



# The Digest

## Sinnissippi Names New CEO

Kemp rose to the top of the list of candidates to lead the agency

Sinnissippi Centers has named a new President/CEO. **Stacie Kemp**, MSW, LCSW, officially took over the role of President & CEO in early January 2024.

Kemp had been Sinnissippi's Interim President & CEO since September following the departure of former CEO **Patrick Phelan**.

Previously, Kemp served as Vice President and Chief Operating Officer and was part of a leadership team that guided the organization's rapid growth during the past eight years.

Kemp's career in the nonprofit sector spans 25 years in behavioral health and social services. Born and raised in Carroll County, she feels passionate about serving the needs of individuals and communities in Northwest Illinois.

**Larry Prindaville**, Chairperson of Sinnissippi's Board of Directors said, "Following a nationwide search, Sinnissippi's Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the best and most qualified candidate to become the agency's next President & CEO was already on board and effectively leading the organization. We are confident that under Stacie's continued leadership, Sinnissippi's trajectory of excellence will continue to mark the agency as a behavioral health resource of choice for many thousands of individuals and families throughout the area."

Early in her career, Kemp was a clinician at Sinnissippi Centers' Mt. Carroll office and rejoined the agency in 2015 as Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer. Prior to returning to Sinnissippi, Kemp served in various social service leadership roles in the Milwaukee area, including as Director of Performance and Quality Improvement and IT Business Collaboration for Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan.

"I am honored to be selected by the Board as the next President & CEO for Sinnissippi Centers," states Kemp. "I feel very passionate about being a strong community partner and about making sure the behavioral health needs of our communities are addressed, and I also feel strongly about equally supporting the employees of Sinnissippi and being a quality employer in Northwest Illinois."

In addition to her leadership roles at Sinnissippi, Kemp has been serving on the Community Behavioral Healthcare Association (CBHA) Board for the last six years, including as Chair, and was recently elected to co-chair the Public Policy Committee, which guides the CBHA legislative and advocacy direction for behavioral health in the state of Illinois.

Kemp is active in her community through the Girl Scouts and as a former board member of the Dixon Family YMCA. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Knox College and a Master of Social Work degree from Washington University in St. Louis.



## Latest News

- Sinnissippi Names New CEO page 1
- CCBHC Update pages 1 & 2
- Recovery by Jennifer Meisel page 2
- My Appreciation by Tamara Wolf page 3
- Holiday Food Basket Project Sets Record page 3
- Recent Donations pages 3 & 4

## Events

- 32nd Annual Sinnissippi Centers Golf Open, Thursday August 8, 2024

## CCBHC Update

Sinnissippi Centers continues to work on our Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) efforts. A CCBHC is designed to ensure access to coordinated, comprehensive, behavioral healthcare services.

The CCBHC model is vital to the future of behavioral healthcare services throughout the nation. Sinnissippi Centers is the recipient of two federal CCBHC grants, which span a total of six years and provide funding and support for Sinnissippi to offer services that will bring the organization into compliance with the service requirements of the model.

The next stage in this model is to become certified through one's own state. Currently, Illinois is in the process of applying for a federal



## What's New?

### Toys for Tots

Sinnissippi Centers' Veteran Services Coordinator Cody Jeremiah spearheaded the agency's participation in the United States Marine Corps' Toys for Tots program this year. Collection boxes were placed in Sinnissippi's locations including our Living Room Drop-In Center in downtown Dixon. The response was overwhelming. You can see Cody in the photo above with all the donation boxes.



### Take a Chance on Youth

Sinnissippi Centers' Take a Chance on Youth 50/50 returns in February and runs through March. Proceeds provide support to youth services including summer activities. Tickets will be sold primarily by Sinnissippi staff and board members. Tickets are \$20.00 and up to 1,000 tickets will be sold. Last year's prize was nearly \$5,000.00. For more information contact Marketing Manager Andrew Jackson at 815-254-6611.

### Heart Disease and Depression

The relationship between depression and heart disease has been known for years. Research shows that at least 25% of cardiac patients have depression and that adults with depression are more likely to have or develop heart disease. Although the link is well known, researchers are still trying to discover why they are linked. It's a good idea to make sure you screen for both.

## CCBHC Update

*Continued from page 1*

grant that will assist with developing the certification process, and Sinnissippi is one of 28 providers in the state of Illinois selected to be a part of Illinois' grant application.

All CCBHC organizations must provide a set of core services, including crisis services, outpatient mental health and substance use services, primary care screening and monitoring, case management, psychiatric rehabilitation services, focused services for veterans, and services provided by individuals with lived experience. Around the nation,

states that have invested in this program have experienced demonstrable cost savings and positive clinical outcomes. If the state application is awarded, Illinois can officially launch the program in July of 2024. "Demand for mental health services and substance use treatment services continues to grow, while staffing shortages and inflation continue to challenge providers' ability to deliver care," says Stacie Kemp, President & CEO. "The CCBHC model will allow us to build on existing federal grants to significantly expand our capacity to provide timely, evidence-based services in the areas we serve – something that is critically needed throughout the state."

