



harmonia
COLLABORATIVE CARE

life. with balance.

Collaboration Creates Confidence

2022 Annual Report

Vision

Harmonia Collaborative Care empowers individuals to be healthy and fulfilled.

Mission

Harmonia Collaborative Care delivers best-practice Health Home, behavioral health and senior services to foster individuals' independence and improve their quality of life.

Core Values

We value **integrity** in the way we serve and empower individuals and are committed to:

Quality Care - We prioritize the quality of care we deliver, drawing from best practice standards, superior quality reviews, continuous improvement and personal commitment.

Compassion - We bring kindness, humanity, empathy and sensitivity to our work to ensure boundaries, maximizing client growth and allowing for provider self-care.

Collaboration - We are active and open to thoughtful collaborations supporting internal relationships, programs and community partners.

Culture of dedication, passion and joy - We outwardly express dedication, passion and joy about our work to our clients, team and community.

Behavioral Health:

Southern Erie, Northern Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Counties.



We can serve anyone in WNY. Our service area is expanding with telehealth capabilities.

Health Home:

All of Erie, Southern Niagara, Northern Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties



Senior Services:

Brant, Collins, Eden, Evans, Gowanda, Hamburg, North Collins and Springville.



CarePanion:

Southern Erie County

Expanding to meet the needs of Erie County and its surrounding areas.



Collaboration Creates Confidence

"I'm fine," we like to say.
"No problems. All set."

Society says we need to be strong. Independent. We can make it on our own.

But sometimes, that's not true. And that's OK.

Collaboration is one of the most powerful strategies to become better versions of ourselves.

It might be a friend with a fresh perspective. A business partner with a new idea. A significant other who acts as a sounding board.

At Harmonia, we provide the vital listening, empathy and counsel people need at critical times – and we practice what we profess. We cooperate across our team to ensure we're considering the full picture and all available resources when making recommendations. We also join forces with a host of regional partners, to broaden our reach and scope of services.

It's all done to strengthen the confidence of our clients – and the bonds within our community.

We help people overcome their struggles and regain some control of their lives.

Together.



Harmonia at a Glance — Services Offered

Harmonia services are designed to improve and enhance mental health, personal growth and independence.

Counseling Services — Professionally trained and licensed clinicians provide treatment for mental health conditions. Our holistic, empathic approach enables clients to take advantage of quality therapeutic services which include:

- Individual therapy
- Marital/Couples therapy
- Family therapy
- Group therapy
- Crisis intervention
- Medication treatment
- Case management
- Links to vocational and social programs

Health Home — Our specialists help Medicaid recipients with mental health concerns and chronic conditions to stay healthy and out of the hospital/emergency room. Harmonia managers coordinate and provide access to care available in the community.

Senior Services — Harmonia's specialists offer compassionate care to seniors facing the challenges of lifestyle change. Our Senior Service Managers provide a free assessment to link clients with:

- Health and pharmaceutical insurance
- Referrals to home care options
- Assistance with housing options
- Assistance with benefits and entitlements (HEAP, SNAP, Medicaid, etc.)
- Links to caregiver support groups
- Unbiased service provider information and referrals
- Unbiased nursing home information
- Transportation options

CarePanion — non-medical in-home care providers who assist seniors and other house-bound clients with tasks such as housekeeping, errands, and safety reviews, while providing much-needed companionship to help them battle loneliness, remain independent and age in place with dignity.

Our Why

We all strive to find harmony in our lives — the synchronicity between our family, passions, work and home. There are many challenges to a harmonious existence: sickness, addiction, the realities of aging and the burdens of life. Harmonia helps to harmonize our clients' lives, so they can move to a melody that supports healthy balance. Harmonia is the Latin word for harmony. It can also mean melody, consonance and concordance. It speaks to disparate pieces working together to create something whole.

What We Do

Harmonia Collaborative Care offers behavioral health and senior care services, along with Health Home case management from our two beautiful facilities in Derby and Hamburg, and via telehealth services to clients all across Western New York. Our counselors and staff pride themselves in providing empathic care to bring balance to the lives of those who entrust us with their care. We help people attain their highest level of well-being and maintain their independence through our integrated Mental Health, Senior and Health Home services, while reducing the cost of care for clients and funders.



