



The Mental Health Association in Niagara County, Inc.
Pamela Szalay, Director Community Education and Referral
433-3780, ext. 312
pszalay@mhanc.com

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MHA IN NIAGARA COUNTY CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

This May marks a milestone for the Mental Health Association in Niagara County (MHA): they are celebrating 50 years of service to the community of Niagara County. MHA invites the public to join them in celebration at a reception on May 13th, from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m., at the Tuscarora Inn on Walnut Street in Lockport. The evening will feature hors d'oeuvres, live music, cash bar, a short ceremony and the opportunity to meet our staff and Board of Directors. Tickets are \$25, and the MHA requests an RSVP by May 6th.

During the past 50 years, many changes have taken place concerning those with a mental illness and those who provide care for them. In the early 1960's, there were more than 500,000 individuals locked up in mental institutions throughout America. Because of several changes in mental health and labor laws many doors to asylums were closed leaving thousands of individuals on their own, many for the first time in their lives. Many had no family or friends to turn to. Some wandered and found themselves in homeless shelters, nursing homes, on the streets, and in many instances, in the judicial system.

The MHA has worked diligently to provide the best services available for those with a mental illness, even extending support services to their families. Last year alone, the MHA served more than 98,000 people through their programs and services, including Compeer, In-Home-Respite, various support groups, our information and referral services, educational presentations and trainings, and online resources including our website, Twitter and Facebook pages.

They are proud to be a Peer-Led Agency with an open door policy. Most services are free of charge and every effort is made to go where services are needed. Presentations are provided on the topics of anger management, domestic violence, self-esteem, bullying, suicide prevention, healthy living and much more. These presentations can be scaled to reach individuals as well as larger groups.

The MHA seeks to have the most accurate, up-to-date, professional information and referral program available. Since 1981, the MHA has published and distributed tens-of-thousands of Help Books, a pocket-sized directory of community services now in its 28th edition. Together with the Help Line and website, and through its partnership with the Niagara County Department of Mental Health, the MHA is able to offer information and referral 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.

MHA is very fortunate to receive funding through the United Way of Greater Niagara, the United Way of the Tonawanda's, the Niagara County Department of Mental Health, private donations, membership fees and grants. MHA looks forward to continuing to provide essential programs and services to Niagara County residents for many more years.

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