



CENTERSTONE

ISSUE TWENTY-THREE | CENTERSTONE.ORG

Reclaiming LIVES

A PUBLICATION OF CENTERSTONE

FARM FRESH OUTLOOK:

HOW THE COHEN CLINIC AT
CENTERSTONE HELPS THIS VETERAN
KEEP SERVING

National Council Roundup | Adverse Childhood Experiences | Reclaiming Lives with Frank Warren

Reclaiming LIVES

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COVER FEATURE

- 2 | Farm Fresh Outlook:
How the Cohen Clinic at Centerstone Helps this Veteran Keep Serving

SERVICE NEWS

- 7 | Mental Health Myth Busting
- 8 | Two New Services FREE to Eligible Recipients

IN THE COMMUNITY

- 9 | Philanthropy in Action
- 10 | Reclaiming Lives Events Feature PostSecret Founder Frank Warren
- 12 | News and Notes

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- 14 | Suicide Prevention Takes a Village
- 15 | Preventing and Healing Childhood Trauma
- 16 | Provider Spotlight: Dan Mansfield, MA
- 17 | NatCon Features Centerstone Presenters



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Reclaiming LIVES

ISSUE TWENTY-THREE

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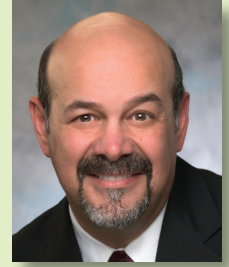
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ABOUT CENTERSTONE

Centerstone is a not-for-profit health care organization dedicated to delivering care that changes people's lives. We provide mental health and substance abuse treatment, education and support to communities in Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee and additionally offer individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities life skills development, employment and housing services. Nationally, we have specialized programs for service members, veterans and their loved ones, and develop employee assistance programs for businesses of all sizes. Our research institute improves behavioral healthcare through research and technology, and our foundation secures philanthropic resources to support our work. For more information, visit www.centerstone.org.



From the Editor in Chief

Greetings! Welcome to the latest issue of Centerstone's *Reclaiming Lives* magazine. I'm excited for you to meet Charley, whose smiling face you see on the cover. He's a United States Army veteran who has served his country well, and it's our honor to have served him recently through the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone in Clarksville.

Charley's story displays two great forms of service. On one hand, his countless deployments to defend our country after 9/11 are a true mark of American heroism. Likewise, his willingness to ask for help with his post-combat trauma exhibits real strength of character.

We were also inspired by others at our Reclaiming Lives Luncheon and After Dark events featuring PostSecret founder Frank Warren. I appreciate how he made discussing mental health issues easier for all in attendance; it's fun looking back at photos from that special day.

Centerstone also recently spoke into mental health care matters on local and national fronts. We're excited about a new commitment to treating and preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences in Nashville—read more about our part in that effort on page 15. Further, our entire organization was actively involved at this year's remarkable National Council for Behavioral Health conference (page 17).

In all we do, please know your support is so greatly appreciated. Together we are delivering care that changes people's lives.

Robert N. Vero, EdD

Regional Chief Executive Officer



FARM FRESH OUTLOOK:

HOW THE COHEN CLINIC AT
CENTERSTONE HELPS THIS VETERAN
KEEP SERVING

At first sight, Charley doesn't look like someone who has spent an entire life in and around the military. Wearing work-tattered clothes and with purple streaks in his long hair, he appears to neighbors as a local farmer who raises chickens, Texas longhorn cattle, fresh vegetables and bright flowers in rural Tennessee. But there among the coops, barns, planting beds and greenhouses, a telltale metal sign for the 101st Airborne Division is on display.

Indeed, Charley served 28 years in the United States Army after being raised by his grandmother—a Polish woman who survived World War II work camps—and his grandfather, a U.S. Army recruiter. He drove tanks as a combat engineer, shot shoulder-launched Stinger missiles as an air defense crewmember, upheld law and order as a military police officer and, for most of his tenure, was one of the “Night Stalkers” who flew twin-engine Chinook helicopters.

“I didn't think I'd like military life because I'd grown up with it. But two weeks in I remember telling my drill sergeant I wanted to make a career of it,” says Charley, whose first passions were skateboarding and surfing. “I got rewarded for the job I did along with free haircuts, clothing, meals and a place to sleep. The Army became my family. I took the whole ‘Be All You Can Be’ thing seriously and kept reenlisting and moving up through the ranks.”

continues on page 4

Along the way, Charley was married for 20 of those years and bought a farm. As a kid, he had learned gardening from his grandmother and gained some agricultural skills when the Army transferred his grandfather to South Dakota. Good with animals, he even raised mice as a teenager and sold them to a local pet shop.

In adulthood, Charley began keeping horses, raising cattle and selling beef to other soldiers on base. He eventually found out about the national Farmer Veteran Coalition and felt a deep connection with its mission to mobilize former service members to help feed America. Most importantly, farming provided moments of balance to his heroic yet often harrowing military career.

