

## The Cuyahoga County Diversion Center is Now Open

The Cuyahoga County Diversion Center opened its doors on May 3. It is a first-of-its kind pre-arrest facility in Ohio, working with law enforcement to help individuals involved in a low-level offense who are exhibiting signs and symptoms of a mental illness and/or addiction receive the help, care and linkage to community resources they need in a treatment environment rather than going to the County jail. View the County's full press release here: [bit.ly/CCDCrelease](https://bit.ly/CCDCrelease).

A big thank you to all of the partners that made the Cuyahoga County Diversion Center possible, including the **County, Oriana House, FrontLine Service**, and law enforcement, as well as **University Hospitals, NAMI Greater Cleveland, Life Long Transportation**, and other community providers.

For more information about the Cuyahoga County Diversion Center, visit [adamhsc.org/diversioncenter](https://adamhsc.org/diversioncenter).



(l-r) Katie Kern-Pilch, Second Vice Chair, Tami Fischer, Chief Administrative Officer, Gwen Howard, Board Member, Maggie Tolbert, Assistant Chief Clinical Officer, Felicia Harrison, CFO, Rev. Benjamin F. Gohlstin, Sr., Board Chair, and Scott S. Osiecki, CEO, attended the Diversion Center ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 4.

## Cuyahoga County Board Members Defend Clients' and Families' Right to be Heard

A budget provision passed by the Ohio House and currently under consideration in the Ohio Senate, Amended Substitute House Bill 110, would eliminate the required appointments and number of members appointed to the ADAMHS Boards across the state. These appointments include six individuals serving in special categories to ensure that the voice of clients, family members and professionals with behavioral health experience are heard.

Our local Board unanimously passed a resolution opposing the language change. To make this opposition known, **Dr. J. Robert Fowler**, Vice Chair, provided testimony to the Ohio Senate Finance Committee on May 13, and **Rev. Benjamin F. Gohlstin, Sr.**, Chair, submitted a letter to the editor published in The Plain Dealer on Sunday, May 23.

In his letter, Rev. Gohlstin noted that current law is working well for 99% of the state's counties, reflecting the position taken by the **Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA)**. The ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County has an 18-member volunteer Board of Directors, of which eight appointments are made by the **Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS)** and ten are made by the **Cuyahoga County Executive**.



(l-r) Cheri L. Walter, OACBHA CEO, J. Robert Fowler, Ph.D., Vice Chair, Beth Zietlow-DeJesus, ADAMHS Board Director of External Affairs

Our Board members are strong advocates for the voice of individuals with lived experience. Dr. Fowler has dedicated 20 years to citizen leadership as a family member of a person with mental illness, and said in his testimony: "As the father of a son living with mental illness, I am proud to serve on the Board and use my voice to ensure that the work in our local system truly benefits affected individuals and their families." His full testimony is available here: [bit.ly/TestimonyMay2021](https://bit.ly/TestimonyMay2021).

Rev. Gohlstin stated: "This is not the time to make changes to local board structures, given increased demand for mental health and addiction services. This effort to limit input and marginalize the voices of the diverse communities we serve should not proceed." The full letter is available here: [bit.ly/ADAMHSletter](https://bit.ly/ADAMHSletter).

We believe that the volunteer Board Members serve a critical role in our local systems of care. As such, we need to ensure robust community representation from all areas, and that our 18-member Board is necessary to truly represent the diversity of our constituents.

As we await the decision of the Ohio Senate, we thank our partners in the 134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly for listening to the perspectives of Board members and constituents from across the state, and for their continued support of people with mental illnesses and substance use disorders.

## ADAMHS Board Held Virtual Annual Meeting

The 2021 virtual annual meeting was held on May 10. The celebration included addresses by **Rev. Benjamin F. Gohlstin, Sr.**, Board Chair, and **Scott S. Osiecki**, CEO, as well as a presentation of this year's Helping Hands Awards and acceptance of the 2020 Annual Report. The annual report is available online: [bit.ly/ADAMHS2020](https://bit.ly/ADAMHS2020)

The ADAMHS Board Helping Hands Awards are presented to outstanding individuals and organizations that embody the Board's mission, positively impact the lives of people living with mental illness and/or substance use disorders and help to alleviate stigma in Cuyahoga County.

