

Winter
2015

Bright Horizons

BHcare Board of Directors

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BHcare PSA
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Bowl-a-Strike Against Domestic Violence!

Join us on Saturday, March 14, 2015 for
BHcare's 27th Annual Bowl-2-Benefit (B2B)
The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence
Services!

B2B is one of the largest events of its kind in
the state with over 1,500 concerned citizens,
businesses, schools, organizations and
community leaders joining the fight against
domestic violence.

Teams of 4-5 bowlers of all ages and skills are welcome to participate. Teams
must pre-register for one of five bowling sessions (9:00 am, 11:30 am, 2:00
pm, 4:30 pm, or 7:00 pm).

There is a \$5 per bowler registration fee and all bowlers are asked to raise \$50
in pledges. Participants receive 90 minutes of bowling, an event t-shirt, shoe
rental, a soft drink and a chance to win some great prizes.

Every 9 seconds, a woman is battered in the United States. The Umbrella Center
for Domestic Violence Services (UCDVS) provides emergency shelter, 24-hour
crisis hotline, counseling, court advocacy and support services to over 7,000
victims and their children each year free of charge.

You can make a difference by bowling a strike against domestic violence!

Questions? Want to learn more? Contact Debbie Soulsby at (203) 736-2601,
ext. 1321 or visit www.bhcare.org.



Valley Services
435 East Main Street
Ansonia CT 06401
(203) 736-2601


BHcare
Hope • Health • Recovery

Shoreline Services
14 Sycamore Way
Branford CT 06405
(203) 483-2630



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www.BHcare.org



[Twitter.com/CTBHcare](https://twitter.com/CTBHcare)

A Message from Our President/CEO



The Greater Valley Substance Abuse Action Council (VSAAC) will be celebrating its 25th anniversary this year! Over this quarter century, VSAAC has impacted countless youth and adult lives. Here's just a few short stories from members of our community about how VSAAC made a difference in their life:

"Having been involved in dealing with youth in crisis for over 25 years as a Police Detective/Youth Officer, and now as Director of Security in the Shelton Public School System, I found the Youth Mental Health First Aid Training (MHFA) a better "tool in the tool box" in dealing with youth in crisis. MHFA gives you a proven plan to identify, listen to and assist a person in crisis to ensure they get the proper assistance. I received very positive feedback from the school security staff that was trained in the program. Many

of them did not have previous training in Youth Mental Health and they all expressed that the training would definitely assist them in their interaction with students in distress or crisis. I would recommend the training to any person directly involved in security or safety of youth in the community."

"I had someone call me one day with concerns about her daughter's friend. She explained to me that her daughter's friend made some statements about "not wanting to live". I was able to talk with her, help her ask the friend some questions and provide her with resources she needed. She then followed up with me and told me that the help and resources were greatly appreciated because the friend was thinking about suicide and needed help."

"A class participant shared that after attending the suicide training, she knew she had to ask the question to a student. She said that the training gave her the confidence and the tools to ask the important question and effectively intervened."

You can read more about VSAAC's upcoming anniversary events in this publication and follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/vsaac to stay up to date on news and events.

Roberta J. Cook
President/CEO

View BHcare's PSA at
<http://bit.ly/BHcarePSA>



Thank You for Making a Difference

BHcare's 3rd Annual Meeting

Nearly 100 of you gathered at Racebrook Country Club on October 29th to listen to client stories of triumph, celebrate out-going board members, and welcome new Chair, Mike Gulish.

BHcare also presented the New Haven Family Condors with the 2014 Community Partner Award.



Gala Raises over \$52K



We were so honored to have 145 of you join us at Grassy Hill Country Club in November for the 14th Annual Holiday Gala. Thanks to your support, the total raised was more than \$52,000!

Many thanks to our sponsors: Webster Bank, Bassett Family Fund, Cohen & Thomas, in memory of Sally M. Thomas, Naugatuck Valley Savings & Loan, Retina Systems, Serra & DelVecchio Insurance and the Valley Community Foundation.

Hundreds of Holiday Wishes Granted

Many thanks to the overwhelming support from you and the community for helping to brighten the holidays for over 400 BHcare clients and their children.

Over 100 community organizations and individuals supported BHcare during this holiday season. Some participated in the Under the Tree project by either fulfilling a wish for a client in need or by making a cash or gift card donation. In addition, BHcare was fortunate to be the recipient of a number of food, toy, and clothing drives held by local businesses and civic groups.