From the start, Charley was intentional about becoming “a good all-purpose combat soldier” and wanted to be wherever there was action. After 9/11, he deployed to Afghanistan enough times to lose count.

“I got shot at, shot back, did all of that. I brought heat to the enemy and I was very proud of what I had built in the military,” he says. “I believed in the mission and what we were doing, but I didn’t see on the other side that it was kind of destroying me a little bit. It wasn’t conducive to my mental health overall. You know, some of the things that I saw . . . it wasn’t good stuff.”

By the time Charley retired, his marriage was ending, and he struggled with anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and thoughts of suicide. A helicopter crash had also caused physical challenges requiring frequent use of a cane to walk. The transition from military to civilian life was overwhelming in general.

“Upon getting out of the Army I didn’t feel like I had that purpose or direction anymore,” says Charley. “I didn’t know what I was going to do on any given day. My day had always been planned out for me: 6:30 a.m. formation, listen to the national anthem, lunch, etc.—for 28 years in my life. I was conditioned.”

Fortunately, Charley found unconditional support for his struggles from the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone. At the outpatient facility in Clarksville, Tennessee, providers

trained in military competencies offer high-quality mental health care and case management resources. Services are available to veterans and their families—as well as families of active duty military (spouse, partner, kids, parents, siblings and caregivers)—regardless of discharge status, insurance or ability to pay.

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A LITTLE BIT.

-CHARLEY

“I knew that I had issues as my time in the Army came to an end,” says Charley. “I was going through a bad divorce and having a hard time adapting to being a civilian. It was all new to me—I wasn’t able to get a grip on reality. I couldn’t concentrate and hadn’t been sleeping well for years. All this stress came together

to where I was having awful suicidal thoughts. I finally walked in to the Cohen Clinic at Centerstone on a really bad day. I just went to the front desk and asked, ‘Can somebody help me?’”

That somebody turned out to be Leahanna McDonald, a Cohen Clinic at Centerstone therapist whose veteran husband had also served in a similar capacity to Charley. He had his initial interview that first day he made contact, and within a week, a therapeutic treatment plan began.

Together they worked on emotional stabilization, developing positive coping skills and building a safety plan to follow if Charley was in crisis. He was surprised at how well the process works.

“If I had one of my days where I would like to do something else than be alive, my safety plan was there on my refrigerator. I have one in my room, too. It’s a great tool,” says Charley. “At first, I wanted to tear it up and say it was dumb. But then I read it, and I used it. The safety plan works. Ms. McDonald taught me how to cope with things in the moment, how to stay grounded. If anxiety comes on, I can do this.

“She was good at getting me to talk because I didn’t want to at first,” Charley admits. “And every time I would leave an appointment I felt good. It felt great to finally get all that stuff out—even things that had happened 15 years ago. I just knew that I had to get myself fixed to a point where I could function through the day. I had found what I wanted to do with my life, and I wasn’t going to fail.”

As retirement from the Army approached, Charley knew there had to be ways to keep serving his country. As it turns out, his way of giving back combines elements of the military, agriculture and mental well-being. “That’s what I want to do—encourage soldiers and veterans to take up agriculture after the military,” says Charley. “It doesn’t have to be a whole farm. Just go in your backyard and plant a raised bed garden. Just do that and you’ll see an amazing thing happen to you, because it happened to me. I just saw how agriculture made me feel well inside.”

Today Charley is helping other veterans connect with resources that enable them to achieve their goals.





In essence, he's giving hope to other veterans that life can get better and there is value in planting seeds and watching them grow.

"It's nothing real fancy. You take a Styrofoam cup, put some soil in it, plant your seed, and name your cup what it is," says Charley. "When it starts growing, that's yours—your life, you grew that. It's just amazing and has more healing capabilities to me than anything else out there."

In fact, Charley wants to share what he's learning with other visitors to the Cohen Clinic at Centerstone. The facility includes a thriving community room where peer veteran-to-veteran interaction is encouraged through a variety of classes and events.

"I served 28 years in the Army, and I really loved it. That was my life," he says. "Now that's over, but I want to continue to serve—to give back to

people. That's what I love. I love seeing the smile on somebody's face when I hand them a nice pretty red flower or bring food to a neighbor. It's the best calling I could ever have. I'm able to use the stuff Centerstone has helped me learn and apply it out here with my farming."

Speaking directly to his fellow veterans and active duty soldiers, Charley offers this closing advice about the care he received from the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone:

"Use these services. These benefits are provided for a reason, and I want to let other veterans know that they exist. Don't be scared to go in and tell them you're having a bad day or that you want to end your life, because sometimes that's reality. So, address it—go get help. I still have those feelings, and I'm not afraid to admit it anymore. If I live my life having to go and talk with somebody to ground myself all the time, I'm okay with that. I really am."