Dear Clients, Colleagues, Donors and Supporters,

2022 was significant in our evolution. With the pandemic in our rearview, we increased our in-person care while fine-tuning new practices and organizational norms. We also evaluated and expanded collaborative opportunities within and outside our walls, which changed mindsets and boosted confidence among our team, while strengthening the confidence others had in us.

For instance, while we still offer our counselors much autonomy in how they approach their practice – a steady point of pride and distinction at Harmonia – we’ve instilled a tightknit culture and sense of team, becoming more receptive to exploring new solutions and approaches by partnering with colleagues and external agencies. These new and expanded alliances are broadening the reach and scope of what we can accomplish, to the benefit of the thousands of people from 92 zip codes we serve each year. I’ll highlight some of these initiatives in this letter – and later, you’ll read about some of those we’ve recently helped.

Behavioral Health

We added capacity and depth to this team in addition to adjusting when, where and how we deliver our services. In response to changing client preferences and the continued popularity of telehealth (which now comprises roughly 2/3 of our treatment sessions), our clinicians split their time between our office and remote settings. This saves them transportation, childcare and related

expenses, as well as valuable time – the same benefits which many clients find so advantageous.

Teenagers are increasingly susceptible to mental illness, especially following the pandemic. Yet, this trend was well underway prior to the outbreak. A 2017 *U.S. News & World Report* article¹ stated that 21% of teens had experienced a severe mental disorder, according to a National Alliance on Mental Illness study. Similarly, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study found 17% of high school students had seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months.

Thus, we are thrilled to have expanded our in-school counseling program, “Turn It Around.” Thanks to a John R. Oishei Foundation grant, we’ve increased our presence at Lake Shore High School to three days per week. This allowed us to complete 365 assessment and treatment sessions with 50 at-risk youth last year. We also hired a full-time school programs coordinator to increase access within rural and Native communities. She’s expanding our relationships, grant management and research capabilities in this critical space, and we hope to one day add other districts to our footprint. You’ll meet some of the people involved in this program later in this report.

In all, we added six counselors and a nurse practitioner while managing the inevitable ebbs and flows of any modern workforce. We are proud of the multidisciplinary team we’ve

assembled, comprised of psychologists, mental health counselors and social workers, each with a host of trainings and certifications. We were especially pleased to be included as a finalist in *Buffalo Business First’s* 2023 Best Places to Work (small company category), further illustrating our commitment to our colleagues as well as the team approach we take toward clients and one another.

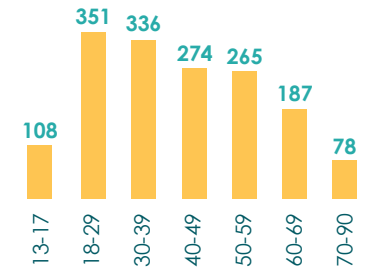
Senior Services

This team continues to see high demand, including a year-over-year increase in cases managed (35%). In addition to the removal of COVID restrictions, a large driver has been the lingering negative public perceptions which nursing homes and assisted living facilities incurred during the pandemic. Continued staff shortages and feelings of patient isolation² have only exacerbated these opinions, leading more seniors and their families to choose to remain at home and age in place longer.

Our CarePanion team, which provides homebound clients with housekeeping, errands, safety reviews, companionship and other non-medical services, has also benefitted from a return to normal. Its increased client interaction led to a 5% increase in service hours.

This is good news for our community, as it allows families more quality time with their loved ones and lessens the need to liquidate their assets, but we also recognize the growing shift in caregiving which has accompanied it. Increasingly, spouses and adult children are taking on this vital role, creating added levels of stress in the process.

Fortunately, we’re not alone in recognizing this. Last year the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation (RCWF), the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York, and the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation teamed up to create “Exhale,” an initiative designed