Eight Helping Hands Awards were presented at the virtual Annual Meeting to:

- ◇ **Waverly Willis**, Founder, **The Urban Barber Association** and Owner of **Urban Kutz Barbershops**, for his work with the fentanyl test strip program and sharing education about substance use and mental health with the community at his Urban Kutz Barbershops.
- ◇ **Sara Szelagowski**, Founder, **Project White Butterfly**, for her continued commitment to meeting people who are struggling with substance use disorders where they are through Project White Butterfly. Her encouragement and efforts to address harm reduction and stigma are changing lives and supporting sustained recovery in our community.
- ◇ **Rev. Jerome C. Rivers**, **Progressive Baptist Church of Tomorrow**, for his work on faith-based initiatives that educate the community about mental illness and substance use disorders as well as how to seek treatment. Rev. Rivers has helped hundreds of individuals and families struggling with mental health and substance use disorders.
- ◇ **Cleveland.com** for the series *Coping Through COVID*, which highlighted the very real struggles during the pandemic and offered hope and resources to the community. The ADAMHS Board commends the efforts of editor, **David Campbell** and reporters, **Evan MacDonald**, **Olivia Mitchell** and **Julie Washington** for addressing substance use and recovery, suicide prevention and grief. This reporting uplifted messages of resilience and coping during the pandemic.
- ◇ **Community Assessment & Treatment Services**, **Oriana House**, **Stella Maris**, and **The Lantern Center for Recovery** for opening their facilities to host vaccination clinics for adults with mental illness and substance use disorders living in congregate settings as well as behavioral health employees. As a result of their willingness to serve as vaccination sites, 940 individuals were vaccinated in partnership with the Cleveland Department of Public Health.

A recording of the annual meeting is available online: [bit.ly/watchADAMHS](https://bit.ly/watchADAMHS).



### Celebrating Front Steps Housing and Service's New St. Joseph's Commons

Congratulations to the **Front Steps Housing and Services** team and **Sherri Brandon**, CEO, on the May 7 ribbon-cutting and open house for St. Joseph Commons. The ceremony celebrated the new housing facility and its residents as they are welcomed into the Ohio City neighborhood. St. Joseph Commons is a four-story, 68-unit permanent supportive apartment building that provides safe and affordable housing for individuals that are breaking the cycle of homelessness and transforming their lives. **Clare Rosser**, ADAMHS Board Chief Public Affairs Officer, attended the event on behalf of **Scott S. Osiecki**, CEO, and shared our Board's congratulations to the many partners who made this project a reality.

### The Cuyahoga County Suicide Prevention Coalition is Guiding Awareness Efforts in the Community

Members of the Cuyahoga County Suicide Prevention Coalition are providing input on the direction of the ADAMHS Board's suicide prevention public awareness efforts. The Board intends to increase awareness of signs of suicide, how to help individuals in a crisis and ways to connect to resources for help.

The first phase of the campaign, which will run through September, includes a partnership with the **Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation (OSPF)** to run the *Life Is Better With You Here* campaign targeted to African-American and Black youth and adults. In addition to preparing advertisements supporting this campaign, the coalition worked with OSPF to promote the importance of community protective factors as part of the *With You Here Fest*, which took place on May 18. The virtual festival, which was streamed on Facebook and YouTube and hosted by teen influencers, included videos from Suicide Prevention Coalitions around the state.

The Cuyahoga County Suicide Prevention Coalition's video featured **Chardé Hollins, MSW, LISW**, ADAMHS Board Behavioral Health Prevention Specialist and coalition co-chair, who discussed the importance of community protective factors, and **D'emor'e**, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student who participates in **East Cleveland Neighborhood Center** programs, who shared how the programs she participates in have helped her. Watch the brief video here: [bit.ly/OSPFvideo](https://bit.ly/OSPFvideo).