The Steven A. Cohen
Military Family Clinic
at Centerstone

To learn more about the behavioral health services provided by the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Centerstone, call (931) 221-3850 or visit centerstone.org/cohen.

MENTAL HEALTH MYTH BUSTING

By Matt Hardy

Stigma surrounding mental health issues has greatly reduced in recent years. However, misconceptions and misinformation still exist. It is vital for the one in five Americans who live with mental health conditions that we debunk mental health myths that persist.

I asked some of our mental health professionals at Centerstone what myths still need busting regarding mental health care matters. Here are three myths and the truth about each.

MYTH: The way to fix a mental health issue is to “snap out of it.”

TRUTH: Telling someone to snap out of a mental health condition is like telling a diabetic to snap out of diabetes. Mental illness may involve genetics, brain chemistry, life experiences such as trauma or abuse as well as other significant social factors. It's true that people with mental health problems can improve, and some experience full recovery. But it isn't a snap. Improvements often require and are achieved through talk therapy, prescribed medicine and other lifestyle changes which take time.

MYTH: People with mental health challenges are dangerous and often criminals.

TRUTH: Those with a major mental illness are actually more likely to be victims of crime than perpetrators. Because they often also struggle with issues of poverty, transient living conditions and substance use, their vulnerability is increased. While the media may regularly highlight crimes committed by someone with a mental illness, research suggests that is rarely the case with criminal violence.

MYTH: Suicide is not preventable.

TRUTH: Suicide is preventable. Eight out of ten people who die of suicide give definite clues to their intentions, although some may be nonverbal or difficult to detect. Warning signs—such as anxiety, agitation or trouble sleeping; withdrawal from friends, family and regular activities; and/or substance use—often indicate someone is experiencing thoughts of suicide. Mental Health First Aid classes are available to educate the public about how to recognize symptoms in a person and guide them to crisis care.

On the clinical level, many health care providers, including Centerstone, use risk assessment methods at each appointment to determine if an individual needs an active safety plan put in place to avoid self-harm. Resulting data shows that many lives are saved. (See page 14 in this magazine for more information about suicide prevention).

No one has to weather a mental health condition alone. There is help, hope and healing for all with mental illness and addiction, which is why it's important to bust the myths and spread the truth. □

Matt Hardy, PhD, is a Regional Vice President at Centerstone overseeing its behavioral health care services in the northern area of Middle Tennessee.

Two New Grant Services FREE to Eligible Recipients

Centerstone recently launched two grant-funded service lines in Tennessee to help those struggling with a variety of issues from mental health challenges and homelessness to substance use. Eligible participants will receive this care at no cost.



Co-Occurring Disorders Treatment

Centerstone has long been industry certified in the practice of co-occurring disorders treatment. Now a free grant-based service of the same name is being offered in five Tennessee counties. **Co-Occurring Disorders Treatment** is for adults, ages 18 and older, who have both a mental health and substance use disorder. The service focuses on recovery as well as pursuing life goals.

Features include:

- Individual and group therapy
- Family education and counseling
- Case management
- Psychiatric evaluation
- HIV testing and education
- Physical health care coordination
- Ongoing supportive services

Co-Occurring Disorders Treatment client April B. said, "I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Centerstone. They gave me the tools and encouragement to do what I need to do."

Qualifying participants must reside in one of these Middle Tennessee counties: Davidson, Houston, Montgomery, Robertson or Stewart. Funding is provided by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment.

This service is now available at the following Centerstone locations. Please call the numbers listed for more information.

Madison
620 Gallatin Pike South
Madison, TN 37115
(615) 460-4333

Clarksville
511 Eighth Street
Clarksville, TN 37040
(931) 920-7263



Keys to Recovery

Keys to Recovery integrates behavioral health treatment and supportive services for individuals and families in Davidson County who experience homelessness and have a substance use or co-occurring disorder.

Homeless individuals experience higher rates of addiction, severe mental illness, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS, making it difficult for them to find and sustain safe housing. Centerstone staff work closely with clients and their families to insure they have the resources needed for permanent housing that supports recovery.

Service features include:

- Support in securing and maintaining permanent housing
- Trauma-informed and individualized substance use disorder treatment
- Linkage to community resources
- Training and employment assistance
- Connection to physical and mental health care resources
- Additional recovery supports such as linkage to transportation, childcare and education

Centerstone's Keys to Recovery is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Grants for the Benefit of Homeless Individuals (SAMHSA/GBHI).