Harmonia Care
Mental Health Services
Persons Served by Age

2022

1,600

Mental Health clients served

117%

increase in Anxiety Disorders since 2019

91%

clients who received multiple sessions

400

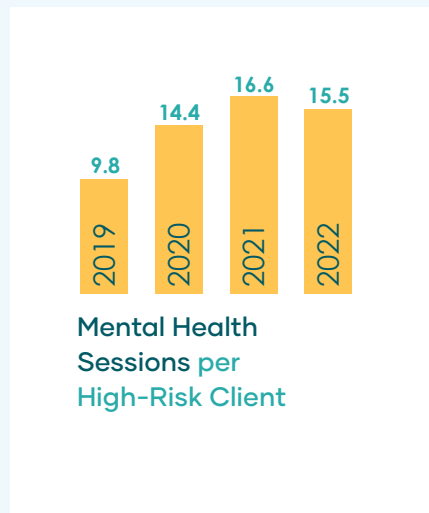
Senior Services clients served

5%

increase in CarePanion Service Hours vs. 2021

to reimagine and increase respite opportunities for family caregivers of older adults. The Exhale grantees included Cradle Beach, which has partnered with our Senior Services and Mental Health teams to provide these much-needed services to Southern Erie County residents. Our Pathways for Caregivers program is now held on the third Thursday of every month. Harmonia's contributions to Pathways include a caregiver support group, held by one of our trained clinicians, as well as expertise brought by our Director of Senior Services. We are working toward a second component that would include an overnight respite.

To further support caregivers, we also received a Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Legacy Fund Grant from the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo. This will allow us to educate caregivers to better support the mental health needs of their loved-one, thereby reducing their own stress and recognizing the importance of their needs in their very important and demanding role. This is just another way that our Mental Health and Senior Services Programs are working closer than ever!



Health Home

Collaboration is at the heart of this team's activities. After all, they literally help clients connect with other agencies and resources to improve their lives. Thus, it's vital for them to stay connected to and work together with a host of partners, including human service organizations, hospitals and healthcare providers, government agencies, elected officials and more.

This team also has the broadest coverage area among our service groups, extending from Niagara through Erie and into parts of Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties. The network of colleagues they must know and maintain is vast, if they are to provide the best services for those with chronic conditions and mental health concerns who need help getting their lives back on track.

Collaborating Through Community Involvement

As an active, long-term member of the Western New York Integrated Care Collaborative (WNYICC), Harmonia is pleased to provide two new coaches offering services for three new programs. Partnering with WNYICC not only lets us provide services to more people in new and innovative ways, it also presents other revenue streams to support our historically underfunded Senior Service Program.

1. We offer a Falls Prevention program, through which our coaches conduct in-home assessments of participants' risk for falling at their residence. Then, the coach and participants work together to reduce those risks by identifying new resources, programs and routines to make the client's home safer.

2. The Healthy IDEAS program integrates depression awareness and management with health coaching. Through screenings, education and links to other providers, programs and resources, we empower individuals to set and accomplish meaningful goals, and provide regular progress reports.

3. The Community Health Coaching program focuses on social risk factors such as access to healthy foods and health education, as well as coordination of transportation services, appointment setting and other critical resources. This helps clients avoid acute care and increases their confidence to make informed decisions and solve their health-related problems.

I'm also pleased that our team is active in the community. Megan Brautlacht, our Director of Mental Health Clinics, completed Leadership Buffalo's 2022 Rising Leaders Class. She learned about Western New York's history – and more importantly its future, including many barriers to and opportunities for wellness. Jennifer Gunia, our Senior Services Director, serves on the Village of Hamburg's Senior Service Advisory Board, and I serve on the boards of the Southtowns Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Value Network Advisory Board, and WNYICC. It's important to provide a variety of services for our community, but it also does wonders for our relationships and brand building efforts when our leaders maintain a public presence.

References:

- Nursing Home Statistics 2023 U.S. News (usnews.com)
- Are Some Age Groups More Prone to Depression Than Others? (usnews.com)

Better Together

There's a certain irony to our work. Virtually every service we provide is designed to help an individual become more independent. Whether it's mental health, senior care and health home case management, the person at the center wants to be able to maintain some sense of freedom, individuality and relief. Yet, as we've evolved as a human services agency, it's become evident that collaboration is the best way to achieve those goals. Be it partnerships with funders, municipalities and other providers, or our clients collaborating with our team and their families, in almost every case we achieve better results when we don't go it alone. In the coming pages you'll be introduced to some people who have benefitted from this approach. They tried to go it alone, but that only got them so far. Yet, once they had a partner they could count on, their lives improved soon after.

The best news? Our team isn't full. We're always happy to discuss new service collaborations – or assist those who need a trusted partner on their side. If any of this describes you, please contact me or anyone on our team. We'll connect you to the right people who can best serve your needs.

