



Transformation

A Bridges Healthcare Publication - Summer 2021

Bridges' Service Expansion Benefits an Underserved West Haven Community

As part of its new strategic plan to more fully meet the behavioral healthcare needs of underserved communities, Bridges Healthcare has established a larger presence and expansion of services in the City of West Haven. The Yale-New Haven Hospital Community Needs Assessment-2019 covering the Greater New Haven area (including Bridges' catchment area) lists chronic diseases and mental health and addiction as top health concerns followed by access to health care services.

- 55% of respondents indicated that they sometimes have access to mental/behavioral healthcare
- 24% indicated that they rarely have access.
- 43% indicated that they only sometimes have access to primary care.

West Haven's Connection to Health



Mental Health · Health Screenings · Addiction Recovery · Support Services



NEW LOCATION!

98 Elm St.
West Haven, CT 06516



According to Bridges' President & CEO Jennifer Fiorillo, "Limited access to behavioral health and primary care services along with the increased hospitalizations in the service area underscores the opportunity for expansion and improved access to vital mental health services and screenings, integrated primary care and wraparound services especially for underserved populations and people of color."

Through multiple partnerships and funding opportunities, Bridges has several new initiatives operating in the community, including a new clinical site at 98 Elm St. The site is a component of the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic, (CCBHC) a federally funded model which offers enhanced access to behavioral health and other integrated services in Milford, West Haven, Orange and Stratford. Bridges achieved CCBHC status in 2020.

[Read More](#)

Ride or Walk for Mental Health and Addiction Recovery October 3, 2021

Bridges Healthcare's **Folks on Spokes Ride/Step Forward Memorial Walk** fundraiser will kick off in person on Sunday, October 3, 2021, at Fowler Field in Milford! As one of Connecticut's longest-running charitable bike rides, this year we're celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Folks on Spokes Ride portion of the event. Metro Star Properties is the presenting sponsor for this year's special event.

Honorary Grand Marshals Ray Vitali and Al Diamond will be kicking off the Ride. Ray and Al co-founded the Folks on Spoke Ride in 1991. Ray Vitali is a Bridges Board member and our current Board Secretary. Al Diamond is a former Board member.

To celebrate 30 years, the event will feature special anniversary activities including a costume contest, 'Cycling through the Decades' memorabilia, photos and much more! As part of the Step Forward Memorial Walk Remembrance Ceremony, volunteer and walk champion Heidi Pierpont will be recognized for her ongoing efforts to help us honor lives lost to mental health-related conditions.

Registration fees are \$40 per cyclist, \$30 per walker, and \$15 for kids under 18 which includes a free t-shirt and lunch from Subway. CappuGino's Coffee & Shakes food truck will be on-site serving food and beverages for purchase.

For 30 years, caring people like you have come out to support Bridges Healthcare's programs and services for those in our community dealing with anxiety, depression, alcohol or substance abuse. We appreciate your participation in this awesome event and hope that this year you'll join us in person or virtually to support our mental health and addiction recovery services which are so critical during these unprecedented

times.

[Register Now!](#)

Bridges' Employment Program Supervisor Retires After 33 Years



With mixed emotions, the staff and clients at Bridges Healthcare bid farewell to Cynthia Dodd, M. Div., Manager of Recovery Services, Employment and the Open Door Wellness Center upon her retirement after 33 years of dedicated, compassionate and enthusiastic service to Bridges.

Cynthia filled many roles throughout her tenure with Bridges, and helped thousands of clients achieve their recovery goals, including securing and maintaining employment, always promoting the concept that "work is everyone's business."

Members of Bridges' Open Door Wellness Club honored Cynthia with a special gift and tribute at an ice cream party at the end of July.

"It has been a privilege to work with all of you, and I am in awe each day of all that you do to make Bridges the wonderful, caring place that it is.

Keep lovingly walking alongside those who come to find a safe place to get through the storms of life or the storms of mental illness. You make such a difference!"

-Cynthia Dodd

Community Art Displayed at Bridges' New West Haven Clinic

Bridges' new clinical office in West Haven features a display of art from local artists and photographers. The exhibit, curated by Elinor Slomba of Verge Arts Group in West Haven, was unveiled as part of the Bridges' West Haven office opening in June. The theme of the loaned artwork is 'West Haven Connections: Landscape as a Point of Departure'.

Many thanks to the following artists and photographers for loaning us their beautiful work:

- **Linda Haas**
- **Sue Pranulis**
- **Libby Earle Depiero**
- **Qusaan Hoskie**
- **Theresa Elisabeth Guerrin**
- **Steven Meyers**
- **Kate Henderson**

Additional photography from Bridges' clients in the Young Adult Services Program is also featured in the exhibit.





Bridges Hosts Reception and Awards Ceremony at New West Haven Location



Pictured left to right: Bridges' Board Members Kathleen Hendricks and Joan Cretella, honorees Peg Jerrell and Ann Yost, State Rep. Dorinda Borer

Bridges Healthcare, Inc. hosted a reception on June 28 to officially open its new clinical offices at 98 Elm St. West Haven. As part of the celebration, Bridges honored former Board Members and West Haven residents Margaret Jerrell and Ann Yost for their years of dedicated board service and support for Bridges and its clients. In addition, posthumous honors were bestowed on former Board Member Stella Cretella.

A long-time advocate for mental health services and a passionate voice for eliminating stigma, Stella Cretella was active on the Region 2 Mental Health Board as well as

many civic and political committees. Stella served on Bridges' Board of Directors from 1994 to 2001 as Secretary from 2001-2004 and Vice-Chair from 2004-2006. She was a committed and generous supporter of Bridges' mission. Joan Cretella continues her mother's legacy as a member of Bridges' Board of Directors since 2007.

Bridges' Board Endowment Committee also honored Cretella's service by establishing the Stella Cretella Scholarship for students majoring in Human Services, with a focus on Public Policy and Advocacy. The first recipient of the award is West Haven resident Emily Wielk, who is pursuing her graduate degree at George Washington University.

Ann Yost served as a member of Bridges' Board of Directors since 1998, served as the Vice-Chair of Programs from 2013 – 2017. Ann and her husband Art, also a former Board member, have been invaluable partners to Bridges, offering professional experience, guidance and compassion to the Bridges community.

Margaret "Peg" Jerrell began her Board service with Bridges in 1997, serving as Assistant Treasurer. Peg offered insight, professional expertise and support for Bridges' mission throughout her tenure. She has also been a strong advocate for Bridges to expand its presence and services in the City of West Haven.

Bridges is grateful for the long-time dedication and support from these women!

Upcoming Events

SEPT 24

Golf Lounge 18 Fall Tournament

Come to the Golf Lounge 18 Fall Classic outdoor golf tournament at Grassy Hill Lodge in Orange to benefit Bridges Healthcare.
\$150 per player
Team scramble, cocktails and dinner.

[Register](#)

OCT 3

Folks on Spokes Ride/ Step Forward Walk

Register for the 30th Folks on Spokes Ride/Step Forward Memorial Walk to raise funds and support community mental health and addiction services.

[Sign Up Today](#)

OCT 31

.5K Slacker Race and After Party

Arciuolo's Shoes Annual .5K "Slacker Race" and After-Party at Dockside Brewery to Benefit Bridges.

Mark your calendars for the easiest race you'll ever run! Registration coming soon!

We thank our community partners for hosting events to benefit Bridges!

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