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A Beautiful Me: Pathways Students Learn About Self-Confidence, Inner Beauty



These Pathways students in Warren learn self-worth, self-confidence.

“I am amazing.” “I am brave.” “I am likable.” “I am loved.” “I am beautiful.”

These are just some of the qualities fourth- and fifth-grade girls at Carlson Elementary School in Warren see in themselves through, “A Beautiful Me” – a four-week workshop series sponsored by Macomb County’s Pathways to Potential and Community Resource Programs.

“A Beautiful Me,” a 501-C3 non-profit, provides original, unique and interactive activities to foster self-worth in women of all ages. They specialize in workshops for grades 3 through 12, with fourth- and fifth-graders being targeted ages. This program was provided to the students as an innovative way to improve confidence and emotional health for Pathways students. Pathways is an MDHHS program that places success coaches in schools and other facilities to help students and families overcome barriers to success.

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Through a fun environment of music, technology and hands-on participation, the students gained skills and knowledge of their self-worth. With activities designed for education, laughing and having fun, they learned what makes each of them special, that what you see is real, that words can hurt others and about the strength of friendship. Each of these lessons helped provide necessary tools for the girls to become responsible, kind and contributing women.

Success Coach Aretha Pomilee-Mathaws described the transformation of one of the students as phenomenal.

“At the beginning of the first workshop, the student was withdrawn and extremely hesitant to participate,” Pomilee-Mathaws said. “In the second workshop, she began raising her hand, reading out loud, interacting with other students and answering questions. By the end of the final workshop, she was a poster child for what ‘A Beautiful Me’ really means, believing in oneself and feeling beautiful inside and out.”

School principal Joann Iras loved the program too and noticed that the girls were more confident in their studies and their interactions with each other. With the support of school staff and the Pathways to Potential team of success coaches, Pathways hopes to expand “A Beautiful Me” to other Pathways schools next year.

The word is spreading. This week, WDIV-TV in Detroit [aired a story about “A Beautiful Me.”](#)



A roomful of “Beautiful Mes.”

From the Director

November has been a special month for Americans as we gathered with loved ones at Thanksgiving to celebrate all that we have to be thankful for. November is also Adoption Month in Michigan, making it a particularly special month here at MDHHS.

Finding forever homes for children who don't have a permanent family is one of the key missions of this department. We try to return these children to their biological parents when it is safe to do so, but that is not always possible. As of this month, more than 320 children in foster care need loving, permanent homes, and we work with several foster care agencies and other organizations to find adoptive families for them.

Witnessing these new bonds between a child and adoptive parents is truly special. I've attended Adoption Day ceremonies hosted by the Michigan Supreme Court in which several adoptions are typically finalized, and they are incredibly heartwarming to watch. This year's Supreme Court-hosted ceremony was held on Nov. 26.

This month, efforts to recruit foster and adoptive parents received a unique boost from the release of a new major movie, "Instant Family," which tells the story of a new adoptive family. Members of our staff, along with employees of the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange, set up booths at two Southwest Michigan theaters showing the movie to hand out brochures to moviegoers who had questions about adoption or becoming a foster parent. This is a great, innovative way to get the word out about our programs, and I'm hopeful we will see new adoptive and foster parents because of this effort.

November is also Lung Cancer Awareness Month, another important month for MDHHS. I want to commend our Cancer Prevention and Control Section for all they do to raise awareness in Michigan about the dangers of tobacco smoking and lung cancer. It is troubling that cigarette smoking continues to be a leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, killing about 480,000 each year.

We are analyzing the results of the 2018 Employee Survey, which ended Oct. 1, and we expect to be able to give you department-level results in mid-December. This feedback is important for our department; it provides information for leadership on how to improve employee engagement programs at MDHHS. This year, the feedback should be particularly useful because we had 69 percent of all MDHHS employees fill out the survey



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HR News

A New Year is Coming: Time to Set Some Goals!

