



# connections

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## From our clients:

*"My therapist helped me in more ways than I can list—but the most important was that I always felt respected, supported and like I was the most important person in the room every time we met. She worked so hard to help me see the right and safe path and how to do my best to stay on it."*

*"I finally found a counselor I can trust. She listens and is so easy to talk to. I'm not a morning person but I wake up excited to come to my morning appointments because it's really helping. I'm so happy I found Greater Lakes."*



Sharon McKellery

## "Never Give Up"

When Sharon came to Greater Lakes a year and a half ago, she was suspicious and angry. She knew she needed help dealing with her mental health issues, but past counseling experiences had all been negative. She wasn't sure she wanted to try again.

"I had terrible things happen to me," she explained. "Then I lost my husband, I lost my home. I was living on the streets, and when you are in that world, it makes you feel so negative. I couldn't get out. I felt hopeless all the time."

So Sharon decided to ask for help one more time. She began meeting with a therapist, and soon was seeing a Peer Counselor as well. Through Greater Lakes' "Trauma Informed Care" approach, Sharon began to feel safe enough to process her pain. And she began to heal.

"I didn't think I'd find an agency where I was comfortable, but you accepted me for who I was," she said. "I was treated with respect. You allowed me to be me. And that's when I started to get better."

Now, Sharon has a new life. She has a home, and a job, and is even going to school. She has the tools and the coping strategies to not only face her life, but embrace it. "Now I just want to tell people: Don't give up," she said. "You might think there is no hope, but there is. There is always hope."

# Annual Dinner raises \$87,000 for Homeless Outreach

Thank you to everyone who supported our 52nd Annual Celebration and Fundraising Dinner! The event was held May 17 at the McGavick Center in Lakewood, and benefited Greater Lakes' Homeless Outreach Program, PATH.

The PATH team visits meal sites, camps, drop-in centers and other places where people who are homeless gather. They build rapport, establish trust, and connect clients with the resources they need. Proceeds from the dinner purchased much-needed supplies for this vital program, such as clothing, hygiene items, bus passes, laundry tokens and other necessities. For those who were able to

transition to stable housing, the funds helped with initial move-in expenses, rent assistance and basic household supplies.

The dinner was sponsored through the generous support of the Franciscan Foundation, Multicare Health System, The Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Albers & Company, genoa, a QOL healthcare company, Optum Health, Community Health Care, Community Health Plan of Washington, Heritage Bank, Molina, Moss Adams LLP, and Tucci & Sons.

Mark your calendars for our 2018 celebration on May 16 for another fun, inspiring evening!



Team members Latisha Bones, Nichole Mims and Brandy Moody shared stories of the many people helped through the PATH program



Long-time supporters Mike and Mary Jo Tucci



Approximately 175 people attended the 2017 fundraising dinner

Sponsored by:



The Puyallup Tribe



- Community Health Care
- Community Health Plan of Washington
- Heritage Bank
- Molina Healthcare

In July, Astrik Price and other staff members represented Greater Lakes at Tacoma's annual Ethnic Fest, raising awareness of our programs, attracting staff, and celebrating our vibrant, diverse community.



## Have an old vehicle you no longer want? Donate it to Greater Lakes!



Greater Lakes partners with Northwest Charity Donation Services to accept donations of cars, trucks, SUVs, RVs, boats, motorcycles and trailers.

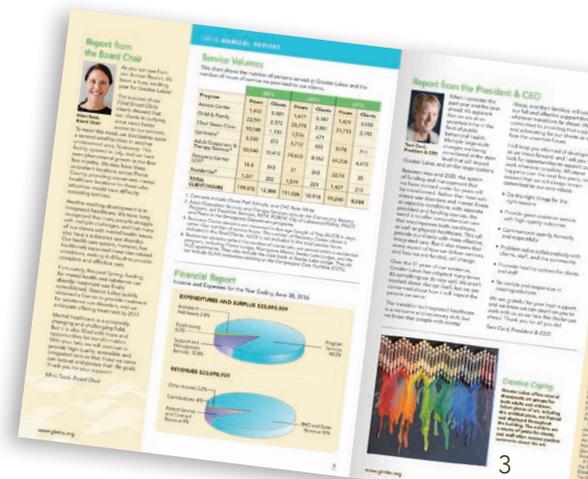
NWCDS will transport the vehicle (running or not!) and provide you with the paperwork necessary for a tax deduction.

Just indicate "Greater Lakes" as the recipient, and once the vehicle is auctioned, the proceeds will benefit our Emergency Needs Fund.

To donate a vehicle, contact:  
**Northwest Charity Donation Services**  
**1-800-961-6119 or [www.nwcds.com](http://www.nwcds.com)**

## Where's the Annual Report?

You may have noticed this edition of *Connections* does not contain our Annual Report, which we have historically included in our yearly fall newsletter. But it hasn't disappeared! We are now publishing *Connections* three times a year, in February, July, and October, and are moving the Annual Report to the winter issue. So look for our program statistics and donor acknowledgments in the upcoming February edition. I hope you enjoy the enhanced newsletter schedule and format, and if you have any comments, ideas, or suggestions about our publications, please contact our Development Director, Marguerite Richmond, at 253-620-5184 or [MargueriteR@glmhc.org](mailto:MargueriteR@glmhc.org). We would love to hear from you!





