

# 20th Annual Chris Ashman Wellness & Recovery Conference



***Elevating  
Voices:***

*Bridging Generations for  
Mental Wellness*

April 11, 2024 | 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Honoring  
*Darcie M. Miller*  
LCSW-R

Commissioner of the Orange County  
Department of Mental Health

**The Annual Darcie M. Miller Excellence in Behavioral Health Leadership Award**

This award will honor individuals who demonstrate exceptional leadership and dedication in the field of behavioral health, embodying the values and characteristics that Commissioner Darcie M. Miller, LCSW-R has exemplified throughout her 36-year career.

**Passion for Behavioral Health Advocacy:** Recipients of this award demonstrate a deep-seated passion for advocating on behalf of individuals with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and substance use disorder.

**Commitment to Systems Change:** Honorees demonstrate a strong commitment to breaking down systemic barriers.

**Innovative Leadership:** Award recipients are innovative leaders who are not afraid to tackle challenges and opportunities to improve behavioral health services and initiatives within their communities.

**Partnership and Community Engagement:** Honorees actively engage with their communities and collaborate with various stakeholders. This person takes a “No Wrong Door” approach.

**Continuous Professional Development:** Recipients exhibit a commitment to continuous learning and professional development, staying informed about best practices and emerging trends, and encouraging others to have access to do the same.

Through the Darcie M. Miller Excellence in Behavioral Health Leadership Award, we recognize and celebrate the outstanding contributions to advancing behavioral health awareness, advocacy, and support within our community, carrying forward Commissioner Miller's legacy of compassionate and effective leadership in the field of behavioral health and human services.

# Elevating Voices: Bridging Generations for Mental Wellness

The theme "Elevating Voices: Bridging Generations for Mental Wellness," encapsulates the essence of collective empowerment and advocacy for mental health across generations. In an era where intergenerational dialogue is increasingly essential, this conference serves as a vital platform to amplify diverse voices and foster meaningful conversations surrounding mental health experiences and wellness strategies. By bridging the gaps between different age groups, backgrounds, and perspectives, we aim to create a space where lived experiences are valued, shared, and leveraged to drive positive change within our communities.

At the heart of this conference is the recognition that every individual's journey with mental health is unique and worthy of acknowledgment. From the keynote address by Tiara Springer-Love, a transformative leader and youth advocate, to the panel presentations featuring a diverse lineup of speakers, attendees will gain insights, share experiences, and explore innovative approaches to mental wellness. Through thought-provoking discussions and engaging presentations, we aim to inspire everyone to become active participants in destigmatizing mental health, promoting resilience, and advocating for inclusive support systems.

Whether a student, professional, family member, or individual with lived experience, we can all bridge generations, elevate voices, and pave the way for a more compassionate and supportive future for mental health advocacy and recovery.



Chris Ashman retired as the Commissioner of the Orange County Department of Mental Health in 2012.

Throughout his career and thereafter, Mr. Ashman has been a true champion for people with disabilities.

Mr. Ashman spearheaded the very first Mental Health Wellness and Recovery Conference in 2001, which is now an annual event named in his honor.

We thank him for his innumerable contributions to the service system and his dedicated support over the years.

# 20th Annual Chris Ashman Wellness and Recovery Conference

*Elevating Voices: Bridging Generations for Mental Wellness*

## PROGRAM AGENDA

**8:00 AM**

Registration Open

**8:00 AM**

Breakfast

**9:00 AM**

Opening Remarks

**9:15 AM**

Keynote Speaker, Tiara Springer-Love

**10:30 AM**

Bridging Gaps Presentation, Adrienne T. Voltaire

**11:00 AM**

Panel Discussion

**1:00 PM**

Closing Remarks



**April 11, 2024**  
8am - 1pm



**Walkill Golf Club**  
40 Sands Road  
Middletown NY 10941

At any point during the conference, text keyword **"ASK"**  
to **888-594-7074** to ask a question to a speaker.

# MEET THE PRESENTERS

Elevating Voices: Bridging Generations for Mental Wellness



**Tiara Springer-Love**

Youth & Young Adult  
Advocacy Leader



**Adrienne Voltaire**

Mental Health  
Professional



**Nora Shepard**

Director of Crisis Response &  
Community Programs  
Independent Living, Inc.



**John Harper**

Statewide Systems Advocate  
Independent Living, Inc.



**Marcella Gallucci-Ritchko**

Managing Director  
Rehabilitation Support Services



**Sarah Salice**

Art Therapist  
Silver Hill Hospital



**Kimberly Marsden**

Clinical Counselor  
Marist College



**Jasper**

SUNY Orange Student



**Angela Turk**

Director of Children's Services  
Orange County Department  
of Mental Health



# Tiara Springer-Love

## Youth & Young Adult Advocacy Leader

**Keynote Speaker**  
**Panel Moderator**



Tiara is a transformative leader, an unwavering mental health advocate, and a dedicated community organizer with an unrelenting commitment to ensuring that the voices of youth and young adults in underserved communities are not only heard but also recognized as a driving force for change within all child-serving systems.