It's the perfect time of year to start thinking about your goals for next year. New year, new opportunities. Before you can achieve anything in life, you have to know you want it. Take some time this month and think about your idea of success and then think about steps you can take to achieve it. Personal goals are just as important as professional goals and, most importantly, no goal is too small.

James Clear, an American author, entrepreneur and photographer, wrote [a great article on goal setting](#). In it, he outlines three strategies for setting goals and following through with them. The strategies are: ruthlessly eliminate your goals, stacking your goals, and setting an upper bound to your goals. Ruthlessly eliminating goals is a strategy focused on prioritizing your goals to give your most important goals your focus. Stacking your goals focuses on the implementation of achieving your goals. It stresses the importance of not only setting your goal but planning out the process for achieving your goals. Finally, setting an upper bound for goals can sound a bit counter intuitive, but it is based in another important goal setting concept. This strategy is about focusing on your maximum rather than your minimum. No goal is too small but there is a balance of achieving the minimum and getting burned out. This area is what Clear refers to as the "Zone of Long-term Growth." The focus here is on sustainability. Short term goals are important, but goal setting is about creating the changes we want to see in our lives.

From furthering your education to Working on Wellness, the Civil Service Commission administers [several programs and resources](#) that will help you along your path to success. Make 2019 the year that you achieve your personal and professional goals.



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this year – 2 percent higher than in the previous survey. This survey is of incredible importance as we head into 2019. My thanks to all of those who participated!

During this holiday season, please take a moment to take pride in the work you have done this year. We must never lose sight of the fact that the services we provide make a profound difference in the lives of Michigan residents and, in many cases, have saved lives. I find this remarkable and humbling, and I would like to thank each of you. It is my hope that MDHHS continues its mission in providing an avenue for residents to be safe, healthy and in a stable environment.

Many employees have shared accomplishments over the past year that they are most proud of. I am happy to share [all of these accomplishments](#) with you. I am appreciative of what we've been able to accomplish, and I believe that we have the strongest and most dedicated workforce here at MDHHS. Keep up the great work!

I hope that you enjoy the holidays with your loved ones and be safe in your travels. As always, thanks for all you do.

AmeriCorps volunteers take oath to serve

Hands raised in the air, more than 700 Michigan AmeriCorps members pledged to volunteer to improve Michigan communities during AmeriCorps Celebration Kickoff Nov. 15 at the Lansing Center.

This year's event had the theme "Be the Greater Good" and offered workshops on leadership, volunteer recruitment, conflict resolution and other topics relevant to community service. The Michigan Community Service Commission, which is within MDHHS, hosted the event.



New AmeriCorps members take the pledge of community service.

The keynote speaker was Chad Pregracke, a 2013 CNN Hero of the Year who has been heavily involved in cleaning U.S. rivers of pollution. Lt. Gov. Brian Calley and State Rep. Julie Calley attended the swearing-in ceremony.

AmeriCorps is a program in which organizations host teams of individuals, or members, to provide a variety of services to meet community needs across Michigan. Members must be at least 17 years old and commit to at least one year of service, full or part-time. In return, members receive a modest living stipend and an education award.

LEAN PROCESS IMPROVEMENT (LPI)

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT & TRANSFORMATION

“How can we adapt to rapid changes in programs and staffing?”

The Cancer Prevention and Control Section is responsible for administering programs that provide cancer screening and follow-up services, along with coordinating Michigan’s cancer plan, to low-income, un/underinsured people in Michigan. Over the last year, the Cancer Section has experienced changes in federal program requirements, significant budget cuts, and changes in staffing due to retirements and other departures. Lean process improvement provided by the Workforce Engagement and Transformation Team has helped our section adapt to the changing environment.



Some of the benefits of lean process improvement, such as preparing for succession planning, were expected when we began process mapping for program duties. Other benefits, such as expanding knowledge of programs and building trust among team members, were not expected. These unexpected benefits were a welcome by-product of the tools and staff of Workforce Engagement and Transformation leading workshops. All benefits of using lean process improvement in our section align with improving state government to better serve Michigan residents.

