as well as infants, children/youth, and their families. Peer supports include emotional support, advocacy, support groups, recovery coaching and services navigation.

### Child Protective Services Liaison



For the past two years, MHA Peer Specialist Page Rodriguez has been Chautauqua County's only CPS (Child Protective Services) Liaison, contracted with the county through CAPTA, the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. She serves as a bridge between clients and social workers whose responsibility is to investigate, intervene and support family and caregivers' ability to safely care for their children where there are allegations of abuse and maltreatment of children.

Page's background as a foster child, preschool teacher, and recovering from her own addiction through the MHA gives her a unique perspective to help families navigate family or criminal court, participate in parenting classes, and communicate with their social workers. Noting "we all want the same thing," her main goal is to strengthen that communication.

### MHA Board of Directors

- Sarah Trantum, President 📍 Kimberly Lombard, Vice President 📍 Jake Kohler, Treasurer 📍 Julie Apperson, Secretary
- Judy Anderson 📍 Jennifer Howe 📍 Lindsey Isaac-Lopus 📍 Sherry Lawson 📍 Tom Lebeau 📍 Sara Luther

## North County Recovery Center Happenings

MHA's North County Recovery Center is located in Grace Lutheran Church at 601 Eagle Street in Dunkirk. In November, the recovery community enjoyed our **first Thanksgiving Luncheon**, filled with food, fellowship, creativity and, of course, gratitude. Regular hours for the North County Recovery Center are 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays and 1:30–2:30 p.m. Fridays for the Wellness and Recovery group.



Art facilitator Wing Haight-Wills (pictured) guides the MHA North County's **Art in Recovery Group** that meets on Wednesdays, 11 a.m.

### Everyone's path of wellness is unique.

Peers and lived recovery experience are the foundation of what we do at the MHA. We also provide practices that build and deepen recovery. Our Art in Recovery (AIR) group is one such practice.

At the December 11 AIR group, community artist Michael Cave showed the group how to make dyed paper flowers. A January session focused on collages. Any art work, and any person, is always welcome.



### "Wellness and Recovery"

a peer support group focusing on mental health challenges and solutions for everyone

Every Friday 1:30pm to 2:30pm  
MHA - Dunkirk Recovery Center  
Inside Grace Church-601 Eagle Street  
Dunkirk, NY /Enter @ The Red Door  
www.mhachautauqua.org  
716-661-9044



The North County Recovery Center is expanding our support in Northern Chautauqua County. Our newest peer, Danny Rosario will be able to assist our spanish speaking participants in Dunkirk on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and in Jamestown on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

**"Wellness and Recovery"** is a new, peer-led support group meeting on Fridays at 1:30 p.m. that explores challenges and solutions encountered on our wellness path. Our common experiences are the foundation for our present understanding and forward growth. This is peer support.

Our space and groups are created from radical acceptance and hospitality. All are welcome.

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### MHA Mission Statement

The Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County commits to radical acceptance, empowerment, and advocacy for our community members who struggle with mental health and substance use.

### MHA Vision Statement

The Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County envisions a time when the peer recovery model is widely relied upon as a foundation of support and advocacy to address the total needs of all individuals and their families challenged by the effects of mental health or substance use disorders. We will persevere in changing our local culture to one of hope, kindness, and justice, redefining and expanding the possibilities for a rich and satisfying life for people in recovery.



## Shopping for MHA....



There are many ways you can help us achieve our vision for “a rich and satisfying life for people in recovery.” **Financial donations** are always appreciated, or you might have more fun shopping for **items we need**, from office and cleaning supplies to warm socks for participants. **Coffee** is welcome year round: any brand, basic flavors, bulk packages for making 100 cups a day.

**Cold weather items** are still needed: men's and women's hats, gloves, socks, and scarves. (No clothing, please.) Check out our wishlists at [MHACHautauqua.org/Donate](https://www.mhachautauqua.org/Donate) for all kinds of ways you can help, or make a difference with your donation on the [MHA Facebook page](#), in person, or by mailing a check to MHA, 31 Water Street, Suite 7, Jamestown NY 14701.



**OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS US HERE**

**FITNESS & HEALTH** **RECOVERY LUNCHEONS** **CREATIVE OUTLETS** **VETERAN SUPPORT**

**SOCIAL SUPPORT** **PEER SUPPORT** **SECURE HOUSING** **SYSTEMS NAVIGATION**