

- Convened the National Leadership Conference on Action for Mental Health. (1962)
- Supported passage of the "Community Mental Health Centers Act" which called for deinstitutionalization and increased community services. (1963)
- Advocated for inclusion of mandated mental illness services in Medicare. (1966)
- Successfully demanded that a "Have you ever been mentally ill?" question be removed from federal government employment forms. (1974)
- Helped to form the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD), a foundation following year, a group of Indianapolis citizens organized the first chapter of the State Society. The first board of directors was made up of the Mental Health Committee of what is now known as the Apartment Living Program for long-term mentally disabled adults was another first in the Association's thrust to serve. It was designed to prevent the re-institutionalization of an at-risk group of patients who sometimes were discharged from state hospitals without full community support services. The program operated apartments, which were usually shared by two or more individuals, and provided case management services. The apartment living program was discontinued in 1989.
- Played a leading role in the development of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which protects mentally and physically disabled citizens living in rural areas. (1987)
- Organized the National Action Commission on the Mental Health of Rural Americans regarding the delivery of mental health services to leaders already were overburdened with several problems. Many community citizens living in rural areas. (1987)
- In conjunction with the Congressional Black Caucus and the National Institute of Mental Health, organized the first comprehensive conference on Mental Illness in Black America. (1994)
- Helped secure passage of the "Mental Health Parity Act," the first federal legislation to bring more equity to health insurance coverage of mental health care and implementation of parity in mental health insurance coverage for 9 million federal workers and their families. (1996-1998)
- Participated in the first-ever White House Conference on Mental Health. (1999)

During the first year of its existence, the newborn Association made progress in spite of the fact that its members were salting on an uncharted sea. There were Rural Americans regarding the delivery of mental health services to citizens living in rural areas. (1987)

At the local level, Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis celebrates 60 years of serving the Greater Indianapolis community. MHAGI's foundation started in 1948, when the Mental Hygiene Society of Indiana was reorganized. The citizens organized the first chapter of the State Society. The first board of directors was made up of the Mental Health Committee of what is now known as the Apartment Living Program for long-term mentally disabled adults was another first in the Association's thrust to serve. It was designed to prevent the re-institutionalization of an at-risk group of patients who sometimes were discharged from state hospitals without full community support services. The program operated apartments, which were usually shared by two or more individuals, and provided case management services. The apartment living program was discontinued in 1989.

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One-to-One volunteer service. The annual Christmas Gift Lift program, continuing today, was initiated in 1950. Public programs, workshops and the dissemination of information about mental health and illness began reaching more people than ever before.

Gateways, a pioneer rehabilitation residence for discharged women patients, was started in 1958 as the Association's response to serve an increasing number of people being discharged from state hospitals as a result of the advent of psychotropic medications. Association programs expanded with the opening of a men's halfway house, Ferriday House, in 1967. The group homes program continued for fifty years, closing in 2008.

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In 1963, additional impetus in the fight against mental illness came about through far-reaching federal legislation following the report of the Congressional Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health. As a result, community mental health centers were established throughout the nation and state. Four such centers serve Marion County residents – Gallahue, Behavior Corp, Midtown, and Adult & Child. Twenty-six additional centers cover the state's total population.

In 1998, the Association spurred a collaborative effort to organize Families Reaching for Rainbows – a project that supports all caregivers who care for youth in the Dawn Project (a local system of care program) with serious behavioral, emotional or mental health issues. The program was later turned over to Choices, Inc. for ongoing facilitation and management, and continues today.

Celebrate the New Year – Volunteer!

Volunteer programs are like individuals: they need a new starting point from time to time. It is a tradition to make the start of the new year a time to make renewed efforts to a desired goal. Volunteer programs can take advantage of this useful date on the calendar just like individuals can. In addition, Prevention Magazine reports studies show that people who volunteer 1 to 2 hours per week are healthier, live longer, and are more satisfied with their lives, compared to nonvolunteers. Check out MHAGI's volunteer opportunities below to see which ones would be a good fit for you.

Crisis & Suicide Intervention Service – Volunteers are needed to take calls from individuals in crisis in the comfort and convenience of the volunteers' own homes. Availability on weekends and/or overnights preferred. Extensive training is provided. Must commit to six hours a week for one year.