As a manager, I was initially concerned about the investment of time it would take to use lean process improvement for process mapping. I was pleased that the facilitators listened to these concerns and adjusted the process where possible. Staff have commented on the high quality of facilitation and products that result from these sessions. Having the Workforce Transformation and Engagement team offer their services free of charge is an incredible benefit during a time of program budget cuts.

Polly Hager | Cancer Prevention and Control Section Manager

*Need more information? Think you have a possible Lean project?
Email TransformMDHHS@michigan.gov with “LPI” in the subject line.*

Cancer Prevention and Control Section Staff comments about LPI

“Attending the LEAN workshop with several of our local staff was invaluable in getting buy-in to problem-solve complex program issues.” - EJ Siegl, Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Navigation Program

“Working with the Office of Workforce Transformation and LPI gave us an opportunity to review our internal processes, maximize our resources and develop more effective and efficient ways of working with our partners!” - Mary Lou Searls, Colorectal Cancer Early Detection Program

“Having the LPI benefit has been priceless. It has best benefitted our section as we work toward building our succession plan and recognizing that we have processes in place for program continuity if there are unforeseen or planned changes.” - Beth Trierweiler, Comprehensive Cancer Control Program

BHDDA Services for Veterans Highlighted at Summit

Director Nick Lyon welcomed about 100 participants to the first Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Administration (BHDDA) Veteran Recognition Summit in late October to recognize outstanding work being done for veterans, military members and their families.

More than two years ago, BHDDA saw a need to better address mental health and substance use disorder services across the state. A preliminary plan was developed by leadership, a BHDDA Veteran Navigator was hired and a three-year strategic plan was developed.

Given the structure of the behavioral health system in Michigan, it was realized that for the implementation of this strategic plan to succeed, it would be necessary to have regional Veteran Navigators in each of the 10 Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHP) regions. Federal mental health and substance abuse block grant money was used to fund these 10 positions through the PIHPs due in part to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) focus on veterans.

Veterans were a priority population identified for adult mental health block grant funds. Seven local Community Mental Health Services Providers (CMHSPs) rose to the occasion and prioritized the need to serve veterans, military members and their families. In addition to the 10 PIHP Veteran Navigators, there are local Navigators in Lapeer, Sanilac, Genesee, St. Clair, Muskegon, Kalamazoo, and Clinton-Eaton-Ingham counties.

The summit provided the opportunity to celebrate some of the successes of this initiative. Highlights of these include:

- A performance indicator to reach 100 veterans and/or military members who otherwise would not be reached and connect them to services was far exceeded. In fiscal year 2018, 1,201 individuals were reached, with 88 percent of them identifying being better equipped to function effectively in the community.
- Seventy-four percent of individuals also reported a greater willingness to reach out for help in the future.
- Progress has been made at many levels with the Veterans Administration (VA). This has included providing assistance to veterans with accessing VA services; formal Memorandums of Understanding between a service provider and their local VA; or the VA beginning to make direct referrals to, and paying for, an agency that provides behavioral health services as opposed to having a veteran travel over three-hours to the VA.
- Conducting over 26 trainings on military culture at behavioral health service providers across the state, as well as hosting larger community events in some local communities.

The three largest diagnosis/challenges being experienced by individuals were PTSD, depression/anxiety, and substance abuse (with opioids and alcohol having the highest percentage of use). Thirty-nine percent of those reached were unemployed, and referrals from Veteran Navigators were made to local community mental health/substance use disorder providers (70 percent); VA and local county VAs (50 percent); housing resources (42 percent); employment assistance (32 percent); education (20 percent); transportation assistance (15 percent); and legal assistance (10 percent).

The cooperation of many community, local and state partners helped with this success of this effort. The summit was an opportunity to celebrate the outstanding work of MDHHS/BHDDA Veteran Navigators.



Director Nick Lyon is pictured speaking at the conference.

