



THE CONNECTION | MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | NOVEMBER 2023

Grateful for Pro Bono Counseling and Its Supporters

"I feel so fortunate to have found this service."

"I am so thankful to have been matched with a counselor."

"Meeting with a therapist has been so helpful and I am beyond grateful."

These statements were made by Marylanders who have contacted Pro Bono Counseling (PBC), expressing their gratitude for the services they have received. They appreciate that the organization exists to connect them with mental health resources and are treated with care and kindness from their first phone call.

"From the moment someone contacts PBC, the team ensures that each caller's circumstances are respected and gathers essential information, like background and preferences, to make the best match with a therapist," explained PBC Clinical Director Sherri Bloom. "Once that connection is made, clients report back to us about how the counseling sessions have positively transformed their lives."

That transformation is achieved through the efforts of PBC's partners. To provide access to counseling at no cost to Marylanders requires the commitment and dedication of volunteer licensed mental health professionals. We appreciate our volunteers who selflessly offer their time, talents, skills, and knowledge to improve the lives of people throughout Maryland. *So far this year, volunteers have donated more than 8,800 hours to 1,262 people in therapy.*

PBC would also not be able to accomplish its mission without all of our supporters. The organization relies heavily on your generous contributions to continue to provide services to Marylanders in need. We are grateful to all of the donors who choose to make a mental health connection to individuals who would otherwise not have access to the mental health resources they deserve. Additionally, PBC recognizes the invaluable support public and private foundations provide by funding initiatives and

other organizational operations.

"The need for mental health services is at an all-time high," stated PBC Executive Director Amy Greensfelder. "We are appreciative and honored that so many individuals, foundations, and organizations are able to support our vital mission."

Diverse Talent Meets Needs

Pro Bono Counseling strives to provide mental health support that is the best fit between the individual or family members and the therapist with whom they are matched. In addition to the background questions staff members ask when someone calls for assistance, they also inquire about the type of clinician they are looking for as well as the type of therapy they may want.

PBC is fortunate to have over 800 licensed mental health professionals who volunteer with the organization, each with diverse backgrounds as well as diverse areas of expertise, skills, and specialties. When a clinician enrolls as a volunteer, they indicate the types of cases they would like to assist with.

"PBC volunteers collectively represent a vast array of experiences, from the populations they assist with, to the topic areas they specialize in, to the approaches they use, so we really are able to provide the most appropriate connections between the client and the clinician," stated PBC Clinical Director Sherri Bloom.

A few months ago, a woman in her 30's contacted PBC who was interested in therapy to help her process past traumas and stress, in addition to coping with the lasting impacts of COVID. During the interview process, it was determined that an art therapist would be the best fit for what she was seeking.

Since PBC has many volunteers who specialize in art therapy, she was connected with a clinician and so far has met with for seven counseling sessions. When a

Upcoming CEU Workshops

Register today to attend an upcoming online continuing education workshop:

November 28

Introduction to Problem Gambling and Screening Tools for Gambling Disorder

2 CE Credits, Presenters - Kristen Beall, LCSW-C, ICGC-I, CAC-AD; and Heather Eshleman, MPH

December 1

Early Psychosis in Transition-Age Youth: Assessment and Treatment Approaches from the Maryland Early Intervention Program

1.5 CE Credits, Presenter - Pamela Rakhshan Rouhakhtar, PhD

December 6

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

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

staff member contacted her to check on her progress, she said that her experience has been very beneficial and helpful.

"Therapy sessions have helped to reinforce some positive coping skills and mechanisms for dealing with my anxiety and stress," she reported. "My therapist is a great support system for me. I have seen healthy changes and it's really made a difference."

She also noted that the clinician made it convenient to meet for sessions, offering flexibility since she works during the week.

"Pro Bono Counseling is a blessing for people like me," she shared. "It can be so costly to try to find a provider and I'm just really grateful this is available."

Welcome PBC Volunteers

Please join us in welcoming the following mental health clinicians who joined our team as PBC volunteers last month:

- Natalie Baker
- Sai Peterson
- Nicole Hughes
- Barbara Rossman
- Si Meng

Have you considered volunteering with PBC? If you're a licensed counselor, social worker, psychologist, or therapist, please join us! Click [HERE](#) for more info.

Give on GIVING TUESDAY

You can double your impact on GIVING TUESDAY. All gifts to Pro Bono Counseling (PBC) made through December 2 will be matched by PBC's Board of Directors.

Thousands of people in Maryland are currently experiencing unprecedented mental health challenges. Your generous gift to PBC will help provide quality mental health care for all those in need throughout Maryland.

Make a mental health connection -- click [HERE](#) to make your gift today.



PBC Resource Corner: WeRNative

November is designated as Native American Heritage Month, providing an important opportunity to acknowledge the impact colonization has had on the mental health of indigenous communities within the United States and globally. One impact is the lack of mental health resources developed specifically for Native Americans.

WeRNative is an online resource for and by young Native Americans looking to connect with culture, build interpersonal connections, and find access to mental

health care. The site offers comprehensive lists of resources for different topics such as relationships, sexual health, identity and culture, and life transitions.

The website connects young people to support lines, therapeutic centers, and organizations that are open to low-income individuals, allowing access to mental health care. It also provides information, resources, and support for Native American youth and young adults seeking mental health support that holds cultural connection, significance, and understanding. For more info, visit [WeRNative.org](#).