



The Newsletter of David Lawrence Center CENTERED

50 Years of Mental Health & Addiction Recovery

WE'VE STILL GOT SOME WORK TO DO



Scott Burgess and Austin Eubanks

From the CEO *Scott Burgess*

Our nation has observed **Mental Health Awareness Month** every May since 1949. The good news is that we've made a *lot* of progress in those 70 years. The topic of mental health – once completely hidden in the shadows – is now much more out in the open, and there's less shame and stigma.

But there's still a *long* way to go. As a whole, we still view mental health as something "other" than our physical health. We'll openly talk about a stomach virus or seasonal allergies, but we tend to be silent about about mental health and addiction challenges.

DLC, in conjunction with our partners, took the lead in keeping the conversation about these topics going with a few recent initiatives.

"My hope and prayer is that someday, we won't need to designate a month every year to focus on mental health awareness, but that it will be a topic that's just a part of our normal, everyday conversations. But we're not there yet."

– SCOTT BURGESS, DLC CEO

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In March, at our **6th Annual Sound Minds Mental Health Symposium**, keynote speaker Austin Eubanks shared his compelling story of opioid addiction and recovery. Austin was a survivor of the 1999 Columbine High School shootings, and turned to drugs to numb his emotional pain. Speaking to a packed house, Austin's main message was simple: "You have to feel it to heal it." By that, he meant we can't just anesthetize our emotional pain with substances, but instead, we need to deal with it head-on – often with the help of mental health professionals. We are blessed to have a team at DLC that is superb at helping people deal with and recover from many differing forms of trauma.

On another front, we're partnering with Collier County Public Schools (CCPS) on their **Grit & Resilience** initiative, which is designed to better equip today's youth and their parents with the tools they need to cope with life's difficulties. (Learn more at collierschools.com/grit.)

Finally, through our **#StandUp** campaign, we are working to raise greater awareness for children's mental health. During May, we invite you **#StandUp** and join us in this effort by visiting **StandUpDLC.org**, where you will find videos, resources and articles, plus opportunities to get involved. You can also request a free **#StandUp** wristband, or purchase a **#StandUp** shirt – with a portion of the proceeds going toward our mission.

Please join us this month in helping to foster discussions about mental health with your family and friends. As you grow more comfortable talking about such things, so will they. Awareness will spread, and the stigma will diminish. Let's mobilize this mission together.



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MISSION

Restoring and rebuilding lives by providing compassionate, advanced and exceptional mental health, substance use treatment and integrated healthcare solutions, available to all.

VISION

To lead the way in transformational care so every individual assisted can achieve what is possible.

David Lawrence Center is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization and is accredited by The Joint Commission. The Center is funded in part by the State of Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Collier County Department of Housing, Human and Veteran Services, and private donations made through fundraising efforts.

WHAT'S NEW

Meet DLC's Three New Board Members

All three of DLC's new board members have been personally touched by mental health and/or addiction issues in one way or another. Here's a closer look at our three newest board members:

Karen Mosteller, CPA, CHBC



Mosteller knows the pain of a parent who just wants the best for a struggling child. "I am always looking for ways to help my daughter, and

how to do or say the right things," she says. "As a family, we have had difficult times, and years. If David Lawrence Center can help one family not have to go through what we are going through, I want to be a part of that."

A CPA and a Certified Healthcare Business Consultant, Mosteller says David Lawrence Center's board is "a good fit for me. I will be able to offer my skills not only on the financial end, but also in strategic business planning and consulting. My strength is helping my clients run their businesses. I hope to be able to offer that to DLC."

Mosteller has been married for 25 years "to my best friend," Chip Mosteller. They have two children – Jordan (29) and Jessica (22). They are members of Our Savior Lutheran Church.

Chris Vernon, Esq.



Vernon says he's impressed by David Lawrence Center's "breadth and depth of the services, its evidence-based decision-making approach, and how effectively

and efficiently it is operated."

A partner at Vernon Litigation Group, he believes his experience as an attorney

who has spent time in hearing rooms and board rooms will be helpful to David Lawrence Center.

"David Lawrence Center is a very significant and very effective part of the effort to address mental health issues in Collier County," says Vernon.

"I believe my background and experience in litigation as well as conflict management and resolution put me in a position to add value to the Center."

Vernon and his wife have two teenage daughters who were born and raised in Naples, and both attend Gulf Coast High School.

Laird Grant Groody



Groody says she has seen the toll that mental illness and addictions can take on a family, adding that "early identification and treatment can mitigate some

of the chaos, and David Lawrence Center certainly is at the forefront of both."

