

MORRIS COUNTY PROUD TO BE STIGMA-FREE

THE STIGMA FREE ZONE NEWS OF NJ

Bringing the Mental Health Conversation to New Jersey

SPECIAL ISSUE ON ADDICTION

CAREPLUS NEW OPERATOR AT BRMC- COUNTY PROSECUTOR LETTER -FRANKLIN LAKES DRUG AMNESTY- MAHWAH MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE - PARAMUS CHURCH HANGS SFZ BANNER- JOE GIRARDI STIGMA FREE- NJPRA AWARDS-HAWTHORNE JOINS SFZ- NJCMHC LETTER

CAREPLUS TO TAKE OVER MANAGEMENT OF BERGEN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



Care Plus Bergen Inc. was chosen as the tenant-operator of NJ's largest hospital. They will work with sub-contractors, Rutgers NJ Medical School and Integrity House, a non-profit dedicated to eradicating addiction. On the CarePlus website, the SFZ initiative was cited as a driving force for better behavioral healthcare:

"With the ongoing efforts of the Stigma-Free initiative in Bergen County, the demand for effective behavioral healthcare will continue to rise. This collaborative project will increase our capacity to meet the needs of our families, friends and neighbors through care integration, compassion, and efficiency."



Bergen County Executive Jim Tedesco, CarePlus CEO Joe Masciandaro, and Freeholder Tracy Zur have all enthusiastically supported the Stigma Free Zone educational initiative in Bergen County. Here, they share a hopeful moment along with SFZ Founder Mary Ann Uzzi and other proud supporters, as CarePlus takes on responsibility for NJ's largest safety net hospital and provider of behavioral healthcare.

QUICKLINKS TO NEWS:

[NJ.Com: BRMC Secures New Operator](#)

[Becker's Hospital Review: Rutgers - CarePlus Joint Venture](#)

[NorthJersey.Com: New Coalition at BRMC/ Video](#)

[NJ Spotlight: Christie's New Mental Health Proposal](#)

[NJ SpotLight: Studies Underway on Women With Opioid Addiction](#)

[Read More About Integrity House](#)



MAHWAH POLICE AND MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE ARE FIGHTING THE STIGMA OF ADDICTION

What is The NJ Municipal Alliance Program all about?

The NJ's Governor's Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse has an Alliance Program which is the largest network of community-based anti-drug coalitions in the USA. Volunteers serve on Alliances in more than 530 municipalities throughout NJ. Municipal Alliances are established by ordinance and engage residents, local government and law enforcement, schools, parents, youth and other allies in efforts to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse in NJ.

The program is funded from the Drug Education Demand Reduction Fund established to collect fines from individuals convicted of a drug offense. MA award recipients match Council grants with a cash-match of 25% and in-kind-services. This match requirement doubles the impact of these grants to total nearly \$20 million per year in programs and activities.

In Mahwah (one of NJ's newest Stigma Free Zones) the Mahwah MA is hard at work raising awareness of addiction in the NJ suburbs, educating the public and eradicating stigma. The Mahwah MA is a non-profit with an appointed director, Ms. Dana Romano. She acts as advocate and liaison for residents and families struggling with addiction. The MMA operates with a board and president, working in cooperation with police, schools and other officials to fight the heroin and opioid epidemic waging locally, particularly against the young.

Watch the two videos, below, to learn more about the public health crisis of prescription drug and heroin abuse in our area, and the Heroin Addiction Recovery Team (HART) Program currently being piloted in Mahwah and in several other surrounding police stations.

Local people with addictions are now encouraged to turn over drugs in their possession and enter a recovery program vs. facing charges or fearing prosecution for possession. Currently,

walk-in hours for the program are being offered one day a week in Mahwah, Paramus and Lyndhurst. You can also read the statement, below, from Franklin Lakes Chief of Police on the similar efforts being discussed in that borough.



