



PRO BONO COUNSELING®

Your Mental Health Connection

THE CONNECTION | MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FEBRUARY 2024

Removing Barriers to Mental Health Care Access

Lack of mental health care access is one of the root causes of the mental health crisis that currently exists. The struggle for access can be caused by many different factors, and often varies greatly by communities. Common barriers include health care costs, lack of awareness, social stigma, and limited provider options just to name a few.

Pro Bono Counseling's mission is to remove barriers and provide relief by connecting Marylanders to mental health support. In 2023, close to 2,000 people contacted Pro Bono Counseling (PBC) requesting mental health counseling. Collectively, PBC volunteers donated 11,642 hours of counseling services.

"The demand for mental health care continues to grow each year," stated PBC Executive Director Amy Greensfelder. "While we envision a future where everyone has access to the services they need, it's still far from a reality in Maryland and most other states in the country."

Last Spring, a man in his 20's called PBC seeking counseling to process his sexuality, as well as for assistance managing symptoms of depression and anxiety. He emphasized the importance of working with a clinician with knowledge and understanding of the LGBTQ+ experience.

"We are very grateful to the hundreds of licensed mental health professionals who have enrolled to volunteer with PBC," stated Amy. "The clinicians bring such a depth of skills and expertise that allow us to match them with clients based upon their needs and preferences."

After he was matched with a clinician, a PBC team member contacted this client to follow up on how he was doing and to learn more about his experiences in coun-

seling. The client reported positive changes that have happened in his life since he was connected to therapy.

"I really appreciate the mission behind PBC, and how it's really needed," he added. "I hope other places and cities in the US are really taking the initiative to do the same thing with counseling."

Mental health is a priority and quality mental health care is available. PBC is here to help you -- If you're experiencing stress, anxiety, grief, or a life transition, call us at 410.825.1001.



Welcome New PBC Volunteers

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

- Julia Calo
- Sharone Dixon
- Hannah Furlow
- Gregory Gaydosh
- Jaclyn Halpern
- Ashley Hoffman
- Leslie Holley
- Shawan Jones
- Abby Miller
- Anjana Muralidharan
- Lisa Orenstein
- Zarria Stephens

Have you considered volunteering with PBC? Enrolling as a volunteer offers many benefits, including thoroughly screened clients matched based upon your experience and preferences, free continuing education workshops, case consultations, and networking opportunities.

Click [HERE](#) for more info and to enroll.

Annual PBC Volunteer Forum March 6

Pro Bono Counseling is hosting its annual online Volunteer Forum on Wednesday, March 6, from 12:00 to 1:00 PM. During this interactive meeting, Executive Director Amy Greensfelder will provide an overview of the past year, including statistics and the impact volunteers have made throughout the state of Maryland.

Volunteers will also have the opportunity to meet in breakout rooms during the Forum to provide feedback on your experience with the organization, network, and meet with the entire PBC team.

Don't miss this opportunity to let us know how we can further support the great work you do--[CLICK HERE](#) to register today.

Upcoming CEU Workshops

Register today to attend an upcoming online continuing education workshop:

March 5

The Stages of Trauma and Recovery (STAR) Model 3.0 - 3 CE Credits, Presenters - Lizette Ubides, LCSW-C; Kate Travers, LCSW-C

March 14

Black Bereavement Crisis: Unearthing the Impact of Grief in African American Communities - 1.5 CE Credits, Presenter - Doneila McIntosh, MDiv, M.A.

March 19

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.

PBC's Gratitude Gathering

Join us for Pro Bono Counseling's Gratitude Gathering on Thursday, May 2, as we honor and celebrate our volunteers for the impact they make each year to ensure all Marylanders have access to mental health care. We will also recognize PBC's generous supporters and community partners.

Event sponsorships are still available-- By sponsoring the event, your organization will support the hundreds of licensed mental health care volunteers who donate their time to Marylanders in need.

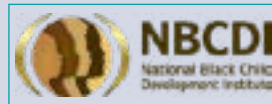
[CLICK HERE](#) for more info and to register.

PBC Resource Corner: National Black Child Development Institute

In observance of Black History Month, this month's Resource Corner highlights the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI). Focusing on the needs and unique attributes of black children from birth through age eight, NBCDI works to build a sense of community and belonging for black children and their families, helping them to feel valued and supported.

The organization promotes itself as, "a trusted partner in developing and delivering culturally relevant, and evidence-based resources to the unique strengths and needs of Black children in early childhood education, health and wellness, literacy, and family engagement."

NBCDI is located in Silver Spring, Maryland. For more information, call 202.833.2220, email: moreinfo@nbcdi.org.



Show Your Love for PBC

Pro Bono Counseling (PBC) launched a fundraising campaign this month to support mental health care. Give today to ensure Marylanders of all ages can find the right mental health professional to meet their needs. Your gift of \$14 or more will support vital mental health resources.

[CLICK HERE](#) to make your gift.