Guardianship Program – MHAGI is currently responsible for the health care and medical decisions for over 50 persons with a mental illness or developmental disability. These individuals have no family or the family is unable to take that responsibility. Volunteers make visits to clients (once a month or more often if desired) to ensure that they are receiving proper care in nursing homes or other supervised care facilities.

Community & Corporate Health Fairs - MHAGI participates in numerous community and corporate health fairs throughout the year. Volunteers can assist with health fairs by staffing the table and providing mental health related information to attendees.

Speaker's Bureau - Our speaker's bureau consists of consumers, parents and family members of consumers, and mental health professionals.

Gift Lift - During the Christmas season, MHAGI provides gifts to clients who suffer from mental illness served by our programs. Volunteers are needed to sort through donations, wrap gifts, deliver gifts, and donate money or gifts.

Events – Volunteers are needed to help with various events.

Office Help – Periodically, MHAGI needs help with mailings, data input, word processing, and other clerical duties.

For more information, call our offices at 251-0005.

Our Town began providing services in 2004 in partnership with Community Health Network's Gallahue Mental Health Services as a community-based mental health services program supporting young adults ages 17 to 25 with serious mental illness. In June 2007, MHAGI transferred operation of the Our Town program over to Gallahue Mental Health Services.

Over time we have seen the reduction in the numbers of patients in state hospitals and state hospital closures after a century of every-increasing hospital populations. We have seen more modern commitment to mental health services.

Today, one out of four people will suffer from some form of mental illness. Fifty million people suffer Clinical Depression and 20 million children suffer mental or emotional illness. Sixty percent of all hospital beds are occupied by people who have suffered from a stress-related physical illness.

Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis looks forward to serving the community for another 60 years. And our message is simple: Good mental health is fundamental to the health and well-being of every person and of the nation as a whole.

The picture has changed radically over the years, yet there is no time to rest. Today, one out of four people will suffer from some form of mental illness. Fifty million people suffer Clinical Depression and 20 million children suffer mental or emotional illness. Sixty percent of all hospital beds are occupied by people who have suffered from a stress-related physical illness.

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Save-the-Date MHAGI events for 2009

June 10-13, Washington D.C.
Mental Health America Centennial Conference

July 29
Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis Annual Meeting

September 21, Brickyard Crossing Golf Course
5th Annual Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis Golf Classic

December 16
Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis Give-A-Wrap

MHAGI Staff

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Gina Brooks

Chief Operating Officer
Mark Rozales

Chief Financial Officer
Robin Disney

Other Management Staff:

Director, Education & Public Affairs
Joe Bartholomew

Director, Crisis & Suicide Intervention
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Coordinator, Adult Guardianship Service
Rosie Carney

Coordinator, Adult Guardianship Service
Anne Myers

Mental Health Liaison – Court 8
Lee Ann Jordan

Mental Health Liaison – Community Corrections & PAIR
Brandy McCord

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Letter from the CEO

Happy New Year!

It always seems fresh to start anew. I think that's part of the appeal of the New Year's holiday for me. Whatever losses or disappointments have occurred in the year can be erased and the promise of a new day creates a renewed energy and passion.

The nation has had its challenges recently, and as we continue to find our path through the economy, the war, the gas prices, and the gray days of an Indiana winter, I implore you to take care of your personal needs and health. It is easy to get caught up each day in what needs to be done. It is easy to turn on the news in the morning or evening and let it dictate your mood. It is easy to think that whatever situation we are in or facing may never end. But we all know that nothing ever stays the same and if you can be sure of one thing, it is that things will change! Live in the moment, love in the moment, laugh in the moment. And if you start to wonder if life as you know it will cease... consider this quote from Peanuts' cartoonist Charles Schultz, "Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It's already tomorrow in Australia."

May peace, health, and friendship be yours this year,

Gina Brooks

Gina Brooks
Chief Executive Officer.



Mental Health America Celebrates 100 Years of Mental Health Advocacy and Support

Mental Health America has announced the launch of its Centennial Year "Celebrating the Legacy, Forging the Future." The 100-year history of Mental Health America is the remarkable story of one person who turned a personal struggle with mental illness into a national movement and of the millions of others who came together to fulfill his vision.

Founded in 1909 by Clifford W. Beers, a young businessman who experienced firsthand the treatment of individuals with mental illness, Mental Health America and its over 300 affiliates nationwide have a 100-year record of achievement advancing the cause of people with mental health issues. The National Committee for Mental Hygiene, as it was called in the early years, was the first association of its kind and the beginning of the organized mental health movement in America.