**A FRANK AND OPEN LETTER ABOUT HEROIN TO
ALL BERGEN COUNTY RESIDENTS**
from the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office



Over the next few days, our office would like to extend some very stark and true thoughts on Bergen County's heroin drug epidemic that is wreaking havoc amongst our young men and women, often resulting in death by overdose.

In each notice, we will share with you our thoughts and intentions over the enforcement of our New Jersey Law entitled **STRICT LIABILITY FOR DRUG INDUCED DEATHS**.

Most believe that our drug laws are applied to "street dealers". To many, these "dealers" are the ones responsible for our drug epidemic. Think again. We are all responsible. Consider this scenario:

You run a good household in suburban Bergen County. You have a house, a great job and great kids who all went to college and are just starting out on the life that you have given them.

Your 23 year old son still lives at home, has a great job and a girlfriend. He is a good kid.

You have some Oxycodone pills in your medicine cabinet. You were prescribed them a year ago. You do not take them but they remain in your bathroom cabinet. You don't know why. All of us have done this at some point in time.

Your son would never take the "oxy". He is a good kid.

But your son's girlfriend has a friend.

You don't know this friend.

This friend has a drug problem and asks your son to get him an "oxy" pill.

Your son knows that he should not do it, but gives his girlfriend the "oxy" pill anyway to give to the friend.

The friend takes the pill. Unbeknownst to you, your son and his girlfriend, it's his tenth of the day, in addition to many other pills that other friends have given him.

The friend dies from all of this. Not just the pill that your son's girlfriend gave him, but based on everything that he took that day.

**YOUR SON AND HIS GIRLFRIEND MAY BE CHARGED UNDER
NEW JERSEY'S DRUG INDUCED DEATH LAW.**

**UPON CONVICTION, THEY MAY RECEIVE 20 YEARS IN PRISON, WITH A
17 YEAR PERIOD WHEN THEY WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR PAROLE.**

**20 YEARS IN PRISON.
FOR ONE OXYCODONE PILL.
YOUR OXYCODONE PILL.**

DO YOU STILL THINK THAT THIS LAW ONLY APPLIES TO STREET DEALERS?

*Brought as a public service message, not at taxpayers' expense,
by the Office of the Bergen County Prosecutor.
For more information, including information on how you can get rid of those old prescription drugs,
call our office at 201-226-5758.*



*Franklin Lakes Police Department
490 DeKorte Drive
Franklin Lakes, New Jersey 07417*

Carmine D. Pezzuti
Chief of Police

Office (201) 891-1855

cpezzuti@franklinlakes.org

BOROUGH OF FRANKLIN LAKES "AMNESTY" POLICY

The fear of criminal prosecution can cause persons who suffer from opioid drug addiction (addiction to heroin or to opiate-based drugs like Percocet or Vicodin) to elect not to seek needed assistance with their addictions. Recognizing that getting help for those in the downward spiral of drug addiction is far more important than penalizing them, the Borough of Franklin Lakes Police Department, consistent with a directive from the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office, has implemented the following policy:

Individuals who advise the Franklin Lakes Police Department that they are addicted to opioids and need help will not be charged with a crime or prosecuted, but will, instead, be referred to appropriate drug counseling and addiction recovery services. If such opioid-dependent individuals are referred to us by parents, children, spouses, guardians or siblings, they will be treated in the same manner as if those individuals had themselves provided the advice to us.

In other words, the Franklin Lakes Police Department will provide whatever help it can to addicts who themselves seek help or for whom help is sought by other persons (such as parents, siblings, spouses, children, etc.). Under those circumstances the addicts will not be arrested and brought through the criminal justice system, but would, instead, be referred for appropriate drug counseling and addiction recovery services.

Since the introduction fourteen months ago to our patrol officers of Narcan, a prescription medicine that blocks the effects of opioids and can reverse an overdose, our officers have saved the lives of six overdose victims. Absent the drug, that would have been six fatalities in just over one year's time within the borders of Franklin Lakes. The problem is here and the Police Department is committed to addressing it head on. Let's work together, outside the criminal justice framework, to save lives.