To make a referral or learn more:

Phone: (615) 460-4386
centerstone.org/keys

Philanthropy IN ACTION



Reclaiming Lives Society Announced

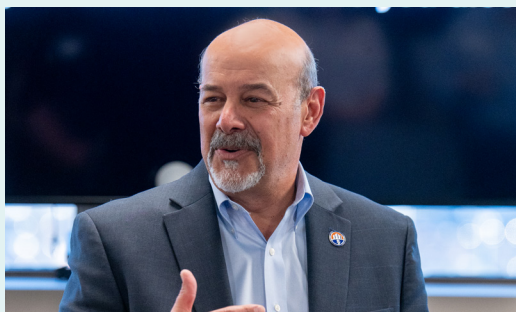
Centerstone board members Kelly Crockett Crook and Dana Oman announced the formation of the Reclaiming Lives Society. Its mission is to further the impact of Centerstone's noble purpose: Delivering care that changes people's lives. Membership includes new opportunities to connect with others who are passionate about mental health. Learn more at centerstone.org/foundation.

Centerstone board members Kelly Crockett Crook and Dana Oman

Boat Parade Brings Kids Toys

The great crew from Shipwreck Cove at Elm Hill Marina made Centerstone the beneficiary of its annual Christmas Boat Parade toy drive. Donated footballs, stuffed animals, art supplies and more were shared with children throughout our Middle Tennessee clinics.

Centerstone staff sort donated toys for children.



cityCURRENT Honors Centerstone

cityCURRENT, a team of 100+ Mid-South partner companies whose mission is to "Power the GOOD," selected Centerstone as its Spotlight Charity of the month. The recognition included a check to support mental health services plus the production of a Centerstone promotional video.

Centerstone's Regional CEO Dr. Bob Vero speaks to guests at a cityCURRENT event.

Honoring our Military

Centerstone's Military Services recently held a fundraiser to support aiding 2,500+ veterans, active service members and their families each year through counseling, therapeutic retreats and more. Hosts Steve and Milah Lynn welcomed guests to their home to hear messages of hope from Brigadier General Scott Brower, Amy Pass, board chair Tom Mahler and Executive Director Dr. Jodie Robison.

Dr. Jodie Robison, Amy Pass, Milah Lynn, Steve Lynn, Centerstone CEO David Guth and Wes Pass attend Centerstone's Military Services fundraiser.

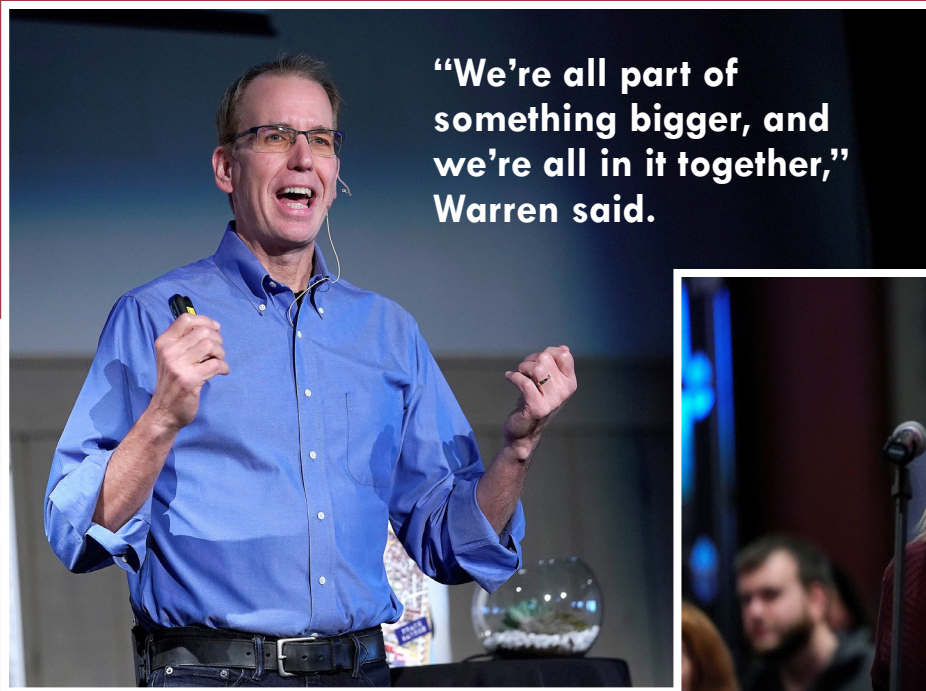


Big Payback Helps Suicide Prevention

The Big Payback, a 24-hour online giving challenge hosted by The Community Foundation to benefit nonprofits, really paid off this year. Generous donors rallied to raise \$6,795 for Centerstone suicide prevention

Centerstone employees celebrate The Big Payback.

Reclaiming Lives Events Feature PostSecret Founder Frank Warren



“We’re all part of something bigger, and we’re all in it together,” Warren said.

An audience member shares at Reclaiming Lives After Dark event



Frank Warren

Centerstone’s Foundation team recently held two fundraisers to further spread awareness of the nearly one million services Centerstone provides to approximately 70,000 people in Tennessee each year.