Meet BHcare's New Board Chair



Mike Gulish was introduced to BHcare 20 years ago by a co-worker who asked him to help start a Compeer program at BHcare (Birmingham Group). As a volunteer, he saw first-hand what a positive impact BHcare had on the lives of the clients. Mike was asked to join the board of directors a few years later.

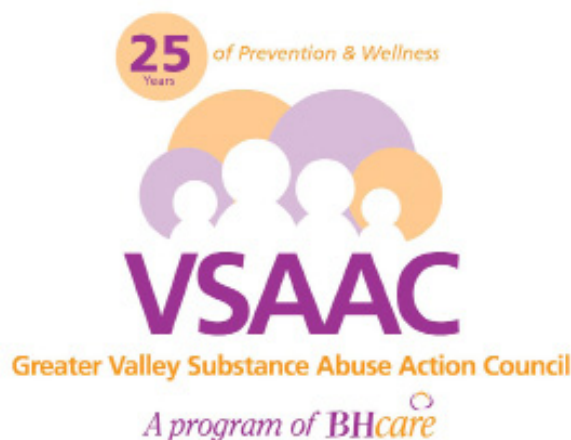
Mike has served on various committees over the years including marketing, strategic planning and My Sister's Place. He also co-chaired the Holiday Gala committee for several years. His favorite day of the year is BHcare's annual meeting day. "I get to hear directly from the individuals whose lives are better because of all the great work that the employees do."

Mike is a financial advisor who started his own firm, Gulish and Associates, 27 years ago. He has been married to his wife, Judy, for 28 years and they have two children. Between running his own practice and volunteering for BHcare and CommuniCare, he also volunteered at his children's schools and coached many of their sports teams. Now that his children are grown, he spends quite a bit of time helping with elderly family members.

VSAAC Celebrates 25 Years of Prevention & Wellness

The Greater Valley Substance Abuse Action Council (VSAAC) was formed in 1990 to address substance abuse issues in the Valley. Over the past 25 years, VSAAC has expanded its programs and services to not only include substance abuse issues but also address tobacco use, suicide, risky behaviors and the mental health of youth and adults in our communities.

Prevention has evolved over the years and VSAAC has been an integral part of the evolution. VSAAC has always utilized data to identify gaps and trends regarding substance use and abuse. As prevention science began to advance, VSAAC embraced the movement and continued to grow with the changes. VSAAC altered its focus from individual change to changing community conditions or policies so that the availability of substances is reduced as well as the demand.



Over the last two decades, research had proven that drug and alcohol addiction is both preventable and treatable. In addition, it has shown us that we need to embrace more than just substance abuse but also look at promoting good mental health, building assets, and reducing other risky behaviors. "By working hand in hand with our communities we are able to delay the age that youth start to use alcohol and illegal drugs, or misuse legal drugs, build protective factors that help to decrease use and support good mental health," said Pam Mautte, Director of VSAAC. "I look forward to continuing our work with our communities in preventing substance use and promoting mental health as this is critical to building both mentally and physically strong individuals and communities."

History

VSAAC was created from a community retreat held in 1989 by the Valley United Way with concerned citizens to address substance abuse issues in the Valley. The outcome of the retreat formed VSAAC in 1990. The State then recognized VSAAC as one of the first few Regional Action Councils. In addition, VSAAC was also awarded a Federal Community Partnership Grant. In 1996 to remain fiscally solvent, VSAAC merged into Birmingham Group Health Services which enabled them to continue to serve the community but also to expand in depth and scope of work while maintaining their original mission. In 1999, VSAAC was awarded a competitive federal Drug Free Communities Grant providing an additional ten years of funding. In addition, they received a highly competitive federal four year STOP (Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking) grant in 2009. In 2010 VSAAC again expanded their reach into the Greater New Haven Community in partnership with the Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services and became Mental Health First Aid instructors. In 2012 VSAAC implemented suicide prevention training and in 2013 began the Drug Endangered Children's Initiative.

VSAAC's services and programs have been provided to more than 150,000 youth and adults throughout our communities which include the towns of Ansonia, Bethany, Derby, Milford, New Haven, Orange, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton, West Haven, and Woodbridge.

Like and follow VSAAC's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/VSAAC for exciting news and upcoming events including VSAAC's 25th Anniversary Workshop/Conference on September 24, 2015.