At its meeting held on March 15, 2016, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Franklin Lakes, by resolution, endorsed the implementation of the above Amnesty Policy

IN MY BACKYARD
COMMUNITY
FREE
CONCERT

SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 16, 2017
12 NOON
(RAIN OR SHINE)

LIBERTY STATE PARK
FREEDOM FIELD

RECOVERY WALK
BEGINS AT 10 AM

BANNER REGISTRATION
BEGINS AT 9 AM

FREE PARKING

BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIRS, BLANKETS AND ENJOY A DAY OF HOPE AND FUN!



FOR INFORMATION REGARDING
EXHIBITOR/VENDOR SLOTS
AND SPONSORSHIPS:

INFO@NEWJERSEYRECOVERYADVOCATES.ORG

NJPRA Celebrates Member Contributions to Psychiatric Rehabilitation

On June 23, 2016 in a room filled with colleagues, friends and family of New Jersey Psychiatric Rehab Association celebrated the contributions of 20 of their most devoted colleagues.

Awardees were chosen for demonstrating the following exemplary characteristics, among others:

- Supports recovery- in all 8 dimensions
- Sees each person as a unique individual and finds their strengths
- Understands the need to include the consumer
- Works with each person to help empower them to enrich their lives
- Conveys hope and respect every day in his role and maintains optimism in the face of adversity

Our 2017 Awardees:

Joseph Birkmann - Rutgers-SHP	Ceaira Underwood - Carelink
Betty Hogan - NECHN	Amyrath Souradjou - Carelink
Lois Miller - CSPNJ	Deltray Smith - Carelink
Robin Glantz - CSPNJ	Amy Smith - SERV
Carmen Ramirez - CSPNJ	Blundean Myers - SERV
Jennifer Zoyac - CSPNJ	Kareen Nazaire - SERV
KC Lovell - CSPNJ	Coleen Christie - SERV
Karen Burke - CSPNJ	Carly Kleiman - SERV
Melica Hampton - Bridgeway	William Simmons - SERV
Coral Beckford - Bridgeway	Dinelle Polchinski - Bridgeway

2017's Practitioner, Supervisor & Administrator of the year will be selected from this group at the 2017 Annual Conference November 16th & 17 at the Pines Manor.

[NJPRA WEBSITE](#)

Mental Health / Stigma-Free

Central Unitarian Church



CUC HANGS BANNER IN SUPPORT OF STIGMA FREE ZONE

After 3 long years of work by its Pastoral Care Committee, Central Unitarian Church has proudly hung a banner with a message of support for people with mental health challenges in front of their sanctuary on Forest Avenue; one of the busiest streets in Paramus.

The church's Pastoral Care Committee, under the leadership of Reverend David Horst, have dedicated a yearly sermon to the stigma surrounding mental illness and created support groups for church families with children with mental health and addiction challenges. They have also hosted interfaith events educating other faith communities on fighting stigma, they support their local NAMI and many church members have fundraised for mental health organizations and causes.

Growing this advocacy was not without controversy within the church. At first, members expressed fears that outreach into the mental health community might result in "problems for the congregation". Asking the faith community to join the Stigma Free Zone coalition was a long process, requiring education of the church's board of trustees to still fears coming from stigma and convincing the congregation that fighting for the safety, health and rights of people with mental illness was indeed,

a justice-related, worthy cause.

Becoming Stigma-Free was accomplished by allowing the membership to participate in the decision-making, giving ample public opportunity for all to question and debate the idea of becoming stigma-free and many, many quiet conversations in the hall. However, since establishing this initiative, all fears have proved groundless, and CUC's efforts to educate their surrounding community have increased. Kudos to Reverend David Horst for having the humanity and courage to encourage such a brave, public step, and to the members of his Pastoral Care Team for being open to the notion that those who cater to the needs of the sick cannot ignore people's mental health. Well done!