Sincerely,

Valerie Nowak
LMHC, MPA
Chief Executive Officer



Tough Times for Teens



Sarah (left) and Jordan lead our team in improving students' mental health at Lake Shore High School.

There's never been a more difficult time to be in high school. Social media pressures seem never-ending – as does the fear of violence. The political landscape is sharply divided. Add in a pandemic which thrust isolation and loss on countless youth, and you can understand why teen mental health is at an all-time low.

Last year marked Harmonia's 10th Anniversary serving Lake Shore High School, located on the Angola-Derby border. With the support of the Gernatt Family Foundation and the John R. Oishei Foundation, we now have two counselors onsite to provide students with immediate and confidential access when experiencing stress, anxiety, bullying or depression.

"Some kids were very uncomfortable returning after the pandemic, especially those going from middle to high school," explains Senior School Clinician Jordan Alston. "Under normal circumstances, it causes anxiety. They wonder, 'Will I make friends? Will it be overwhelming?' Many hadn't seen a teacher's face for a year and a half. We're here to help these kids find their voices."

All this has fueled a greater need for – and acceptance of – mental health counseling among teens. Harmonia has served thousands of Lake Shore students since 2012, providing 365 sessions last year alone.

"We don't just look at the student," says School Programs Coordinator Sarah Cozzemera. "We look at their social determinants of health and psycho-educational resources – like home environment, food insecurity, and access to medical care."

Sarah attended New York's 2023 Youth Mental Health Summit, hosted by Governor Kathy Hochul and the NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH). There were more than 1,000 participants at the event, where some alarming statistics were shared.

Recent surveys have shown that, on average, teens spend 3.5 hours per day on social media, while one in four spend five hours or more, and one in seven spend seven or more.¹ Moreover, those who spend more than three hours a day have twice the risk of experiencing poor mental health outcomes, including depression and anxiety.²

"Vaping and screen time are the two big things destroying kids right now," Sarah reports. "Both involve highly addictive substances and activities."

Nicotine's addictiveness is well known, but addictive elements are intentionally included in social media apps too. Notifications, likes, subscriptions, "missions," "prizes," and

other algorithmic programming all keep teens tethered to their platforms, to the delight of advertisers.³

"The governor is talking about investing \$30 million to address mental health in our youth," Sarah adds. "This is a major wake-up call."

The cumulative effects are seen by Harmonia's counselors every day, but they're also seeing progress among many of the students they counsel.

"Most of my kids are works in progress," Jordan says, "but those I've been with for a few years, their attitudes toward mental health have improved. They can verbalize their feelings much better, even if they're still struggling or processing those feelings. They're finding better ways of addressing it and building confidence."

One of her clients was having issues but didn't want to talk about it. She tried to pass it off like it was no big deal, which is common. Now, she's more self-aware and comfortable getting into specifics. She's able to talk about friends and family and feels "less stuck."

The team meets regularly to talk about potential issues they're seeing among students. How are they doing academically? Have they been sick or absent? Are they aware of homelife changes like divorce or housing stability?

"This gives more details," says Jordan. "Instead of leaving it to a parent or administrator who might lean toward punishment, this opens everyone's eyes to consider all the issues that could be causing this behavior."

It all circles back to the pandemic's cumulative and lingering, if not permanent, effects.

"The state is asking youth service providers to add programs, so teens feel connected and can thrive again," Sarah says. "To address their social determinates of health, we asked the Buffalo Community Fridge network to fund a community project in Angola. Now, we're working with the Family Support Center in the Hoag Building – just steps from the school – to provide a fresh-stocked fridge and pantry, as well as clothing, school and hygiene items, all at no cost to families."

Jordan has seen firsthand the impact on students, including one whose parent died from COVID. She's struggled with guilt because she thinks she brought it home from school.

"It's hard to get students to even begin a conversation, to sit down and open up," Jordan shares. "A lot of hopes and dreams were dashed in a moment. They missed out on a lot."

Conversely, many students were thriving remotely. Being forced to return caused them anxiety and distrust. Some were assigned a remote, work-from-home status until they could return to an in-school environment.

"We've helped some graduate who might not have," Jordan adds. Harmonia is also eager to expand to other districts. We've seen our impact at Lake Shore and know other schools could benefit by having us onsite as well. We're pursuing grants to make that happen, and if you'd like to, we'd welcome that conversation.