## **ADAMHS Board, Thrive Peer Support, and Over 20 Community Partners Launch Outreach Efforts to Reduce Overdose Deaths in Cuyahoga County**

To help combat overdose fatalities, the ADAMHS Board, **Thrive Peer Support** and more than 20 community partners are bringing the opioid reversal medication Narcan (naloxone), fentanyl test strips and information about mental health, addiction and other services directly to high-need communities across Cuyahoga County.

May is historically a high month for overdose fatalities in Cuyahoga County. In March and April the County experienced record high fatalities from lethal drugs. Many collaborative efforts, all with the aim of saving lives and connecting people with the services they need, were held in May and will be held throughout the summer months. The ADAMHS Board and partners are doing grassroots fentanyl test strip and naloxone distribution in high incidence overdose zip codes. The locations for these distributions are shared on the ADAMHS Board Twitter account [@ADAMHSBoardCC](https://twitter.com/ADAMHSBoardCC).

Fentanyl awareness messaging is running on radio and digital spaces. Please help share this message:

***Fentanyl, the leading cause of drug overdose deaths in Cuyahoga County, is in cocaine, pressed pills, meth and heroin. Any Drug May Contain Fentanyl. Test your drugs, don't use alone and carry Narcan. Learn more at [testyourdrugsc.com](https://testyourdrugsc.com). If you are ready for help, call the 24-hour Addiction and Mental Health Crisis Hotline at 216-623-6888.***

The first 25 NaloxBoxes will be installed in facilities throughout Cuyahoga County by the ADAMHS Board through a partnership with **MetroHealth's Office of Opioid Safety** and **Project DAWN** to expand access to naloxone.

The ADAMHS Board received 3,468 units of naloxone to distribute in 13 zip codes thanks to the **Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS)**, **RecoveryOhio** and the **Ohio Department of Health (ODH)**.

Thrive Peer Support is hosting a public outreach tour with the goal of reaching over 7,000 people in Cuyahoga County over the next several months in zip codes with high overdose rates and access to at-risk populations. Outreach events will be hosted in a drive-through or walk-up style at each of these locations on a regular day and time each month so that communities know where they can go to get resources and support. Current locations can be found here: [bit.ly/thriveoutreach](https://bit.ly/thriveoutreach).



## **#StigmaFreeCLE Campaign Launched in May for Mental Health Month**

The #StigmaFreeCLE campaign is a public awareness partnership of over 30 local organizations committed to ending the stigma associated with mental illness and substance use disorders so that everyone can access treatment, feel supported and live their best life.

On May 25, **NAMI Greater Cleveland** hosted a virtual rally to kick off the campaign. **Luke Russell**, Deputy Director of **NAMI Ohio**, kicked off the event. **Chris Mignogna**, Executive Director of NAMI Greater Cleveland, moderated a panel discussion with two individuals in recovery **Cathy D.** and **Archie G.**, who took part in the photo shoots for the campaign. They spoke about what stigma is and some ways to overcome it.

You can get involved in the #StigmaFreeCLE campaign efforts in several ways:

- 1. Talk about mental health and addiction.** Talking about mental illness and substance use disorders will help grow community-wide understanding.
- 2. Learn about mental health and addiction.** Mental illness and substance use disorders are complex medical conditions, and there's always more to learn. Visit [stigmafreecle.com](https://stigmafreecle.com) for a list of resources.
- 3. Listen without judgment.** Everyone's experience with mental illness and substance use disorders is different, and everyone's story matters.
- 4. Share your story.** If you have a mental illness or substance use disorder, one way you can help create a #StigmaFreeCLE is by sharing your story when you are ready. It could help others.
- 5. Reach out for help.** If you are struggling with a mental health or substance use issue, you are not alone and help is available. Call Cuyahoga County's 24-Hour Suicide Prevention, Mental Health/Addiction Crisis, Information & Referral Hotline: **216-623-6888**.
- 6. Support each other.** If you know someone who is struggling with a mental illness or substance use disorder just be there to listen and support them in any way you can.
- 7. Share these messages.** Organizations participating in the campaign will be sharing these simple ways to help reduce stigma, support each other and reach out for help. Please follow #StigmaFreeCLE and share these messages. Together, we can create a #StigmaFreeCLE!