"Our groundbreaking work has transformed how the country approaches mental health care," said David L. Shern, Ph.D., president and CEO of Mental Health America. "The recent passage of mental health parity is a milestone that builds on our history of advocacy. Now we must move on other fronts so the nation approaches the issue of mental health with the same urgency as other health problems. Good mental health is fundamental to the health and well-being of every person and of the nation as a whole."

Mental Health America will continue its vital work into a new century to end discrimination against persons with mental illnesses, increase research into the causes and cures of mental illnesses and expand access to effective, high quality treatment and prevention programming.

The year-long anniversary will recognize major accomplishments, highlight the organization's continuing work and focus on the challenges and needs of Americans with mental health and substance use conditions.

Over the course of a century, Mental Health America led the way on major advancements and improvements in research, prevention, and treatment surrounding mental health care.

Major accomplishments include:

- Convened the First International Congress on Mental Hygiene in Washington D.C. (1930)
- Advocated for passage of the "National Mental Health Act," which created the National Institute of Mental Health. (1946)
- Launched Mental Health Week (which eventually became May is Mental Health Month) with the Jaycees to educate Americans about mental illness and mental health. (1949)
- Commissioned the casting of the Mental Health Bell from chains and shackles that restrained people with mental illnesses in decades past. (1953)

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**Gift Lift 2008
Provided Holiday Warmth!**



2008's Gift Lift was another huge success this year. Gift Lift received over 500 gifts from people in the community to provide holiday warmth to those with

mental illness served by MHAGI programs, Gallahue Mental Health Center, and Midtown Community Mental Health Center. Special thanks go out to Brenda Creech and Colleen Parker who donated their time and

coordinated the Gift Lift at their respective Eli Lilly locations. In addition, MHAGI would like to thank all Eli Lilly employees and other

community members who participated in this year's Gift Lift by donating gifts for the individuals served. Lastly, MHAGI would also like to thank all the volunteers in the community who donated their time to wrap the donated gifts at our annual Give-A-Wrap celebration, the time shared in "giving back" was what the season was all about.



Class Uses Yoga to Balance Life's Stress

It may seem that there's nothing you can do about your stress level. The bills aren't going to stop coming, there will never be more hours in the day for all your errands, and your career or family responsibilities will always be demanding. But you have a lot more control than you might think. In fact, the simple realization that you're in control of your life is the foundation of stress management.

Take control of your life and make a commitment to become healthy physically and mentally in 2009. Start by having MHAGI complete a workshop for your group. The workshop is one full hour with the first 30 minutes focusing on stress management strategies and techniques and the last half consisting of a 30 minute yoga session. The yoga session is facilitated by a registered yoga instructor and most of the yoga is done while sitting or standing.

Managing stress is all about taking charge: taking charge of your thoughts, your emotions, your schedule, your environment, and the way you deal with problems. The ultimate goal is a balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation, and fun – plus the resilience to hold up under pressure and meet challenges head on.



Yoga's effects on the body: The following is only a partial list of yoga's benefits:

- ~ sound sleep
- ~ lower heart rate
- ~ reduced stress
- ~ reduced anxiety and muscle tension
- ~ reduced cortisol levels
- ~ increased strength and flexibility
- ~ lower blood pressure
- ~ sense of well-being
- ~ slowed aging process

For information about workshop fees or to schedule your groups' stress management and yoga workshop contact Joe Bartholomew at jbartholomew@mhaindy.net or call (317) 251-0005.

**Two Foundations Provide
New Support for Guardians**

Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis announces it is the recipient of a \$5,000 grant from the Rotary Foundation of Indianapolis, Inc. and a \$10,000 grant from the Carl R. Hendrickson Family Foundation.

Both grants will support Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis' Adult Guardianship Services. The Program provides guardianship of a person who has been judged unable to manage his/her own affairs due to a disability which causes incapacity and loss of the ability to make sound decisions.

Once a court awards guardianship to the organization, the Guardian is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to make emergency decisions for the protected person following the standards of practice by the National Guardianship Association. The Guardian makes monthly visits to the client, attends any meetings relevant to care decisions, ensures that all of the individual's physical, mental, and spiritual needs are being met, and makes the appropriate connections to obtain services for the individual as needed.