1. Social Media and Youth Mental Health, U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory, 2023.

2. Associations Between Time Spent Using Social Media and Internalizing and Externalizing Problems Among US Youth | Adolescent Medicine | JAMA Psychiatry | JAMA Network.

3. Stanford University: "A Psychiatrist's Perspective on Social Media Algorithms and Mental Health."

Caring Comes Full Circle

Mary Ann loves her father very much. Daniel, a widower since 2005, cared for Geraldine – Mary Ann’s mom and his wife of 53 years – throughout her grueling battle with ALS.

Years later Mary Ann, a native of Hamburg, N.Y., found herself living in Alabama with her husband and two kids and facing a difficult decision: her father had reached a point where he needed full-time care of his own. After consulting with her brothers, they decided on a nursing home. However, after just a few visits, Mary Ann could see her dad was miserable.

“I just found it to be too...sad,” she says. “I couldn’t let him stay there. He was losing his will to live.”

She convinced her husband to find a job closer to home. They got as close as Erie, Pa., which allowed Mary Ann to move in with her dad and become his full-time caretaker. After all the years he spent caring for her and her family, she felt she owed him that.

All went well the first few years, but about a year ago Mary Ann began feeling tired and isolated, longing for more mental stimulation.

“Caregiving is very hard work,” says Jennifer Gunia, Harmonia’s Director of Senior Services. “It often takes a toll on people physically and mentally. That’s normal.”

As Mary Ann began recognizing her symptoms, she learned of a new caregiver initiative while at church. It was our new Pathways for

Caregivers partnership with Cradle Beach, through which our senior services and behavioral health teams collaborate to provide relief and group support to caregivers. The initiative came to life thanks to an Exhale grant, funded by the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation and Health Foundation for Western and Central New York.

First, Jennifer came to her father’s home and shared the options available to the family, which gave them a much better sense of strategy and direction. She advised them on ways to keep him safe and guard against falls, along with other helpful tips. Mary Ann was also surprised to learn these services wouldn’t cost her father anything; they were covered by various county and municipal funding.

Mary Ann then joined the Caregiver Support Group facilitated by one of Harmonia’s clinical therapists. She was able to share her story with other caregivers and met others going through similar situations.

“They all were extremely helpful,” Mary Ann attests. “To have someone on your side is just such a blessing when you’re caring for others.”

That extra help has made a huge difference, allowing Daniel to age in place at his home with dignity – per his wishes. The immediate impact it had on his psyche was unmistakable.

“We wouldn’t be having this conversation if I’d left him in that nursing home. He wouldn’t have lasted,” she asserts. “But when



Mary Ann found respite from caring for her aging father from our Pathways for Caregivers partnership with Cradle Beach Camp.

he knew I was springing him out of there, he found his ‘superpowers.’ He was finally able to walk the steps he needed to get discharged, because he saw the chance to return home.”

A brief visit leaves no mystery as to why. Black-and-white portraits of his parents on their wedding day; mementos of military service; photos of his wife and their graduated grandchildren; and woodcarvings he created: birdhouses, figurines – and a spectacular moose made especially for Mary Ann.

Daniel, now 95, is slowing down. He uses a walker. He’s had to give up driving and his strolls along the beach, “combing for goodies.” His hands no longer allow him to

enjoy woodworking or firing pistols at the Cherry Creek Gun Club he belonged to for so many years. Still, for 95, this retired Ford Motor Co. worker gets around better than most his age – and younger.

Mary Ann has recently returned to the workforce part-time, at Jen and Julia’s encouragement, giving her some mental stimulation and respite from the constant toll of caretaking. And she’s telling her story to anyone she meets in a similar situation – including about Harmonia’s presence in our community.

“I’ve let a lot of people know about Harmonia,” she explains. “It’s an amazing service that’s here for us. We should all take advantage of it.”



Health Home Director Kristy Gasiewicz played a key role in helping Matt regain housing, medical and emotional stability as he works to maintain his sobriety and good mental health.

Helping People Get Past Their Past

Matt has had an incredibly difficult life. At age 11, he lost his father in a motorcycle accident – right after he had argued with him about it being his turn to ride. Now in his mid-30s, he still blames himself to an extent.