## Recovery by Jennifer Meisel

As a Sinnissippi Centers Behavioral Health Clinician I know that the stories of the clients we serve can both create more awareness and encourage others to seek the services they need.

I wanted to share the following recovery story of a client I see. I began seeing her in the summer of 2023. At her first appointment she came in intoxicated and reported she did a "99 shooter" before coming in.

We discussed the event and sobriety. When she first came to me, she was buying these 99 proof shooters daily and drinking them in her car and could not stay sober. She said she was in a very rough relationship with her husband and child. She was unable to spend any money, even to buy lunch for work and oftentimes went without eating.

She was self-medicating with alcohol and due to her Post Traumatic Stress Disorder when her husband would yell at her she would shut down and be quiet not to cause any further yelling. She was kicked out of her home numerous times where she would go walking without socks and shoes on her feet and the only clothing she had with her was what she was wearing.

During the following months we worked on her trauma, communication skills, sobriety, and proper medication. Now she is sober from alcohol, did couples sessions, and she is getting along with her family where they are doing activities together again. She is taking pride in her appearance and caring about how she looks and feels.

She is now using her voice during discussions with her husband, she is engaging in sporting activities with her son, she is back to sleeping in the same room with her husband, and their son looks to her again for support and attention.

In the beginning she would say she felt coming here was her biggest support and the place she felt safe and secure. She enjoyed the group and someone listening to her. I am so proud of all the work she has done and continues to do.

This family went from complete disaster to reunification and a healthy all-around environment. She oftentimes thanks me, but I always tell her that I only provided the tools and that it was her that did the work. She will say that makes her feel stronger hearing the validation. She often says she is so grateful to be getting her life back again and credits all the support services she has received from Sinnissippi Centers.



## My Appreciation Tamara Wolf

As I reflect on my 30 years at Sinnissippi Centers, I can't help but be thankful to the many strong and compassionate women who lifted me. I feel the need to thank each one of them, some who have passed.

Elissa Quigg who hired me in 1993 as an intern to serve part-time in the DCFS Homemaker program. I'm grateful that I was considered and hired as supervisor of the DCFS Homemakers when Elissa retired in 1994 and for the chance to prove myself.

I am grateful to have been a case aide in the Family First program where I worked full time with wonderful women who had my back, enhanced my skills, and challenged me, like Katie Seitner and Beverly Albrecht.

Carol Novak, whose influence helped me understand that trauma changes a person's ability to accept help, to function, to trust, or see their future clearly. Carol pioneered the search for a parenting support curriculum to benefit parents who have experienced trauma.

During the Community that Cares grant, I met many wonderful parents facilitating Parent Cafés and support groups throughout our service area. I will treasure those café conversations with parents who genuinely love their children and have a strong desire to support their growth socially, academically, and spiritually.

I spent the last six years in the

Family Advocacy Center and have loved facilitating parenting classes. I'm so grateful to Kimberly Crump, Gloria Martin, and Nicole Bleuer for including me in some of the Healthy Families trainings. And thank you, Amanda

Rousonelos, for your compassionate, nurturing support.

I cannot forget to thank my "Sinnissippi Sisterhood": Stacie Kemp, Gretchen Wing, Jessica McCarver, Jordan Clapper, Kateri Mowery, Janda Hicks, Ginnie Schauff, Kelly Burrow, DeAnne White, Laura Smith, and Inga Neuner. Thank you to Ann

Prindaville, Mary Coester, Vernalee Sheffler, and Irene Lewis-Wimbley, who have left Sinnissippi but remain my inspiration. All these women have lifted me with encouragement at a time when I needed it most. Thank you to Katie Herath, Kim Hanson, and Jenni Holloway, you are simply the best at what you do!

I happily leave my position in the Family Advocacy Center with relief and gratitude that Olivia DeWitte and Jordan Clapper are accepting the torch.

"We rise when we lift others" is my favorite mantra. I can only hope that I lifted a sister or two along my path. Thank you to all the wonderful women who have lifted me. There were simply too many to name them all.

- Tamara (Tammie) Wolf. Sinnissippi Employee from November 15, 1993, to November 24, 2023.



## Holiday Food Basket Record

Sinnissippi Centers continued a holiday tradition this past December with our Holiday Food Basket Project. Boxes of non-perishable canned and boxed food items and a meat and dessert item are given out to Sinnissippi client families based on certain criteria and are registered by clinicians and case managers. This year we distributed nearly 170 baskets, impacting over 600 individuals. It was a significant increase from last year's project. The baskets were either picked up by clients or delivered by staff just prior to Christmas.