## Staff Members Participated in Various Speaking Engagements This Month

May was a busy month for speaking engagements with staff participating in everything from a radio show to a virtual statewide conference:

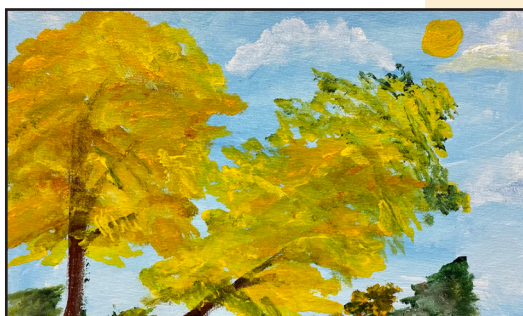
- **Carole Ballard, MSSA, LISW**, Director of Education and Training, spoke on a virtual Cleveland Consent Decree Community Conversation panel, co-hosted by **United Way of Greater Cleveland** and the **Cleveland Branch of NAACP**. The session addressed crisis intervention and officer wellness. She was joined on the panel by **Rosie Palfy**, Citizen Advocate and **Mental Health Response Advisory Committee (MHRAC)** member, **Rev. Dr. Jawanza Colvin**, **Olivet Institutional Baptist Church**, **Dr. Randy Dupont**, **City of Cleveland Monitoring Team**, **Bridget Brennan**, **Department of Justice**, and **Captain James McPike** and **Deputy Chief JoEllen O'Neill**, **Cleveland Division of Police**.
- Carole was also on the radio this month. **NAMI Greater Cleveland** partners with **Portia Booker** of **WOVU 95.9 FM's Groove with Portia** on a monthly mental health radio show. On this month's segment, Portia and **Megan Rochford**, **NAMI Greater Cleveland Program Director**, talked with Carole about crisis intervention. Listen on Spotify here: [bit.ly/CITlisten](https://bit.ly/CITlisten).
- **Clare Rosser**, Chief Public Affairs Officer, shared a few words about the ADAMHS Board's work and how to reach out for help prior to the start of an **Improbable Players** performance for **MyCom**.
- **Jess Saker**, Director of IT, shared her recovery story at Ohio's 2021 Opiate and Other Drugs Conference, which was held virtually.
- **Beth Zietlow-DeJesus**, Director of External Affairs, and **Madison Greenspan**, External Affairs Officer, presented at the Opiate and Other Drugs Conference on the ADAMHS Board's grassroots fentanyl test strip distribution program. They were joined by two community members who have helped with grassroots distribution since the program began, **Rebekah Wiland, MSW, LISW-S**, from **FrontLine Service** and **Waverly Willis** from **The Urban Barber Association**.
- **Madison Greenspan**, External Affairs Officer, spoke to staff in the **Cuyahoga Job and Family Services** Snap to Skills/JET Department for Mental Health Month and shared information about mental health and addiction resources available in the county.

## The Next Eliminating Structural Racism in Behavioral Health Work Group Meeting is June 7

The next Eliminating Structural Racism in Behavioral Health Work Group meeting will be held on **June 7 from 1:00-2:30 p.m.** The presenter will be **Latoya Logan** from **Project LIFT**, a social justice and prevention advocacy organization.

Join the meeting at [bit.ly/esrbhcgw](https://bit.ly/esrbhcgw). This is a recurring meeting and the Zoom link is the same for each.

Meeting ID: 863 0230 3039  
Passcode: 915826



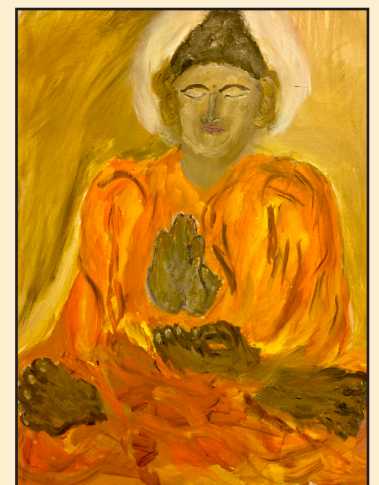
## AIDS Funding Collaborative Advisory Committee Appointments

The ADAMHS Board announced that Board Member **Max M. Rodas, MA**, is our new representative on the **AIDS Funding Collaborative** Advisory Committee. His 20 years of experience as the Founder and Executive Director of **Nueva Luz Urban Resource Center**, a non-profit organization addressing the root causes of systemic poverty and health inequities, will make him a great addition to the committee.