As Matt struggled with his mental health, he turned to drugs as an escape. That led him to several years in jail for various thefts in support of his heroin addiction. His best friend was then murdered while he was incarcerated, creating further anguish which he still feels today.

After his release, Matt was placed in a short-term housing facility until his government benefits resumed and he could afford his own apartment. Now 15 years sober, he had hoped he was on his way back to living a normal life – including getting to spend time with his three kids, now early teenagers. Instead, he was attacked at the group home by another resident, which caused him an extended hospitalization after he fell from a window, inflicting injuries to his head and extremities.

Once released from the hospital, he was suddenly homeless. Housing instability often has a domino effect, as medications and government benefits can't be issued without a place of residence. He secretly lived in a Buffalo lighthouse until he was discovered. Then under a bridge. Then next to a City Hall statue.

Other human service agencies aided him along the way to an extent, but he wasn't gaining the traction he needed. Then Harmonia's Health Home Team was assigned his case.

"Kristy has helped me out a lot more," Matt offers. "If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't be here right now."

Kristy is his case manager who has become a valuable point of contact. She helped Matt connect with the right people and agencies to regain some stability. She found safe, temporary housing for him which also provided three meals a day. Then she located an available apartment, which he moved into within weeks. She helped him regain access to his medications and social security income, plus a cell phone. She ensures he keeps important appointments and even serves as a liaison with his mother.

"Kristy pretty much stalks me – but in a good way," Matt laughs.

While stalking isn't quite the right word, our Health Home team does keep tabs on its clients. They've seen time and again how challenging it is for people to re-enter society after long imprisonments or hospitalizations. It's challenging for them to find landlords or employers who trust them. It's difficult for them to move

to neighborhoods that don't contain the same temptations and negative influences which sent them down the wrong path originally. And, they often have some mental health issues they are trying to overcome – just like Matt.

"Matt's a great example of why we do what we do," Kristy says. "When he has his medication, he's much less likely to veer off course from the plan we've created. This means fewer hospitalizations, legal issues and other interruptions. The goal is for Matt to live independently and do things on his own."

Kristy is confident that Matt is ready to put his past behind him – but not all of it. His devotion to his kids is a constant motivating factor, and he very much wants them to be able to rely on him.

"They need me right now," he says. "I'm doing this for them."



People who listen; more powerful than pain meds

Janelle was working as a file clerk in a legal office in 2016 when her world – and body – were suddenly rocked. Her vehicle was struck by another traveling roughly 70 mph, causing a series of joint and tissue injuries, chronic pain in her back and shoulder, and numbness in her arms.

Janelle had always been healthy and happy. She didn't use drugs and avoided pain medications.

"Life was really fine before then," Janelle recalls. "I was 33 years old and had never taken a single pain pill before that accident."

Yet, the pain she suffered was overwhelming, and in the course of her medical care and physical therapy, Janelle was prescribed a series of pain management injections. She was led to believe it would just be a few and would be temporary so, uneasily, she agreed.

She was subsequently given 192 injections over six sessions – and they didn't work as intended. Instead, they caused added damage to her tailbone area, she says...and she still has the scars they left.

More medications were prescribed over the next few years which created a deep foginess and caused her to walk with a cane. Still, Janelle never felt like she was getting better.

"I was actually advised by doctors to not stop the treatments, for fear of losing my lawsuit," she says. "I was

in constant pain despite going to physical therapy and a chiropractor multiple times a week. I barely went anywhere else because I was in too much pain."

Finally, she questioned the course of treatment her doctor was prescribing, including oxycodone – which she instantly rejected. She grew wary and decided to seek other opinions.

She saw three more specialists who also wanted to keep her on pain medications, insisting they weren't dangerous. But Janelle's body was telling her otherwise.

Making matters worse, some wouldn't accept the no-fault insurance coverage which New York provides to vehicle accident victims. This added even more stress, as did a series of health issues affecting her father and two brothers.

"I was starting to blur the line between my mental and physical health," she explains. "I was having panic attacks and began throwing up my medications."

Around this time, Janelle's wife began counseling sessions at Harmonia. She came home one day and asked Janelle to consider if it might help her too.

"I was hesitant," Janelle admits. "I'm of an age where conversations about mental health weren't encouraged. But I knew I was struggling, so I decided to call."

