



PRO BONO COUNSELING

Your Mental Health Connection

THE CONNECTION | MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | APRIL 2023

PBC Volunteers Provide Essential Services to Marylanders

Every year, Pro Bono Counseling (PBC) is able to help thousands of Marylanders access mental health care at no cost thanks to the hundreds of licensed mental health professionals who donate their time and expertise. Without their generosity, mental health care would not otherwise be available to many people in Maryland.

More than 850 licensed mental health professionals across the state are enrolled with PBC as volunteers and provide care to those in need. These trained professionals provide a safe, non-judgmental space for clients to explore a range of issues that may be troubling them.

When volunteers enroll with PBC, we ask that they pledge to take a single case pro bono each year, although many clinicians offer to care for additional clients. In 2022, 319 clinicians accepted between two to five clients, and 66 clinicians donated their services to more than five clients.

As a PBC volunteer, clinicians can attend PBC workshops that are educational, timely, and relevant to a clinician's practice and are presented by experts in

their respected fields, earning continuing education credits at no fee. They also have the opportunity to work with clients who come from a diverse range of backgrounds, consult with experts on their cases, and network with their peers.

However, the main reason to join PBC most often cited by enrollees is that they simply want to give back to their communities. Most clinicians agree with longtime PBC volunteer Alyce Ross, LCPC, who stated, "I joined Pro Bono Counseling to give, not to receive."

"As the demand for Pro Bono Counseling's services continues to increase, we can't say enough about how grateful we are for the generosity of our volunteers and how much they do give of themselves," said PBC Clinical Director Sherri Bloom. "Last year alone, volunteers donated close to 11,000 counseling hours to people of all ages across the state of Maryland."

Recently a woman in her 40's called PBC seeking counseling to process life transitions, improve her social relationships, and deal with grief she was experiencing. She shared the overwhelmingly positive experiences she has had with her PBC therapist when we contacted her for a routine follow-up call, describing the progress and changes she noticed since she started working with her therapist.

"Counseling has been a good thing for me," she explained. "My clinician has helped me work on my goals and we keep updating the goals as needed. This is the best clinician I've ever had -- I'm really grateful."

This client also rated PBC's services as highly as they could and said that they would be very likely to recommend PBC to another person they knew who may need mental health support.

If you're a licensed mental health professional interested in volunteering with PBC, please visit our website to enroll or email [PBC's Outreach Coordinator](#).



Creative learning! Pro Bono Counseling recently hosted an in-person art therapy workshop for mental health clinicians, "Holding in the Balance: Promoting Creative Self-Expression in Therapy," presented by Cathy Goucher, MA, ATR-BC, LCPAT, LCPC. For more info on workshops, visit PBC's [Events and Workshop](#) page.

PBC's Gratitude Gathering

Join us for Pro Bono Counseling's Gratitude Gathering on June 8, as we honor and celebrate our volunteers for the impact they make each year to ensure all Marylanders have access to the mental health care they



MD Lt. Governor
Aruna Miller

need. We will also recognize PBC's generous supporters and community partners.

Scheduled event activities include:

- Volunteer Recognition** - PBC will honor and recognize milestone service achievements and all volunteers will be eligible for special gratitude gifts.
- CHAI Radha Pathak Humanitarian Award** - Honoring the memory of Dr. Radha Pathak's benevolent spirit in helping others, this year's award recipient is Maryland Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, for her work on destigmatization and access to mental health care.
- Board Member Recognition** - PBC's outgoing Board President Gil Bliss, LCSW-C, will be acknowledged for his service and the new Board President nominee will be introduced.
- Community partner and organization supporter appreciation.**

Tickets are limited, so [RSVP](#) to attend today: <https://tinyurl.com/mr23uy46>.

Continuing Education Workshops

Register today to attend an upcoming continuing education workshop:

May 10 - Decolonized Healing: Understanding Treatment in the Native Community
1.5 CE Credits

Presenter - Mercia Cummings, LCPC

May 17 - Providing Counseling Pro Bono: Clinical Applications for Volunteers

1 CE Credit, Presenters - Amy Greensfelder, LMSW, Sherri Bloom, LCSW-C, and Yolonda Nelson-Swain, MAHS, VASIII

June 8 - Grief Explored: Facilitating Growth in Grief in the Adult Population
2 CE Credits

Presenter - Carrie Boone, MSW, LCSW-C, CGP

June 12 - Challenging Behavior in Young People: A Neurodiversity Affirming Approach
1.5 CE Credits

Presenter - Courtney Hart, LCSW-C

For more information and to register, visit PBC's [Events and Workshop](#) page.

PBC Resource Corner: Ballet After Dark

Ballet After Dark (B.A.D) is a dynamic nonprofit organization that serves youth and women impacted by violence and trauma in Baltimore City.

Founded by Tyde-Courtney Edwards, a classically trained ballerina,



art model and survivor of sexual assault, Ballet After Dark offers a variety of trauma-informed care, holistic resources and somatic interventions to black survivors.

Types of care include trauma-informed dance therapy workshops, self-defense workshops, as well as programs that focus on educating young girls on reproductive health, healthy relationships, financial literacy and more. Additionally, B.A.D offers information related to resources for trauma involving sexual assault and domestic violence, addiction, mental health crisis, health care, food and other local hotlines.

For more info on B.A.D's classes and programs, visit BalletAfterDark.com, or they may be messaged on their contact page www.balletafterdark.com/contact.