Finding Your Balance for the New Year

Some people, by nature, are goal-setters. So it seems New Year's resolutions were made for people like them. However, timing life-changes, health-improvement efforts with the turning of the calendar doesn't appeal to their opposites.

Yet many people will admit that they love the energy of change that accompanies each new year. The gym is packed, the self-help books fly off the shelves, TV shows abound focus on it, and much of the talk around the work place break room is about what people are doing differently for the new year. We are essentially the same, but the new date brings, for some reason, a new attitude. However, a month or two into the new year that old nemesis stress seeps back into our lives and causes upheaval with our work and home lives. Let's nip it in the bud and find the balance in life, work, and home, right now. Think about these practical steps and keep the balance in your life for 2009. Read on and reap the benefits.

At Work

Set manageable goals each day. Being able to meet priorities helps us feel a sense of accomplishment and control. The latest research shows that the more control we have over our work, the less stressed we get. So be realistic about workloads and deadlines. Make a "to do" list, and take care of important tasks first and eliminate unessential ones. Ask for help when necessary.

Be efficient with your time at work. When we procrastinate, the task often grows in our minds until it seems insurmountable. So when you face a big project at work or home, start by dividing it into smaller tasks. Complete the first one before moving on to the next. Give yourself small rewards upon each completion, whether it's a five minute break or a walk to the coffee shop. If you feel overwhelmed by routines that seem unnecessary, tell your boss. The less time you spend doing busy work or procrastinating, the more time you can spend productively, or with friends or family.

Ask for flexibility. Flex time and telecommuting are quickly becoming established as necessities in today's business world, and many companies are drafting work/life policies. If you ask, they might allow you to work flexible hours or from home a day a week. Research shows that employees who work flexible schedules are more productive and loyal to their employers.

Take five. Taking a break at work isn't only acceptable, it's often encouraged by many employers. Small breaks at work—or on any project—will help clear your head, and improve your ability to deal with stress and make good decisions when you jump back into the grind.

Tune in. Listen to your favorite music at work to foster concentration, reduce stress and anxiety, and stimulate creativity. Studies dating back more than 30 years show the benefits of music in everyday life, including lowered blood pressure. Be sure to wear headphones on the job, and then pump up the volume—and your productivity.



Communicate effectively. Be honest with colleagues or your boss when you feel you're in a bind. Chances are, you're not alone. But don't just complain—suggest practical alternatives. Looking at a situation from someone else's viewpoint can also reduce your stress. In a tense situation, either rethink your strategy or stand your ground, calmly and rationally. Make allowances for other opinions, and compromise. Retreat before you lose control, and allow time for all involved to cool off. You'll be better equipped to handle the problem constructively later.

Give yourself a break. No one's perfect! Allow yourself to be human and just do the best you can.

At Home

Turn off your PDA. The same technology that makes it so easy for workers to do their jobs flexibly can also burn us out if we use them 24/7. By all means, make yourself available—especially if you've earned the right to "flex" your hours—but recognize the need for personal time, too.

Divide and conquer. Make sure responsibilities at home are evenly distributed and clearly outlined—you'll avoid confusion and problems later.

Don't over commit. Do you feel stressed when you just glance at your calendar? If you're overscheduled with activities, learn to say, "no." Shed the superman/superwoman urge!

Get support. Chatting with friends and family can be important to your success at home—or at work—and can even improve your health. People with stronger support systems have more aggressive immune responses to illnesses than those who lack such support.

Take advantage of your company's Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Many organizations offer resources through an EAP, which can save you precious time by providing guidance on issues like where to find a daycare center and caretaking for an elderly parent, as well as referrals to mental health and other services.

Stay active. Aside from its well-known physical benefits, regular exercise reduces stress, depression and anxiety, and enables people to better cope with adversity, according to researchers. It'll also boost your immune system and keep you out of the doctor's office. Make time in your schedule for

the gym or to take a walk during lunch—and have some fun!

Treat your body right. Being in good shape physically increases your tolerance to stress and reduces sick days. Eat right, exercise and get adequate rest. Don't rely on drugs, alcohol or cigarettes to cope with stress; they'll only lead to more problems.

Get help if you need it. Don't let stress stand in the way of your health and happiness. If you are persistently overwhelmed, it may be time to seek help from a mental health professional. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness—taking care of yourself is a sign of strength.