The Advisory Committee also has a new representative from the **Cuyahoga County Board of Health**, **Zachary Levar**, who supervises the Ending the HIV Epidemic grant and the Ryan White Part A Program.

## May Art Display

This month's virtual art display features artwork by clients of **Far West Center's Art Helps and Heals (AHH!) Art Therapy Program**. View the full display here: [bit.ly/MayArtDisplay](https://bit.ly/MayArtDisplay).



## Welcome New Staff Members!

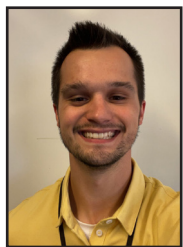
**Anthony Henderson, Jr.**, joined the ADAMHS Board staff on May 10, as the new Chief Compliance Officer. He has worked in the public sector for many years, at the **Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority** for close to seven years before joining the **Cuyahoga County Office of Budget Management** for over five years. Anthony has a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and a Master of Public Administration degree.



*Anthony Henderson, Jr.*

He shared, "Having a family member that struggles with mental health issues forces you to take a step back and take notice of how much entities such as the ADAMHS Board are needed and can help. What excites me the most about working for the Board is the chance, in my role, to ensure that these services not only stay in place but are provided in a way that helps the people who need them most, while staying within the confines of the rules and laws that govern them. I look forward to meeting and working with providers in the community that do this great work and to ensure the work is sustained now and in the future."

Anthony shared that, in his free time, he enjoys watching movies, especially Sci-Fi or suspenseful movies. If you need movie recommendations that will keep you on the edge of your seat, Anthony can be reached at [ahenderson@adamhsc.org](mailto:ahenderson@adamhsc.org).



*Dalton Skerlec*

**Dalton Skerlec** joined the ADAMHS Board staff on May 3, as the Database Specialist. In the midst of the pandemic, he graduated from **Ashland University** with a Bachelor of Science degree with a focus in actuarial science and computer science.

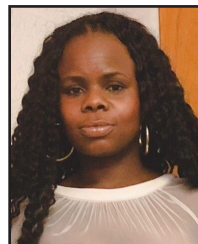
Dalton shared that he has a personal connection to the ADAMHS Board's mission, and that he looks forward to doing what he loves and getting to help others while he does it. He is also excited to work in Cleveland because he loves the city.

Some of his hobbies include watching sports, exercising, gaming and spending time with his cat, Baker, who is not named after Cleveland Browns quarterback Baker Mayfield because Dalton is a Pittsburgh Steelers fan!

Dalton can be reached at [skerlec@adamhsc.org](mailto:skerlec@adamhsc.org).

## Congratulations to Danielle Clark on Becoming an Ohio Certified Public Manager!

**Danielle Clark**, Director of Finance, recently gave a presentation on her final project, titled *Transparency in Budget: Where the Dollars Make Sense*, for the Public Management Academy through **Cleveland State University's Levin College of Urban Affairs**. With the completion of this presentation and her written report, she will be awarded the Ohio Certified Public Manager credential. Congratulations, Danielle!



*Danielle Clark*

**"What mental health needs is more sunlight, more candor, and more unashamed conversation."**

Glenn Close



## Register Today! Spots Still Available for June Trainings

There are still spots available for several ADAMHS Board spring trainings. The cost is \$25 and participants can earn three CEUs/RCHs. Visit the training institute page on the ADAMHS Board website to learn more and to register: [adamhsc.org/trainings](http://adamhsc.org/trainings).

**June 14:** Managing Client Resistance

**June 18:** Leading your Team to Success and Beyond (Supervision)

Summer trainings will be added soon so stay tuned!

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