She adds that she is "most impressed with the professionalism at David Lawrence Center. They provide a range of critical services with limited resources. David Lawrence Center is very creative in providing the services the community needs and teaming with other service organizations to leverage better outcomes for their patients."

Following a career in the investment world, primarily at U.S. Trust, Groody retired in 2008. Since then, she focused more on direct service volunteer work with Planned Parenthood and the Shelter for Abused Women and Children. She also served on the board of the Community Foundation of Collier County from 2014 to 2017, where she's still on the emeritus board.

With her financial background, Groody says she can help David Lawrence Center on that front as needed.

SUCCESS STORY

Ignoring the Pain

By Tom

My troubles started when my father left our family, leaving my mom to raise my older brother and me. I loved my mom, but I missed having a dad.

I was a typical teenager, getting into trouble on occasion, dabbling in drugs and alcohol, but nothing serious. My life took a terrible turn in 1995, when I was 23. My brother was killed in a car crash, then my grandfather (my mom's dad) died. Mom was on the verge of falling apart, so I felt like I had to be strong for her. I invested all my energy in making her life easier... but I didn't take care of myself.

I never took the time to process my own emotions after my brother's death; I just bottled everything up inside. Drugs helped. Heroin became my friend. I loved how it took me to places where I didn't have to feel anything. I was addicted on and off for years.

Things got better when I met Victoria. She was a single mom with two kids. We got married in 2000, and had a couple kids of our own, and life was going fairly well for a while until between 2011 and 2015. I lost an aunt, an uncle, a stepfather, and a grandmother. While I was trying to stay strong for Mom, Victoria got terminal cancer in 2014.

I dove deep into "Tom the Protector" mode. We tried every kind of treatment available, and by early 2016, her cancer was actually in remission. But in July 2016, we were in a car accident, and Victoria took the brunt of it – with a cracked skull, broken ribs, punctured lungs, and lacerated

spleen. Her body had been so ravaged by the cancer treatments that it was just too much. Victoria died October 25, 2016.

For a while, I tried to be strong for my kids. But after



"David Lawrence Center gave me my life back. I've been sober for four years, and I'm able to express my feelings now. I'm fully recovered, and I'm so grateful."

– TOM, DLC CLIENT

barely making it through Christmas 2016, I couldn't handle it emotionally any more. The next day, I took a bunch of Victoria's old pills. I wanted to die and join her in heaven.

When I woke up the next day, I was angry at first. But then I had a moment of clarity, and I realized God had woken me up for a reason – to be there for my kids.

I ended up at DLC. Their Traumatic Incident Reduction therapy program was literally a lifesaver for me. I finally dealt with all the pain of my past – peeling back the layers one at a time, like an onion. It was so hard, but so worth it.

Supporters like you make success stories like Tom's possible. Thank you for your support!

CELEBRATION RECEPTION

Three Local Leaders Honored at DLC's Celebration Reception

DLC recently celebrated the success of another season in Naples with a reception at Naples Grande that honored three special individuals and businesses for their support of mental health. The reception was also an opportunity for DLC to thank donors, advocates, and friends for their continued support throughout the year.

About the Honorees:

Cummings & Lockwood, LLC, Partner of the Year.

Cummings & Lockwood has been a steadfast supporter of DLC for over 13 years. Through their partnership, they've helped further the conversation on the importance of mental health and substance use services in our community. In addition to their financial contributions to a variety of DLC fundraisers, they allow their expert staff to serve in leadership capacities on the Center's various boards and committees.

Lavern Gaynor, Stand-Up Award.

Gaynor was honored for her passion to bring awareness to adolescent mental health, in particular, for her support of DLC's efforts to provide early identification of at-risk children and community collaborations that increase access to services.



Scott Burgess, Mary Beth Crauford, Lavern Gaynor, Honorable Janeice Martin

Honorable Janeice Martin, Advocate of the Year.

Judge Martin was honored for her role in advocating for the needs of those struggling with mental health and addiction who have faced legal challenges as a result of their illness.

THANK YOU TO OUR MEDIA SPONSOR:

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ISSUES & ANSWERS

Teen Vaping on the Rise

The nationwide epidemic has hit home in Collier County schools.

Just a few years ago, most middle- and high-school students had never even heard of “vaping” – the smoking of e-cigarettes. Electronic cigarettes are handheld devices that heat a liquid solution that usually contains nicotine into an inhalable vapor. Since the devices are easily hidden and since the practice doesn’t leave the smoky smell, it’s easy to hide. One vaping cartridge contains as much nicotine as a full pack of 20 cigarettes, and some students are vaping that much nicotine per day.