HIV and STD Conference Highlighted

Innovative Ways to Improve Care

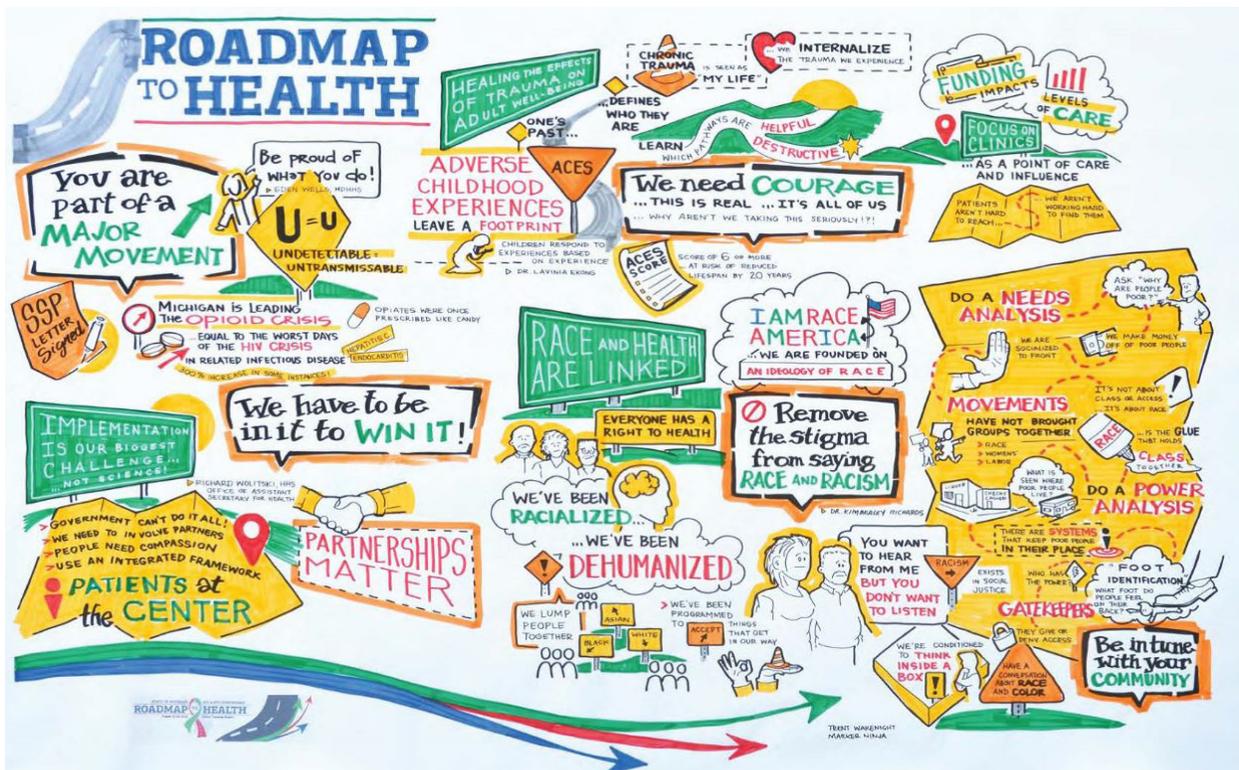
More than 500 health professionals gathered in August for the 2018 State of Michigan HIV and STD Conference to hear innovative ways to enhance care and improve the infrastructure in HIV and STD care and prevention.

For the past three years, the Division of HIV and STD Programs has worked with the Michigan Public Health Institute to host an annual conference. The August conference was at Grand Traverse Resort in Traverse City.

Building on the “Roadmap to Health” theme, the conference offered an opportunity to learn new content and build connections with colleagues in the field. Forty-three percent of the participants used an accompanying interactive mobile app during the two-day event with 2,000 interactions, accessing session information and sharing photos.

Continuing education was provided for nurses, social workers and health educators totaling 1,460 contact hours earned. In evaluating the conference, attendees used such key words as: Resources, Aware, Enjoyed, Networking and Better Understanding. Kudos to the HIV and STD Conference Planning Committee for another successful year!

Mark your calendars for the 2019 annual conference to be held at the Renaissance Center in Detroit on August 13 and 14. This conference theme will focus on health equity.



The Roadmap to Health was a theme of the conference.