The fifth annual Reclaiming Lives Luncheon and inaugural Reclaiming Lives After Dark events welcomed 700 guests to hear a special presentation from PostSecret founder Frank Warren. He discussed how the PostSecret Project—people anonymously submitting personal secrets for open discussion—has created conversations around mental health issues that otherwise would not have happened.

“We’re all part of something bigger, and we’re all in it together,” Warren said.

Attendees included a range of people, from Tennessee Commissioner of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Marie Williams and Senator Bill Frist at the luncheon, to young professionals who publically “posted” secrets related to mental health at the more interactive evening event.

Other speakers included Centerstone Regional Chief Executive Officer Dr. Bob Vero, the Reverend Canon Fred Dettwiller, event co-chairs Jenny Hannon and Cindy Shafer and Centerstone board members and Reclaiming Lives Luncheon co-founders Kelly Crockett Crook and Dana Oman.

Luncheon presenting sponsors were: FirstBank, The Ayers Foundation and Stasia Obremsky and Dan Carroll. Other sponsors included: Parker Griffith Family Foundation; Fifth Third Bank; Tish and Chuck Elcan; Circa Design; Oman-Gibson Associates, LLC; Laura and Dan Hannon; James and De Thompson; Allen Printing; Alliance Bernstein Private Wealth Jay DeGeare; Ann and Tom Curtis; Bradley; Baird Wealth Management; Cahaba Wealth Management; DVL Seigenthaler; Emily and Jim Flautt; Howard and Elizabeth Lamar III; Ingram Entertainment, Inc.; Jo/Ry Candles; McDougall Associates; The Predators Foundation; Pinnacle Financial Partners; Waller; Ventas, Inc.

Table sponsors were:

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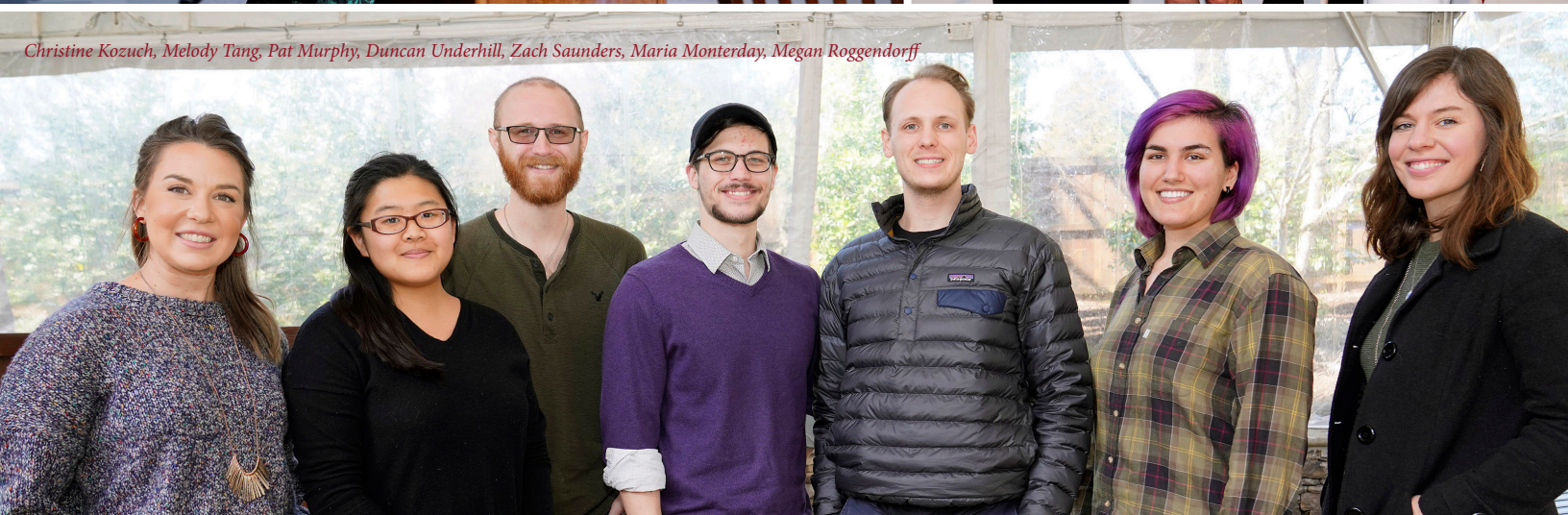
Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
Commissioner Marie Williams



Dr. Bob Vero, Jenny Hannon,
Frank Warren, Cindy Shafer



Christine Kozuch, Melody Tang, Pat Murphy, Duncan Underhill, Zach Saunders, Maria Monterday, Megan Roggendorff

