



The Digest

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Out In The Community

- Whiteside County Senior Wellness Fair April 24th
- Cinco de Mayo May 5th, Sterling YWCA parking lot
- Child Fair June 3rd at Sauk Valley Community College

Events

- Stay Home for Sinnissippi Non-Event Gala April 22nd-30th
- Red Cross Blood Drive - Sinnissippi Centers Dixon Office April 25th
- Sinnissippi Centers Golf Open August 3rd

The State of Behavioral Healthcare

Sinnissippi Centers' President/CEO Patrick Phelan gives an update

In recent years the COVID pandemic, a dramatic increase in opioid overdose deaths, workforce shortages, and a reduction in the stigma associated with mental health and substance use challenges have all increased efforts in Springfield and Washington D.C. to build a comprehensive and sustainable behavioral health system.

In 2021 and 2022, new laws aimed at the development of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics, a student loan repayment program for behavioral health professionals, and long overdue rate increases for Medicaid-funded services have allowed our field to take several steps forward. As a result of years of neglect, we still have a long way to go, however. There are several legislative priorities for Sinnissippi Centers and our partners that we are watching closely during the spring legislative session in Illinois.

Two new rate bills have been introduced, specifically directed at crisis services for mental health and residential substance use treatment under Medicaid. Current rates fall very much short of paying the costs of supporting a 24/7 crisis system with multiple layers of coverage and the professional staffing required to provide crisis services. The increases requested would allow providers of these services to cover their full cost of care. Additional bills would ensure that the entirety of a residential stay is paid for through the last day of treatment and provide for a check-off donation opportunity on state income tax returns to support behavioral health.

Workforce challenges have hit many industries very hard, but one of the most affected has been the behavioral health field. Historically, inadequate compensation and the challenging nature of the work have prevented many from entering the field. Two critical bills have been introduced: One to expand the student loan repayment program and another to provide tuition waivers to college students who pledge to work in the behavioral health field.

In recent years, there has been a push to expand crisis services for youth and adults. Critical legislation this year would ensure that those crisis services have sustainable funding as other first responders do, and will ensure that organizations like Sinnissippi can support individuals who are in need of inpatient hospitalization.

State and federal parity laws were designed to ensure that behavioral health treatment is equally accessible as physical healthcare. However, several barriers still exist that deny the public true parity. For those with private insurance, statistics show that behavioral health services are much more likely than physical health services to be assessed as out-of-network. In addition, coverage of behavioral health wellness visits is extremely rare. For those with Medicaid coverage, treatment is not possible until lengthy assessments are completed. Proposed legislation would address each of these areas and increase the parity we are promised under current laws.

Important legislation this year focuses on harm reduction for those with substance use disorders. New efforts would develop safe consumption sites, allow for the distribution of fentanyl test strips, and improve access to lifesaving Narcan.

Driving such a hefty agenda forward requires a great deal of support. We are only successful with the backing of our trade associations, consultants, champions, and most importantly dedicated legislators who sponsor and pass these critical bills.



Patrick Phelan, Sinnissippi Centers' President/CEO



Sinnissippi News

Lloyd Sidwell

Sinnissippi Centers has lost a long time friend. Former Sinnissippi Executive Director **Lloyd Sidwell** passed away March



7th. Sidwell was the Executive Director under our former name, Sinnissippi Mental Health Center, from 1979–1989. Lloyd was a strategist who envisioned new ways of attaining higher goals for the agency. Sidwell achieved many milestones, among them were: Sinnissippi implemented the Intensive Outpatient Program which continues today; opened new offices in Oregon, Mt. Carroll, and Rochelle; and established the agency's toll-free number - 800-242-7642. Finally, under Sidwell's leadership, corporate restructuring took place and the name changed to Sinnissippi Centers, Inc. Sidwell visited Sinnissippi on February 12, 2016. He was very impressed with the continued growth of the agency and seemed pleased that many things implemented during his tenure were still in place.

Alcohol Awareness Month

April marks National Alcohol Awareness Month and is sponsored by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) to educate the public about America's



#1 health problem: Alcohol dependence which claims the lives of more than 90,000 people every year. This month focuses on raising awareness about alcohol use and dependency before it is fatal.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Have you heard about **988**? What is the new 988 number all about?

The 988 dialing code is an easy to remember number formerly known as the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** and formerly a 10-digit phone number.

It's a 24/7 crisis and support line. You can **call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org** for yourself or for someone else, if you are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.

988 serves as a universal entry point so that no matter where you live in the United States, you can reach a trained crisis counselor who can help.

988 offers 24/7 access to crisis counselors who can help people experiencing mental health-related distress. That could be:

- Thoughts of suicide
- Mental health or substance use crisis, or
- Any other kind of emotional distress

It is a network of over 200 locally operated and funded crisis centers around the country. Sinnissippi Centers is among the crisis centers that participate in 988.

The need for such a crisis and support line is clear. Too many people are experiencing suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress without the support and care they need, and sadly, the pandemic only made a bad situation worse when it comes to mental health and wellness in America.