Mark your Calendars!

Bowl-2-Benefit March 14, 2015

9:00 am, 11:30 am, 2:00 pm,
4:30 pm & 7:00 pm
AMF Lanes, Milford, CT

Walnut Hill Community Church Easter Walk/Run April 4, 2015

8:00 am
Derby Greenway, Derby, CT
(all proceeds benefit UCDVS)

Employment Salute April 29, 2015

12:00 pm to 1:30 pm
Molto Bene, Ansonia, CT

Shoreline Benefit featuring Cupcake Wars May 21, 2015

5:30 pm
Pine Orchard Yacht & Country Club, Branford, CT

BHcare Community Block Party May 28, 2015

4:00 pm to 7:00 pm
BHcare Grounds, Ansonia, CT

Branford Road Race June 21, 2015

10:15 am
Branford Green, Branford, CT
(proceeds benefit UCDVS)

VSAAC's 25th Anniversary Workshop/Conference September 24, 2015

8:30 am to 3:00 pm
Anthony's Ocean View, New Haven, CT

Community Support Awards

BHcare was awarded \$7,500 from the Melville Trust Fund. These funds will provide long-term, unemployed, homeless individuals with the tools and skills necessary to obtain employment. This includes training programs, obtaining identification required by employers, tools or equipment, haircuts, clothing, and assistance with transportation costs.

MELVILLE
CHARITABLE TRUST

BHcare's Greater Valley Substance Abuse Action Council (VSAAC) received \$2,250 from the Valley United Way Special Needs Fund to provide Mental Health First Aid classes throughout the Valley. These courses include Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health First Aid for Law Enforcement and Public Safety.



The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services received \$2,500 from The Foundation of the New Haven County Bar for the Lock Replacement Fund. The Lock Replacement Fund enables local victims of domestic violence to replace the locks on their apartments/homes as part of a safety plan. It helps deter abusers from accessing the home and helps reduce the chances of the victim becoming homeless by vacating their residence out of fear.

The Foundation
of the New Haven County Bar

Doctor's Corner

David A. Sperling, M.D.
Medical Director, BHcare

In the dust jacket of Stanley Kunitz's "The Collected Poems", it is noted that his poems encompass life's meaning, the relation of time to eternity, kinship with nature, love and loss, and most poignantly the prenatal loss of his father. The prenatal loss of his father refers to his father's suicide prior to his birth. His advice to young poets is "to persevere, then explore. Be explorers all your life."

The theme of persevering as a first step is as apt for us as it is the clients we serve. It implies seeing through whatever life, fate, circumstance, illness, accident, heredity or reversals come our way. Our clients come to BHcare for alleviation of symptoms, but their symptoms can only be understood in the context of their lives and experiences. We all metaphorically draw maps to help us understand where we have come from, where we are now, and where we hope to go. Often the client comes with a roughly drawn map, and in our professional roles, we become aspects of Lewis and Clark to help them draft and refine their maps to include important landscapes, rivers, and valleys interspersed with mountains. We look for routes that they may have previously taken that have lead to dead ends or worse, are leading them in circles. It is that feeling of being lost, unsure and frightened that represents one element of the fertile soil in which symptoms thrive. Other important elements include: culture, early experiences, current stressors, genetics, medical conditions, substance abuse, age and longstanding personality patterns. Becoming a cartographer is a lifelong journey for the treater, and hopefully for the client. It implies recognizing your landscape for what it is honestly as a point of departure, and then looking to see what remains, how to proceed and what roads to follow.

Mr. Kunitz's advice was right, and not just for young poets; "persevere, then explore. Be explorers all your life."

Stanley Kunitz won the National Book Award for Poetry in 1995 for "Passing Through: The Later Poems New and Selected". In 1998, he was honored as the Poet Laureate of the United States.

How I'm Helping...

Branford area vendors gathered together on December 14th for the Annual Holiday Shopping Expo at Pine Orchard Yacht and Country Club. The event, coordinated by Betty Ann and Christine Donegan, raised awareness and over **\$10,000** for BHcare.

Many thanks to all the vendors, shoppers and BHcare supporters!

If you'd like to learn more about how you can help, visit our website at www.BHcare.org or call 203-736-2601 x1327.