Education has lessened the general fear of people with mental health challenges among CUC congregants, they have not experienced any adverse events since publicly taking on the fight against mental health stigma, and they discovered some among their own who, given the chance, were happy and eager to talk about their challenges or those of a family member living with an illness.

The Church unanimously voted 200-0 to join the Paramus Stigma Free Zone in 2015 and their Pastoral Care Committee was one of 10 religious organizations in NJ to receive the NJ Governor's Award for Fighting Stigma in April, 2016.



My Personal Schizophrenia

I don't know what happened to my life
I don't know what happened to my soul
I felt so cold, so lost, so alone
I feel like I lived and lost control

*Life was full of delusions
Not knowing what was real
Not knowing what to feel
Just full of confusion*

Unable to comprehend
What was going on around me
What was going on inside me
Didn't know what was around the bend

*Didn't know what was coming next
Didn't know if I would survive
I lost my will to live,
I lost my will to be*

Felt like I was losing everything
And everyone around me
Couldn't control my moods or emotions
Crying and upset all the time

*Felt like everything I did was a crime
Felt lost and alone
With paranoia and voices
Too scared to be outside*

But scared to be home
Didn't know my choices
Lost friends, lost family
But worst of all I lost myself

*But deep inside
I knew I was losing my mental health
It was hard to cope
Just kept clutching to my rope
Trying not to lose hope*

Colleen Mulrooney
www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk

No Health Without Mental Health

**PROUD TO BE
STIGMA-FREE**

May 21, 2017

Central Unitarian Church

A Community of Covenant

Our Covenant

As a congregation, we honor our mission and promise to act with grace as we celebrate our shared humanity. We view our differences as strengths and work to meld them into harmony by listening with open minds. We agree to act with honesty, compassion, love, and respect. With this covenant, we will deepen our connections and add joy to our collective lives.

State of NJ Dooms Thousands Struggling with Mental Illness

By The New Jersey Community Mental Health Coalition

(Reprinted From TapIntoNet.com)

With the stroke of his pen on Tuesday, Governor Christie and his administration marked the end of the effective community mental health safety net in New Jersey. An appropriation in the state budget served as the last hope for community mental health providers in their fight to ensure that they can continue to provide care for the state's most vulnerable under the Department of Human Services' (DHS) controversial fee-for-service (FFS) funding cuts that went into effect on July 1. Without this budget appropriation, the future for New Jersey residents struggling with mental illness looks increasingly bleak.

[Continue Reading Here](#)

HAWTHORNE NJ JOINS GROWING PASSAIC COUNTY FAMILY OF STIGMA FREE ZONES

Hawthorne's Mayor and City Council and Mental Health America, Passaic Director Joanne Green passed the Stigma-Free Zone resolution in May, 2017. According to Mayor Richard S. Goldberg, "A stigma free community's goal aims to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness. We are dedicated to raising awareness of the disease of mental illness and creating a culture wherein residents ... feel supported by their community and neighbors, and feel free to seek

treatment ...without fear of stigma. To this end I have appointed a committee to fulfill the requirements needed to be declared a “Stigma Free Community”. It will be chaired by Joe Ross and will have... Helen Pasquale representing the Board of Health and the Municipal Alliance, Alex Clavijo representing the Board Education, Nicole Leininger and Guy Tumminello representing the public. The Police Chief, Superintendent of Schools and I will serve ex-officio helping the committee. My thanks to those that volunteered to serve our community”.

Hawthorne is the 5th SFZ in Passaic County –and according to Green, it soon it will encompass all 16 Municipalities !





TODD OUIDA FOUNDATION RECOGNIZED BY JOE GIRARDI

At the beginning of his pre-game show, Joe Girardi will sometimes wear a tee shirt and briefly speak about a charity he feels is worthy of his attention. On June 6, 2017, kicking off a series with the Boston Red Sox, Girardi honored Todd's foundation.

Todd would love it!

[VIDEO ABOUT TODD OUIDA](#)

**Bergen County Annual
Wellness Conference
Friday, October 13, 2017
8:00 AM - 2:30 PM
Paramus**