In 2020, the U.S. had one death from suicide about every 11 minutes. In 2021: For people aged 10–14 and 25–34 years, suicide was the second-leading cause of death. Suicide rates increased among certain ethnic groups such as African Americans and Hispanics. In addition, more than 105,000 people died from drug overdoses and nearly 900,000 youth aged 12-17 and 1.7 million adults attempted suicide

Yet, there is hope. The 988 Lifeline helps thousands of struggling people overcome suicidal crisis or mental-health related distress every day.

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is funded by the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration** and has been administered by **Vibrant Emotional Health** since it began as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline in 2005.



Blood Drive at Sinnissippi

Sinnissippi Centers will host an **American Red Cross Blood Drive** **Tuesday, April 25, 2023, from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm.** The blood drive will be in **Sinnissippi's Conference Center** at our **Dixon office** at **325 Illinois Route 2, Dixon.** Appointments are preferred although walk-ins are welcome-subject to availability. For an appointment you can call **800-RED-CROSS** or Destiny at Sinnissippi Centers at **815-284-6611.** You can also schedule your time online at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/donation-time>.



Sinnissippi Centers Blood Drive
Conference Center
Dixon Office
Tuesday, April 25, 2023
2:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Stay Home for Sinnissippi

Stay Home for Sinnissippi Centers Non-Event Gala will return during April, Alcohol Awareness Month, and just prior to May, Mental Health Month.

Details are posted on our website under the events section at www.sinnissippi.org.

There is a link to donate online to the Non-Event Gala and other content.

The virtual event runs April 22nd through April 30th, 2023. The idea

is to make your own fun anytime during those dates and to promote your mental wellness, while making a donation to support the event. Proceeds from donations to Stay Home will support Sinnissippi Centers' Veteran Services.

For more information on Sinnissippi visit our website, www.sinnissippi.org, email us at info@sinnissippi.com or call 800-242-7642.



More News

Save the Date

Sinnissippi Centers' 31st annual golf open will take place on the first Thursday in August at

Deer Valley Golf Club in Deer Grove. The August 3rd event is a scramble format, sometimes called a best-ball tournament. Anyone of any golfing ability would enjoy our "fun-raiser". Proceeds from the golf open will benefit Veteran Services at Sinnissippi Centers. Information is posted on our website under events. Go to www.sinnissippi.org. You can also email us at info@sinnissippi.com.



Take a Chance on Youth

The 2nd annual **Take a Chance on Youth 50/50 fundraiser** was another huge success, this year raising over \$4,000.00 for youth services. The winning ticket was held by **Jeff Berge** of Rock Falls. Pictured at right are Phyllis Berge, Jeff Berge, and Sinnissippi Centers' President/CEO Patrick Phelan. Proceeds will support activities for youth in services at Sinnissippi especially during the warmer months.



Running Mad 5K

Rockin' Nutrition in Dixon held a 5K fun run April 16th in honor of a former employee Lexie Perry. The fun run was Alice in Wonderland themed and some participants wore appropriate costumes. Proceeds from the Running Mad 5K are being donated to Sinnissippi Centers.



Natalie Andrews Honored

Former Sinnissippi Centers' Director of Substance Use Services, **Natalie Andrews**, paid a visit March 16th to our Dixon office. Andrews was selected as the 2020 recipient of the **Jane Reid Keefer Award** for professions and education. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the luncheon where the presentation was to be made was canceled. Andrews received her award during her visit to Sinnissippi Centers. She also attended the rescheduled Women of Achievement luncheon this year on April 13th. Andrews, Sinnissippi Centers' **Gloria Martin**, **Cassandra Salmon**, Director of Development and Marketing at the YWCA of the Sauk Valley and **Linda Hellmich**, PhD, Board President, YWCA of the Sauk Valley, are pictured above during the award presentation at Sinnissippi Centers' Dixon office.



Left to right: *Cassandra Salmon, YMCA of the Sauk Valley Director of Development & Marketing, Sinnissippi Centers' Gloria Martin, Natalie Andrews, and Linda Hellmich, PhD, YMCA of the Sauk Valley Board President.*

Navigating Childhood Anxiety

KSB Hospital, Sinnissippi Centers, the Lee County Health Department, and NAMI Sauk Valley are among the sponsors of a September event in Dixon. Psychologist **Karen Young** will come to Dixon for a presentation and workshop on understanding the developing brain to support whole-child development. The event will take place on **Tuesday, September 26, 2023**. More details will follow in the next edition of The Digest and on Sinnissippi's website.



The Digest Newsletter Spring 2023

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SINNISSIPPI CENTERS
 Together we inspire wellness

Sinnissippi Centers, Inc.

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800-242-7642

www.sinnissippi.org

Office Locations

- Dixon
 - Illinois Route 2
 - Town Square Centre
- Freeport
- Mt. Carroll
- Oregon
- Rochelle
- Sterling

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The Digest is a publication of Sinnissippi Centers, Inc.



Donations

Donations can be mailed to Sinnissippi Centers, 325 Illinois Route 2, Dixon, IL 61021.

You can also donate online, visit: www.sinnissippi.org/donate

You can specify if you would like to give your donation in honor or in memory of a family member or loved one.

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...Lloyd Sidwell
Jeff & Phyllis Berge
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