Project Search Helps U.P. Students with Disabilities Find Jobs

The Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) Marquette District Office recently helped kick off a program to help students with disabilities prepare for the workforce – the first Project Search program in the Upper Peninsula.

Project Search is an evidence-based program that offers students with disabilities a unique, business-led, one-year employment preparation program that takes place entirely in the workplace. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration and hands-on training through worksite rotations, with the end goal of job placement.



Here are some of the new interns.

The recent kickoff in Sault Ste. Marie was a partnership between the MRS district office, War Memorial Hospital and the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District. The kickoff in October coincided with National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

War Memorial Hospital in Sault Ste. Marie will serve as the worksite for six intermediate school students. The students, known as “interns,” will learn different skills by working in 11 different departments in the hospital. Skill trainers will assist the interns in the worksites and classroom. Each intern will rotate through a variety of different work stations as well as participate in classroom instruction that focuses on independent living, employability skills and career exploration.

Report: Michigan Making Great Progress in Autism Services

Michigan has gone from 33rd to 10th in the nation for the number of certified behavior analysts and has made significant progress supporting autism services since 2012, according to a recent MDHHS report.



“ABA (applied behavioral analysis) therapy is often life changing for a child with autism, greatly helping them develop the skills and confidence needed to live a self-determined independent life,” Lt. Gov. Brian Calley said. “I’m so proud that we are now 10th in the nation for the number of certified behavior analysts and have 10 universities with behavior analyst degree programs. All of this work is making a difference and I look forward to seeing this progress continue.”

There are now 873 behavior analysts certified in Michigan, up from 118 analysts in 2012. The improvements are highlighted in the [Michigan Autism Council’s Autism Spectrum Disorder \(ASD\) State Plan 2018 Progress and Recommendations Report](#), issued Thursday by MDHHS. The report highlights the successes and future needs related to autism in Michigan. Achievements also include:

- Ten Michigan universities now have behavior analyst degree programs.
- Behavior analyst licensure legislation passed in Michigan (Dec. 2016).
- ABA services for Medicaid beneficiaries expanded to cover birth through 20 years old (Jan. 2016).
- ABA services for Medicaid beneficiaries covered for 18 months through five years old (April 2013).
- Passage of autism insurance reform (April 2012).
- Creation of the Autism Council (July 2012).

“While impressive changes have occurred in the past several years, Michigan is diverse in its geography and population, and improvements in state systems and services need to be made more consistent throughout the state,” said Amy Matthews, vice-chairperson of the Michigan Autism Council. “The Autism Council is eager to continue the progress that has been made so far to improve the lives of Michigan families and this report provides a wonderful blueprint for doing so in the years to come.”

Recommendations in the progress report are across several areas including family engagement, early identification and intervention services, educational services, adult services and supports and physical, mental and behavioral health.

“The State of Michigan is fortunate to have the support of the Michigan Autism Council in leading the way forward on this important issue,” said Lisa Grost, manager of the Autism Section within MDHHS. “Michigan families have greatly benefited from the commitment and dedication of the Michigan Autism Council and this report is another vital step in keeping that momentum.”

The Michigan ASD State Plan 2018 Progress Review and Recommendations can be viewed in its entirety at www.michigan.gov/autism.



Recognizing Our MDHHS Military & Veterans

Updates



Many of our finest men and women are currently serving or have bravely served our country. Lets remember to thank and honor those who have served and to keep those currently serving and their family members in our thoughts and prayers as we hope for their safety. Names in **red** are new additions. Names in **blue** are status changes.

MDHHS Employees Currently Serving

Employee

Work Location

Branch of Service

No Updates

MDHHS Employees Who Have Served

Employee

Work Location

No Updates

MDHHS Family Members Serving

Employee

Work Location

Relation

Branch of Service

Status

No Updates

[Go to Inside MDHHS](#) for the full lists of **Employees Currently Serving**, **Employees Who Have Served** and **Family Members Serving**.

If you would like your name added to or removed from the list, please email Scott Davis at: DavisS8@michigan.gov.