Sinnissippi maintenance pitch in to deliver food baskets to our offices

## More News

### Recent Donations

Sinnissippi Centers would like to express our thanks to all the individuals, businesses, and other organizations that support us throughout the year. Your generosity goes a long way in helping us complete our mission of improving the mental wellness of individuals in the communities we serve. This fall we had two special fundraisers. A Community Impact Night in October was hosted by Pizza Ranch in Sterling. The proceeds benefited summer group programming at Sinnissippi. Prior to that a team of employees from Citizens State Bank traveled to Traverse City Michigan for the Ragnar Race in September, for Recovery Month. The proceeds benefited the mental wellness and recovery of Sinnissippi clients. Words cannot adequately express our gratitude.



Sinnissippi Centers Youth Services staff accept the donation from Pizza Ranch at the end of their Community Impact Night in October.



Sinnissippi Centers Marketing Manager, Andrew Jackson (center), accepts Citizens State Bank's donation from their Ragnar Race Team.

Recent Donations continued on back page

## The Digest Newsletter Winter 2023-24

Editor: Andrew Jackson  
Writers: Andrew Jackson, Stacie Kemp, Jennifer Meisel, Tamara Wolf  
Contributors: Autumn Jordan, Cody Jeremiah, Stacie Kemp, Yariela Lopez, DeAnne White



SINNISSIPPI CENTERS  
Together we inspire wellness

## Sinnissippi Centers, Inc.

Administrative office  
325 Illinois Route 2  
Dixon, IL 61021

### 24-hour Emergency Phone Number

**800-242-7642**

[www.sinnissippi.org](http://www.sinnissippi.org)

#### Office Locations

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

#### Apartment Sites

- Dixon
- Mt. Carroll
- Rochelle
- Sterling

#### Recovery Homes

- Dixon
- Amboy

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 57  
Rock Island, IL



United Way of Lee County  
Community Partner



*Sinnissippi Centers is funded, in part, by the Illinois Department of Human Services and is a United Way of Lee County Partner.*

*Sinnissippi Centers is accredited by The Joint Commission and recipient of the Gold Seal of Approval.*

*The Digest is a publication of Sinnissippi Centers, Inc.*



**SINNISSIPPI CENTERS**  
*Together we inspire wellness*

## 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](http://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.

Lawrence Allen  
Anonymous  
James & Sandra Arduini  
Valerie Berning  
Bill & Connie Bontz  
Mindy Borgmann  
Boss Carpet One Floor & Home  
Darlene Butterbaugh  
David & Marlene Cain  
Central Bank Illinois  
John & Beth Nelson Chase  
Citizens State Bank  
Connie & Larry Clayton  
Rev. Jeffrey & Mary Coester  
Linda Collett  
Alan & Kathleen Cooper  
Deborah Ebensberger

JoAnn Fettrow  
Amy Finn  
Kay Fisher  
Forreston Veterinary Clinic  
Linda Giesen  
Julia & Ron Hammer  
Reed Harris  
Kathy Heinkel  
Illinois Critical Access Hospital  
Network  
Andrew & Beverly Jackson  
Kevin Keltner  
Leon & Dolly Kinn  
Sarah & Hugh Knapp  
Charlene Knudten  
Fritz & Sally Kuhlemeier  
Delores Kustom  
Brad & Sharon Law  
Ann & Doug Lee  
Sue Linder  
Bill & Annette Long  
Macedonia Baptist Church  
Kevin Marx  
Joanne Mayes  
McCormick's Nursery & Garden  
Center  
Andy & Sarah McFarlane  
H.F. Miller Insurance Agency  
Mt. Carroll United Methodist  
Women  
Ellen & Carl Mumford

Jennifer Nesbit  
Erin Otto  
Allison Palmer  
Jeni Pearce  
Patrick & Tricia Phelan  
Pizza Ranch  
Larry & Ann Prindaville  
William Reigle  
Cheryl Rife  
Deb Rife  
Kristen Rife  
Rochelle Veterinary Hospital  
Rock Falls American Legion  
Jim & Inger Sarver  
Sauk Valley Bank  
Mark Scholl  
Thomas & Tammy Shaw  
Richard & Donna Siders  
Bettie Sullivan  
Triumph Financial/TBK Bank  
Peggy Tully  
Julie Turner  
Peggy Ulferts  
Fonda Wells  
Sarah Wheeler  
Morris & Pat Wiener  
Gary & Lori Wilhelm  
Charles Winterton  
Stephanie Wurster

### In Honor of

...Phyllis Berge  
John & Beth Nelson Chase  
William Reigle  
Erma Zager

### In Memory of

...Former patients of Singer  
Mental Health Center  
Dennis & Monica Hendricks

...Michael Delp  
Pam Delp

...Jerry Heisinger  
Larry & Ann Prindaville

...Sandra Meinsma  
Mary Ann Hutchison

...Sylvia Montavon  
Jeff & Phyllis Berge

...Bill Ritenour  
Jeff & Phyllis Berge

...Dr. W.S. Rybak  
James & Sharon Grot

To sign up for the electronic version of The Digest visit [sinnissippi.org/newsletter](http://sinnissippi.org/newsletter)