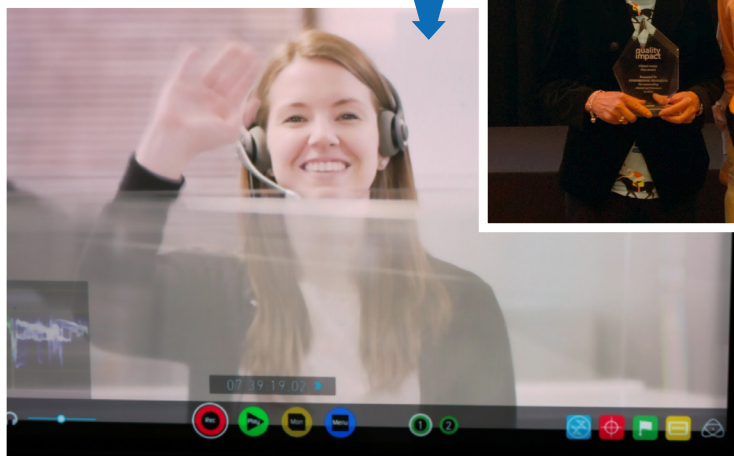


Dr. Bob Vero, Ben Menefee, Hannah Menefee Dudney, Pat Williams, Becky Stoll, Claire Stoll and Jessica Bliss attend the TAMHO Awards.



Drs. Karen Rhea and Brad Nunn display the Quality Impact award.

Centerstone's Elizabeth Holihan appears in the TDMHSAS crisis line commercial.



Centerstone Peer Coach Rosie Morton meets Governor Bill Lee at Behavioral Health Day on the Hill.



Centerstone's Career Connect team accepts the Goodwill Community Partner of the Year award.

Celebrating the TAMHO Awards

2018's Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO) Awards included special recognitions for Centerstone and its associates. Centerstone board member Albert Menefee, III was posthumously honored with the Frank G. Clement Community Service Award. Centerstone's Becky Stoll won the Dorothea Dix Professional Service Award. Nominated by Centerstone, The Tennessean won TAMHO's Media Award, recognizing its commitment to reporting on mental health.

Peer Support Team Meets Governor Lee

Centerstone Peer Support Services staff participated in advocacy efforts

at Nashville's Behavioral Health Day on the Hill. Rosie Morton, peer coach with Centerstone's PRAISE program, met Tennessee Governor Bill Lee and discussed how the service line safely supports individuals with mental illness or addiction.

Centerstone Wins Practice Transformation Honor

Centerstone won a Quality Impact award for outstanding clinical practice at the COSEHC Education Sessions & Quality Impact Practice Transformation Network Collaborative Meeting in South Carolina. We appreciate this testament to our commitment to delivering care that changes people's lives!

Commercial Features Crisis Team

Centerstone crisis care consultants were featured in a new commercial produced by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) promoting statewide crisis line services. It even aired during the GRAMMY Awards! In crisis? Call Centerstone 24/7 at (800) 681-7444.

Career Connect Wins Two Awards

Centerstone's Career Connect—free employment services for young adults who've been involved with the criminal justice system—was awarded Community Partner of the Year by Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee. Nashville Workforce Network also named Career Connect its Community Partner of the Year.



Eric Capehart (TSU), Centerstone's Meryl Taylor, Aleyda Sanchez (Central Care Counseling) and Ingrid Cockhren (ACE Nashville) discussed Race, Mental Health and Toxic Stress.



The Smith family is filmed for a story about adoption and foster care.



Becky Stoll and Fox 17's Dennis Ferrier discuss suicide prevention.



Beth Hail discusses seasonal affective disorder on NBC affiliate WSMV-TV.

Serving Refugees and Immigrants

Meryl Taylor, Centerstone Refugee and Immigrant Services coordinator, spoke at an Adverse Childhood Experiences event on Race, Mental Health and Toxic Stress. We're proud to serve refugees and immigrants in our communities.

Suicide Prevention Efforts Increase

Centerstone supports efforts to improve safety and suicide prevention measures at the Natchez Trace Parkway Bridge in Tennessee led by the Natchez Trace Bridge

Barrier Coalition. Vice President of Crisis and Disaster Management Becky Stoll spoke with WZTV Fox 17 News about mental health and the bridge where more than 30 people have died by suicide.

KidCentral TN Highlights Adoption, Foster Care

KidCentral TN, a state resource helping families raise healthy and happy children, interviewed the Smith family (featured in a previous Reclaiming Lives) about fostering and adopting older siblings through Centerstone. Adoptive father

Mark Smith also wrote an op-ed—"How Foster Parenting Changed My Life"—that was featured across the state.