While cigarette smoking continues a steady decline among students (the annual Florida Youth Tobacco Survey shows a 64 percent decline among students ages 11 to 17 from 2012 to 2018), vaping is fast rising in popularity... and at an alarming rate. For example, during the same period from 2012 to 2018, there’s been a 361 percent increase.

These statistics reflect a nationwide problem. “What we’re seeing in Collier County mirrors the national epidemic of vaping,” says Chad Oliver, Collier County Public Schools (CCPS) Executive Director of Communication and Community Engagement.

At the start of the school year, CCPS sent an email to all parents of middle- and high-school students, “explaining the dangers of vaping and ways that parents can be alert and proactive,” says Oliver. The district is also planning to show a Public Service Announcement video to its students, demonstrating the dangers of vaping, along with the consequences if they are caught – which range from a five-day

suspension for first-time offenders to felony arrest for those who vape THC (the chemical in marijuana that causes a person to get high).

Much like cigarettes were a generation ago, vaping is now considered a way to be “cool” among peers. Tracy Bowen, Coordinator of K-12 Health and Physical Education for CCPS, says students are feeling not only peer pressure to participate, but are also bombarded by slick marketing campaigns on social media, making it look cool and fun.



“We don’t have any long-term data on the consequences of vaping. But we know the dangers of nicotine, and we know it affects their developing brains. Vaping is putting kids at risk.”

– TRACY BOWEN, CCPS COORDINATOR OF K-12 HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

CCPS is working with several local agencies, including DLC, to educate members of the community about vaping, and to help parents be on the lookout for it in their children.

Sources: Florida Youth Tobacco Survey, Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey.

GRANT NEWS

Community Foundation Grant Will Help Improve Access to Mental Health Treatment

The Community Foundation of Collier County has awarded David Lawrence Center a \$27,500 grant to support its Access to Mental Health Care Program, which is designed to reduce or remove barriers to mental health treatment.

The funds will help provide vulnerable adults in Collier County with access to medication management, language interpretation services, transportation costs, and program coordination.

A portion of the funds will be used for psychiatric medical services. These services include medication evaluation, administration, and management. Clients will also receive monitoring to ensure prescription compliance. For the uninsured, psychiatric medical services and the medications can be cost-prohibitive barriers to effective treatment and recovery.

Additionally, translation services will be provided to help give individuals with language barriers swift access to mental health care. DLC contracts with certified interpreters for in-person, video, and telephone translation services in multiple languages (including Spanish, Haitian Creole, and

American Sign Language) to ensure each person in need of interpretation will receive optimal benefit from their treatment.

As a result of the grant, vulnerable individuals will also receive transportation assistance. Uber vouchers and/or bus passes enable clients in need to keep appointments and fill their prescriptions, which improves their ability to adhere to their treatment plan.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

"My Job Is a Dream Come True"

As a Peer Recovery Coach, Deb Lewis loves nothing more than helping her clients stay on the road to sobriety. After all, she's been in their shoes.

Deb Lewis gets a little choked up when talking about her job as a Peer Recovery Coach at David Lawrence Center. On the verge of celebrating 34 years of sobriety herself, Lewis is humbled that she has the opportunity to help people on their own road to recovery.

"I'm sorry," she says, her voice cracking. "But this is a job I wanted for a long time. It's like a dream come true for me. It's a miracle."

Lewis struggled with substance misuse from the ages of 14 to 24, but has now been clean for more than half of her life. It hasn't always been easy – "It hasn't been rainbows and butterflies," she says – but she has faithfully adhered to 12-Step programs, while fighting the good fight. Now she's helping others do the same.

She uses an "accountability" form to help keep her clients on track, asking the same 12 questions at every meeting. Questions include:

How many people are in your support network? What recovery materials did you read this week? How was your week, successes, miracles? Challenges or struggles? Do you have a dream, goal, or intention for the future?

Lewis says when she struggled with self-esteem as a young girl, she wanted to be a psychiatrist someday, "so I could figure out what was wrong with my brain – and to help

others." But she grew up in a home of addiction and chaos, and no one in her family had ever gone to college. She didn't either... but now she has her dream job.



"I don't have any letters behind my name, but I've lived this program, and it's an honor to now help others, and to be paid for something I love so much."

– DEB LEWIS
DLC PEER RECOVERY COACH

"I don't have any letters behind my name," she says. "But I've lived this program, and it's an honor to now help others, and to be paid for something I love so much." She is now pursuing certification as a peer recovery counselor.