Joan and Kathy organized the supplies according to each grade requirement, and recruited board members and staff to help fill hundreds of packs for kids in need.

Charlotte, a Child and Family Therapist, identified 39 of her young clients who were in need, and she received enough back packs for each of them.

## Ready for School

Joan and Kathy are at it again! This Dynamic Duo was highlighted in the Spring edition of *Connections* for their tireless work on behalf of Greater Lakes clients. And this past August, they were hard at work once more. When Joan overheard a therapist mention that one of her young clients didn't have a back pack for the upcoming school year, that's all it took. She and Kathy set to work making sure every child seen at Greater Lakes would start the new year with the supplies they needed. They connected with Diane Formoso of Caring

For Kids, who donated boxes of supplies. They raised donations, shopped back-to-school sales, and put out bins for donated items. In just a few weeks, they had enough to fill more than 400 back packs! The therapists were delighted to receive the supplies, and one teen who knew his mother was worried about back-to-school costs was especially happy. He said "I'm going to go home and look through it with my mom like, 'Surprise! I have school supplies!' This makes me hyped up for school!"

## Driven to Succeed

Thanks to the Boeing Employees Community Fund, who provided a generous grant to purchase a vehicle for the Jail Transition program. This amazing team offers transportation to people with mental health challenges who are being released from jail. They connect them with housing and other resources, give them rides to appointments, and support them on their path to recovery and self-sufficiency. A dedicated vehicle increases their efficiency and allows them to offer more services to more people. Thank you Boeing Employees!





LaDonna Chirpas, ARNP uses a "Skype" video connection to consult with clients from her Kentucky office.

## Remote Possibilities

Across the nation, there is a shortage of Nurse Practitioners (ARNPs) who can prescribe and monitor medication. For some mental health organizations, this has meant long waits for clients who need this level of care. But at Greater Lakes, technology has come to the rescue!

Through the innovation of Telehealth, an ARNP in another state can meet with clients thousands of miles away through a "Skype" video connection. It may sound unusual, but it's proving to be a popular way to provide consistent, timely care for our most vulnerable clients.

How does it work? The team consists of a Medical Assistant, Chelle, and the Telehealth nurse, LaDonna. Chelle escorts clients to the bright, cheerful room and on the way, explains what to expect. She reassures them that if they are uncomfortable with the process, they can stop and the client will be able to see a prescriber in the traditional manner. As the "hands and feet" of the team, she records appointments, takes vital signs, faxes information, and provides personal intervention when needed. LaDonna, the Nurse Practitioner, consults with the client from her office in Kentucky, through a screen mounted at eye level.

Since the program launched in late June, the team has provided services to about 20 clients a week, and have not encountered any significant challenges. In fact, LaDonna was surprised to find that even patients who have fears about electronics don't seem to have issues, once they meet her and start talking.

"When a client feels in control of the situation, they are much more open to it," Chelle explained. "And then they meet LaDonna, and she has a way of putting people at ease."

"Even though it is an electronic connection," she added, "it's still a human connection, and that's what makes it work."

## Farewell, Walli!

### Board member Walli Roarke retires after 25 years of service

Walli Roarke joined the board of Greater Lakes Mental Healthcare in 1992 after a family member was diagnosed with Schizophrenia. As a Special Education teacher, she also encountered students with mental illness, and she wanted to learn more about the disease and the treatments that were available.

Through serving on the board, she did learn a lot about the field of mental healthcare. But she also learned just how vital Greater Lakes is to our community, and that is what has kept her involved for the past 25 years.

"People who suffer from mental illness need compassionate, professional care," Walli said. "And they need an organization that is willing to grow and change with the times, to be an advocate, and help reduce the stigma of living with mental illness. Greater Lakes does all of that, and that is why I have been honored to serve for so long."

Walli admits that the staff and her fellow board members also played a role. "The board is so dedicated, and so compassionate," she said. "They are always striving to improve. And I've enjoyed getting to know the staff. I am really in awe of all they do."

Walli may be retiring from the board, but fortunately for Greater Lakes, she will continue to serve on several committees in addition to her other volunteer work.

**Thank you, Walli, for your years of service and your commitment to improving our community!**



Walli receives a parting gift from Board President Mimi Tucci.



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## Make a Difference!

Greater Lakes relies on generous donations from our compassionate community to support our programs and provide hope, relief and recovery to those impacted by mental illness. Please consider making a gift to Greater Lakes — a gift that could change a life.

Mail your check to the address below, or make your gift online at [www.glmhc.org](http://www.glmhc.org).

For information about monthly giving, planned giving, or other ways to support Greater Lakes, call Marguerite Richmond at 253-620-5184.

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### Greater Lakes Mental Health Foundation

9330 59th Ave. SW • Lakewood, WA 98499-6600

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## OUR MISSION

We empower hope through compassion, engagement and connection with those we serve.

We empower relief through effective evidence based practices that promote skills & resilience.

We empower recovery by building upon strengths and supporting individuals in their goals.

## OUR VALUES

- Do the right things for the right reasons.
- Provide great customer service with high quality outcomes.
- Communicate openly, honestly, and respectfully.
- Problem solve collaboratively with clients, staff, and the community.
- Promote healthy options for clients and staff.
- Be nimble and responsive in creating solutions.

Adopted July 23, 2015