Hail Provides Expert Commentary

WSMV-TV in Nashville recently called on Regional Vice President Beth Hail to discuss issues including seasonal depression and child discipline alternatives to spanking. Centerstone is always excited to provide expert commentary on mental health issues affecting our local communities. □



Suicide Prevention Takes a Village

Lacy Monday, LCSW

Suicide is the tenth leading—and still rising—cause of death in the United States.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed that suicide rates climbed in almost every state from 1999 to 2016, with increases above 30 percent in 25 states. Those numbers, along with the widely reported suicide deaths of celebrities from chef Anthony Bourdain to designer Kate Spade, have kept this epidemic in the headlines. But how do we begin to effectively reduce suicide in our country?

To borrow a well-worn but no less accurate phrase, it takes a village. In the same way that “all hands on deck” were required to bring awareness and change to major present day issues like smoking hazards, seatbelt safety or HIV transmission, we must take a robust community approach to suicide prevention.

Here are three areas where increased suicide prevention awareness can lead to sustainable change.

Mental Health First Aid

People are commonly taught the life-saving basics of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or what to do when someone suffers a serious cut or concussion. But what about a crisis of the mind?

Like a traditional first aid class, Mental Health First Aid teaches participants how to identify when someone may be experiencing a mental health emergency and how to help that person. One-day classes (available through Centerstone) include discussions on recognizing symptoms of depression, anxiety, psychosis and addiction, then determining the right way to assist. It’s a training everyone should have.

Primary Health Care Checkpoints

The SAMHSA-HRSA Center for Integrated Health Solutions reports “up to 45 percent of individuals who die by suicide have visited their primary care physician within a month of their death.” By partnering with behavioral health providers to establish a systematic, checkpoint approach to suicide prevention that closes gaps in patient care, lives can be saved.

Community Engagement

Suicide rates will decrease through greater community involvement. Employers can help destigmatize mental health issues through Employee Assistance Programs that link staff to available resources. School systems can more purposefully add suicide prevention education into their health curriculum. Churches and other faith-based organizations can host support groups and behavioral wellness classes through the local branches of associations like the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

Finally, some bright news in suicide prevention awareness is that more people are recognizing their need for help. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline saw a record-setting 65 percent call increase in the days immediately following the tragic news of Bourdain and Spade. Reaching out in a time of need shows strength.

Help is available via Centerstone’s 24-hour crisis hotline at (800) 681-7444. □

Lacy Monday, LCSW, is director of Crisis Care Services for Centerstone.



Preventing and Healing Childhood Trauma

Dr. Bob Vero

Evidence shows children who experience traumatic events have a higher incidence of physical, mental, economic and social challenges as they age. Societal issues stemming from childhood trauma are now so pervasive that policymakers are taking note.

I'm heartened that Nashville Mayor David Briley recently declared an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Awareness Day for the city. It's an important recognition for many Tennesseans, one that moves us a step closer to preventing childhood trauma while also helping individuals and communities heal past hurts and successfully reclaim their futures.

Adverse Childhood Experiences, commonly referred to as ACEs, are traumatic childhood events like physical and emotional abuse or neglect, sexual abuse and family issues, including mental illness, addiction, divorce and incarceration. Being impacted by poverty, racism and bullying qualify as ACEs, too.

When ignored, ACEs can lead to a toxic stress response that puts the body's stress systems on constant "high alert." Without a safe,

stable, nurturing adult around to help buffer the impact, toxic stress can negatively impact brain development and factor into a wide range of current and future physical and behavioral health problems.

The Sycamore Institute reports nearly 60% of Tennesseans have experienced one or more ACEs. In one year, that had a \$5 billion impact on our state economy through medical costs and lost workplace productivity.

Fortunately, there is growing recognition—and action—to address adverse childhood experiences.

Collaborations like All Children Excel (ACE) Nashville facilitate partnerships among providers, caregivers and the community to help prevent and reduce the impact of ACEs and improve community health. Increased collaboration and awareness drives discussion, action and positive change.

Building Strong Brains Tennessee is a statewide initiative to create culture change so that the state's overarching philosophy, policies, programs and practices focus on utilizing the latest brain science to prevent and mitigate the impact of ACEs.

At Centerstone, we know focused prevention of ACEs is crucial. Our Early Childhood Services team works with expectant parents to reduce toxic stress during pregnancy and teach bonding techniques that will boost their baby's brain development. Other related services include postpartum depression treatment, family therapy and fatherhood engagement plans.

Where the impact of ACEs is already present, the next best step is trauma-informed care that begins to heal the pain of childhood adversity. It starts not by asking an individual, "What's wrong with you?" but rather "What happened to you?" In Centerstone's services to incarcerated parents, taking that approach while teaching mindfulness and other therapeutic coping techniques is resulting in positive, hopeful outcomes.

I hope every Tennessean will commit to recognizing ACEs and countering childhood trauma. Find a local ACEs education event through the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (tn.gov/tccy). Look for everyday ways to build resilience and recovery capital in the children you encounter. Investing in kids and being a positive role model guides them and our entire state toward greater success and wellbeing. ☐

Dr. Bob Vero serves as the Centerstone Regional CEO, Tennessee and Georgia.