UCDVS News

Teen Dating Violence Prevention & Awareness Month

February is Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Awareness Month. Love shouldn't hurt, but for many teens it does. Teen dating violence is more common than many people think. One in three teens in the U.S. will experience physical, sexual or emotional abuse by someone they are in a relationship with before they become adults.



The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services offers a program specifically for teens who are in abusive relationships. The program teaches teens how to identify an abusive relationship, what to do when in an abusive relationship, provides education on date rape and drugs and lets them know that it is not their fault.

If someone you know is in an abusive relationship, please call one of our 24-hour hotline numbers at (203) 789-8104 or (203) 736-9944 for free and confidential help.

Everyone deserves to be in a safe and healthy relationship.

Social Club News

BHcare's Valley Social Club has created a 2015 calendar featuring members' artwork. Club members participate in a variety of art classes throughout the year. The pages the calendar are filled with dozens of pictures of their paintings and drawings.



The club is selling the calendars for \$5.00. All proceeds will be used for art supplies and additional art classes for club members.

To purchase a calendar, please contact Jacques at (203) 735-9106.

YAS Expands to Shoreline

BHcare was awarded funding from the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to expand the Young Adult Services (YAS) program to the Shoreline along with increasing client capacity in the Valley.

This program serves young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 who have psychiatric and/or substance abuse issues. The program provides a variety of skill building activities (both individual and groups) to teach life skills (e.g. budgeting, cooking) and social skills that are essential to help young adults increase their overall independence.

For those who live independently, some housing funds are available to assist them with security deposits, rental payments and purchasing items for their apartment. This funding provides the young adults with an opportunity to live successfully in the community.

Learn more about BHcare's YAS program at www.bhcare.org.

My Sister's Place Rolls Out the Red Carpet

My Sister's Place Thrift Store and Donation Center (MSP) held a red carpet premiere of their short film February 5 at the store located at 380 Main Street in Ansonia. The film highlights the store's role in raising funds and awareness for victims of domestic violence and features people who shop at, donate to, and support MSP.

Nearly 50 of you attended the viewing party that featured film stars Miss Carolyn, Judy, Nancy Cahoon, Carol Pendagast, Christina Baldino, Michael Baruch and Cheryle Pearsall.

The video was written, filmed and produced by Annalisa Russell-Smith.

MSP shopper and film star, Miss Carolyn said she had bought her entire outfit at the store. She shops at MSP because she knows she is helping victims of domestic violence. "When I'm wearing it, I know why I purchased it," she said.

All proceeds from the store benefit The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services (UCDVS). MSP contributes more than \$176,000 a year to UCDVS.

You can help in the fight against domestic violence by sharing MSP's video at <http://bit.ly/MSPvideo>.



BHcare is supported by the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Guilford Community Fund, the Guilford Human Services Council, the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, The Valley United Way, United Way of Milford, The Valley Community Foundation and the Towns of Bethany, Branford, Derby, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton and Woodbridge.

BHcare is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities and is licensed by the Department of Public Health.

BHcare is a partner agency of CommuniCare, Inc.

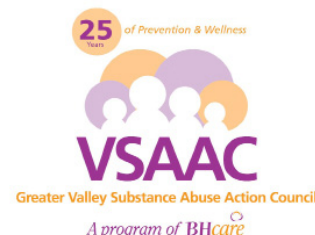
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We apologize for any omissions or oversights. If your department, foundation or municipality has been overlooked, please bring it to our attention.



127 Washington Ave., Third Floor West
North Haven, CT 06473

****Return Service Requested****



Onward & Upward: The Journey Continues with Your Support

The phrase onward and upward means moving toward a better condition or higher level. If a person moves onward and upward, they continue being successful or making progress. Your support has helped make the journey onward and upward a reality for families and individuals throughout the Lower Naugatuck Valley, along the CT Shoreline and in the Greater New Haven communities.

Each year thousands of people walk through the doors of BHcare who are struggling with mental illness, substance abuse and/or domestic violence. Because of you, over **12,000** individuals and families have made the journey onward and upward. Your support helped over **7,000** victims of domestic violence move on from a life filled with violence to a place of safety. Your generosity provided over **33,312** clinical services to nearly **3,000** individuals making their journey to a healthy, happy life a reality.

With your help, thousands more can make the journey to improve their lives. Please show your continued support by making a gift today. You can use the enclosed envelope to make your donation, or you can donate online at www.bhcare.org.

Thank you for making the journey onward and upward possible.