Janelle was quickly paired with Veronica, one of our clinicians. They'd only had a couple of sessions when Janelle experienced a mental health emergency.

"It felt like a complete nervous breakdown," she remembers of her crisis call to our office.

Lynne, our Hamburg office receptionist, answered that call. Janelle was in tears, "pouring her heart out." It was as if someone had flipped a switch and eight years of frustrations came bursting through in a flood of emotions.

"I felt that my marriage, my relationships, my mental health and my life were hanging by a thread," says Janelle. "Lynne really helped me. She calmed me down and immediately got me in (to see Veronica). She probably saved me."

Then Kristine, one of our prescribing nurse practitioners, was added to her team – with the clear understanding that Janelle didn't want to be prescribed any controlled substances.

And to Janelle's surprise, Kristine listened.

Now, Janelle is on a regular schedule with this team, and it's created a sense of stability and support that she realized was missing. Moreover, it's come from a place she never expected.

"Every conversation I've had with Veronica and Kristine makes me forget I'm talking with healthcare workers," Janelle laughs. "Veronica and her purple hair – it's one of my favorite things! And Kristine very much has this 'mom tone' to her.



Janelle, second from right, found (from left) Harmonia's team of Veronica, Lynne and Kristine when she needed them most.

I've never had medical providers make me feel this way. The culture of the entire office...it's like a family. I'm normally not one for corny words, but it's literally the embodiment of the organization's name."

Looking back, Janelle feels very fortunate. She's free of controlled substances and her marriage is as strong as ever. She's also used the knowledge gained through her legal ordeal as career inspiration: she's an insurance claims specialist now and hopes to get involved in her company's fraud division – with a focus on no-fault insurance, so that other accident victims don't go through what she did.

She also wants to share her story. She saw how quickly and effortlessly her life took a terrible turn. She wants others to know it can happen – but there's help available. Right here, close to home.

"One pill can destroy your life," she says. "I'm beyond blessed that I only had the issue I had, and I'm very lucky I found Harmonia."

Raising Funds, Awareness... and Spirits!

Harmonia hosted its first fundraising event this past spring at OnCore Golf. The event drew dozens of supporters and their guests to learn more about Harmonia's offerings in mental health and senior care, as well as the need for greater funding overall.

Attendees had fun hitting some balls at OnCore's Golf simulators, while our guest of honor, PGA HOPE golfer Nick Martone, spoke of his experience dealing with PTSD – and how golf and mental health counseling helped him regain balance and control of his life.

Guests also enjoyed Resurgence Brewing's OnCore-themed beer as well as wine from Southern Wine and Spirits, both of which were donated. Attendees could also enter raffles to win OnCore merchandise and private golf lessons – and everyone walked away a winner with gift bags filled with Harmonia-branded OnCore golf balls and agency information.

Join us for our next one!

Mark your calendar:
Thursday, June 13, 2024
The Legacy at 18 Mile Creek,
6653 Taylor Road in Hamburg.



Board of Directors

Harmonia's Board of Directors provides leadership, consultation, experience and talent that helps our team grow and improve at a meaningful and manageable pace. The result is an agency that provides superior client attention, service and value for all of our clients, partners and supporters, in addition to being worthy stewards of our donor and public funding dollars. Meet our full team at harmonia-care.org.

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Director of Mental Health Clinics
Beverly Eagan
HR and Compliance Specialist
Kristy Gasiewicz, MS
Health Home Program Director
Jennifer Gunia
Director of Senior Services

How Can You Make a Difference?

Donors

Harmonia Collaborative Care is a not-for-profit organization that relies on donations and public funding to sustain the quality of services we provide, which directly or indirectly impact the lives of all of our neighbors. Please help us foster good mental health and independence in our community.

Your tax-deductible donation can be made at harmonia-care.org/donate, by calling 716.947.5025, or by mailing a check to:

Harmonia Collaborative Care
6722 Erie Road (Route 5)
Derby, NY 14047

Want to Join Us?

We want to be the **first choice** for behavioral health and senior care professionals — and we're growing. At Harmonia, "life with balance" is more than just a tagline or even a goal for our clients. It's a concept that's every bit as important to our staff, and it's engrained in our culture. Ask us about our approach to work-life balance, and visit harmonia-care.org/careers to see what positions we're currently looking to fill. We regularly consider new board members as well.





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