Dan Mansfield is the Clinic Manager and a Therapist at Centerstone in Tullahoma, Tennessee. He studied psychology at the University of Michigan and completed a Master of Arts in marriage and family therapy at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Dan worked for years as a youth pastor and then with troubled teens at a therapeutic boarding school. Mansfield says joining Centerstone has given him the opportunity to expand his clinical care repertoire and serve in various leadership roles.

Why do you choose to work at Centerstone?

Centerstone has helped me grow as a therapist, supervisor, leader and person. Starting out, I was able to hone my skills as a therapist working with children, adolescents and their families while also being given the opportunity to become Clinic Manager. Centerstone also supported me in becoming an American Association for Marriage and Family approved supervisor. As a result, I've supervised many interns and therapists working toward licensure. Finally, I've been given the opportunity to serve in multiple projects, which has led to the improvement of our service delivery.

What is the most significant recent advancement you have witnessed in mental health?

The partnering of mental health treatment with technology. I believe that in the next 5-10 years, Centerstone will see a substantial

upsurge in the use of app-based interventions, monitoring the quality of treatment delivery, and even ways to track and anticipate changes to our clients' symptoms.

Tell me about your family.

I met my lovely, talented wife Jill while serving with her in youth ministry. She has her own photography business, and we have a beautiful teenage daughter, Chloe. The three of us teach Second Grade Sunday School together, and we enjoy spending time with our dog, a Siberian husky named Willow.

What do you do in your spare time?

I enjoy landscaping and gardening, hunting and fishing, playing video games and woodworking projects. I am also a huge fan of The Walking Dead!

What would people be surprised to learn about you?

I lettered in cross-country and golf in high school, played alto

saxophone in the Michigan Marching Band, and I am an Eagle Scout.

What's a piece of advice that you've found useful over the years?

My father would always say, "If a job is worth doing, it's worth doing right the first time."

Describe an ideal day off.

I would wake up early but feel well rested. As my family slept in, I would quietly work in the garden and spend time in prayer. Then, my family and I would have breakfast together on the back patio, followed by a long hike through the woods and an afternoon picnic.

What's on your bucket list?

I would love to establish my golf handicap and play The Old Course in St. Andrews, Scotland. I walked that course once in college, but to play The Birthplace O' Golf would be tremendous. □



Mandi Ryan, Director of Healthcare Innovation, leads a presentation on Health Homes.



Centerstone's Ashleigh Hall, comic book superhero Spark, and Ian Skotte

NatCon Features Centerstone Presenters

More than 5,000 behavioral healthcare professional from around the country gathered in Nashville recently for NatCon, the National Council for Behavioral Health's largest annual conference. Events included dynamic presentations by 12 Centerstone experts from across our national organization.

Chief Executive Officer David Guth spoke about how to create and grow community behavioral health systems. On the main stage, he discussed the progress and future of mental health treatments and called on every industry member there to join the effort to help change history for those in need.

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Karen Rhea, along with Mindy Olivarez from QualityImpact Practice Transformation Network, led participants through an interactive presentation on how to improve clinical care through innovative partnerships.

Becky Stoll, Vice President for Crisis and Disaster Management, was part of two panel discussions about suicide prevention and shared insights about the Zero Suicide model, best practices and evolving standards of suicide care.

Mandi Ryan, Director of Healthcare Innovation, led an interactive presentation entitled "Health Homes: Delivering Care That Changes People's Lives" discussing strategies to improve gaps between physical and mental care.

Marketing Coordinator Ashleigh Hall brought a spark of creativity to NatCon, delivering a fun TED talk about how the Centerstone Comics series was developed through our Prevention Services.

Other presenters from across Centerstone's enterprise included Vice President of Payer Contracting & Strategy Dawn Kingsley, Vice President of Business & Service Development Jan Goodson, Director of Business Development Kimberly Brothers, Children's Department Manager Kristine Nunn, Systems of Care Coordinator Lisa Felsman and Clinical Managers Lynda Killoran, LCPC, and Debbie Thomas, MSW. □

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CATCHING UP WITH CENTERSTONE COMICS



Centerstone has released its fifth superhero-themed comic book for teens. *Spark: Rising from the Ashes* addresses the crucial topics of depression and suicide prevention among today's youth. It has also won a gold Aster Award for excellence in healthcare advertising.

"Depression and suicidal thoughts are among the most prominent mental health issues kids face today," says Ashleigh Hall, a Certified Prevention Specialist from Centerstone. "This new comic featuring our superhero Spark presents a creative way to spark conversations around those tough topics."

Previous Centerstone Comics have dealt with other relevant issues adolescents face, such as bullying, sexting, underage drinking and online safety. The sixth comic book will address counterfeit prescription drugs and healthy decision making for teens.

You can read all of our comics at centerstonecomics.org.