Lewis cites a couple of "success stories" – a young man who faithfully keeps coming back, and a mature woman who is making better life choices – and says they make her work more than worthwhile. "Those stories make my day. Actually, my week, my life."

SAVE THE DATE



Sponsorship opportunities are available.

For more info, please contact Moira Larkin at moiral@dlcmhc.com or 239-354-1445.

8TH ANNUAL YOUNG EXECUTIVES SUNSET CRUISE

JUNE 13, 2019, 7PM - 9PM

NAPLES PRINCESS, 550 PORT O CALL WAY, NAPLES
TICKETS: THREE LEVELS RANGING FROM \$55 - \$85

Join the DLC Young Executives when they host the 8th Annual Sunset Cruise on June 13, 2019 aboard the Naples Princess. This wildly popular event often sells out. The two-hour cruise along Naples Bay will feature a fun, festive atmosphere, hors d'oeuvres, drinks, and a priceless encore performance of a beautiful Naples sunset.

Attendees are encouraged to get into the Flag Day spirit by wearing their most patriotic apparel. Casual red, white and "nautical" blue attire is encouraged by all and a prize will be awarded to the most patriotic outfit.

All proceeds from DLC Young Executives events benefit the mission, operations, and expansion of David Lawrence Center's community-based prevention and treatment programs that help the one in five local children and adults who experience psychological and substance use challenges.



PREVENTION CORNER

Answers to Important Questions from Parents

Q&A with Jessica Liria, M.S. | Supervisor of Prevention Services



Jessica Liria, M.S.

Q: Cell phones seem to be the center of the universe these days. How do I monitor what my teen is doing with the phone and how can I set limits on use?

A: While there are many positives to what our phones can do these days, there are also negatives. First, cell phones are a privilege, not a right! As a parent, you are responsible for what your teen does. It is important to know what is happening. Explain the dangers of conversing with unknown individuals online and give them the opportunity to show you what apps they have on their phones (and be interested!). Limiting use is a good idea; try having a basket for everyone in the household to place their phones in for an hour or two and use that as an opportunity for family bonding. Remember, you have to be the example. If the expectation is to be off of the phone, you have to be off of it too.

Q: What is the relationship between exposure to violence and bullying?

A: Have you ever reflected on the amount of violence and hate we are exposed to on a daily basis? Whether it is in movies, music, social media, TV shows, video games, or the evening news...our days are filled with devastating and traumatic events. It's important to understand how this exposure is perceived by youth, and the impact it has on their ability to process the event, and to be empathetic. It is easy to become desensitized to the violence, and in some cases, youth may see it as a normal way to resolve conflicts. As a parent or caregiver, having meaningful discussions with your child or teen about the violence they have seen is crucial in helping them develop conflict resolution skills, and empathy. Also, be an example. When you are disrespected, use that as a learning opportunity and show your child how to handle it in a non-confrontational, assertive, way.

For information about DLC's Active Parenting programs and to register for an upcoming session, please visit: www.davidlawrencecenter.org/parentingprograms/.

Getting to Know DLC's Prevention Specialist Nicole Combs



Nicole Combs

Nicole implements evidence-based prevention programs throughout the community, and in both school and after-school settings. Prevention programming focuses on reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors. Youth of all ages, ranging from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, learn about, and improve, emotion management skills, peer refusal strategies, risk reduction techniques, decision making skills, setting and achieving goals, the negative consequences of substance use, and more.

"My experience working at DLC has allowed me to gain knowledge on how mental health and substance use impacts everyone in the community," says Combs.



"I have learned a lot from not only my colleagues, but the students and adults I see in the community through our programs. I am proud that I have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our youth and help them understand valuable life skills."

Favorite

Movie: All eight Harry Potter movies!

Hobbies: Going to the beach, traveling, shopping, and spending time with family, friends, and my dog.

Thing about living in Naples: The tropical environment – the weather, the beach and the palm trees!

Thing about working at DLC: Working with the kids

Food: Ice cream cake

Music: 2000s

Animal: Cheetah

LOCATION & CONTACT INFO



MAIN CAMPUS 6075 Bathey Lane, Naples, FL 34116 | Access Center / 24-Hour Emergency Services | 239.455.8500

IMMOKALEE SATELLITE SERVICES 425 North First Street, Immokalee, FL 34142 | 239.657.4434

HORSESHOE DRIVE SATELLITE SERVICES 2806 South Horseshoe Drive, Naples, FL 34104 | 239.263.4013



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