Tiara, holding an LMSW, is fueled by her own personal journey within the child welfare and mental health systems, which has shaped her unwavering commitment to improving the lives of others in similar circumstances. Throughout her career, she has been privileged to serve in various impactful roles, including being the statewide lead for the Youth Peer Infrastructure Network funded by New York State. She has excelled as the coordinator of annual statewide conferences and provided invaluable technical assistance to national, county, and regional level collaboratives, offering best practices to drive systems change.

Hailing from Jamaica, Queens, NY, Tiara also managed the borough's first and only New York State-funded Youth Recovery Clubhouse. Her dedication to her community shines through in her work, and she has a notable achievement as the Lead Youth Facilitator for New York State's Governor Kathy Hochul's historic 2023 Youth Mental Health Summit and statewide Youth Mental Health Listening Tour.

Tiara's career trajectory is marked by her enduring commitment to supporting and uplifting the future generation and bridging generational gaps to foster mutual empowerment within the peer community. Her relentless pursuit of these goals is a testament to her leadership, passion, and dedication to making a difference in the communities of those she serves.

*"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."*

# **Adrienne Voltaire**

## **Mental Health Professional**

### **Presenter**



Adrienne T. Voltaire is a native New Yorker, born and raised in the Hudson Valley. She holds an undergraduate degree from New York University and completed her graduate studies at Long Island University.

Currently practicing as a mental health professional, she has spent over 20 years working in the fields of education and human services. From classroom teacher to child welfare worker to public servant to mental health professional, Adrienne has made advocacy for the under-represented part of her personal creed. As a person in recovery, Adrienne has turned her attention to the plight of the addict in recent years—committing to using her personal experience with addiction and recovery to help others and to lend her voice on behalf of those who cannot or will not be heard.

Adrienne is the very proud mother of a brilliant 18 year-old daughter, whose strength and tenacity inspires her daily.

## **Nora Shepard** Director of Crisis Response & Community Programs

### Panelist



Nora Shepard serves as the Director of Crisis Response and Community Programs at Independent Living, Inc. Nora is dedicated to breaking down barriers and empowering individuals to overcome challenges such as stigma and adversity.

At the forefront of her work, Nora collaborates closely with clinical teams to foster positive change and promote holistic wellness. Her extensive 38 years of experience and certification as a Recovery Peer Advocate and New York State Peer Certified professional underscore her commitment to advocating for individuals' rights and facilitating meaningful system changes.

Beyond her role within Independent Living, Nora is deeply engaged in community service, serving as the Chairperson for a Community Service Board and actively participating in various local committees. She firmly believes that community involvement is paramount in driving advocacy and fostering systemic transformation.

Nora's Bachelor's Degree in Community and Human Services, coupled with her numerous certificates of accomplishment, exemplifies her dedication to lifelong learning and professional development. Nora brings with her a unique blend of lived experience, professional expertise, passion, and advocacy.



## **John Harper** Statewide Systems Advocate

### Panelist



John was born in Los Angeles California, the second of 10 children. After High School, he joined the Maryknoll Missionary Society, and after 10 years of study, he was ordained a priest in 1975. He served on the Island of Mindanao in the Philippines and as Vocation Director for the Maryknoll Society in New York. In 1988 he resigned from the priesthood and was appointed Executive Director of Emergency Housing Group (now HONOR) in Orange County New York where he served until 2015. He served as an Instructor in the CASAC Program at SUNY Orange, and then joined Independent Living Inc. as the Systems Advocate where he continues today.

John lives in Port Jervis with his son Zachary, a Peer Engagement Professional with the Alcohol and Drug Awareness Council (ADAC) in Orange County. John is a writer, published author, public speaker having lectured in over 3000 public speaking engagements as a Subject Matter Expert, and an active member of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

## **Marcella Gallucci-Ritchko** Managing Director Children & Youth Services

### Panelist



Marcella (Marcie) Gallucci-Ritchko is the Managing Director for RSS Children and Youth Services. Marcie completed her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Binghamton University.

Marcie found her niche when starting at RSS in 2012 and absolutely fell in love with the agency, programs, and the incredible work being done with youth and families. She has a tremendous passion for trauma informed/strength based skillful intervention to provide support, guidance, and often creative/out of the box ideas for youth and families to be their most independent and successful. Marcie has the belief that there are an infinite number of solutions to every challenge, barrier, or concern and it is about finding the one that might best fit for a child or family.

Currently Marcie is blessed to work with an incredible Children and Youth Staff Team across programs at RSS. "The C&Y teams allow work to feel less like a job and more like a community of individuals united in the same mission. Each one of the supervisors and staff members are truly amazing in their dedication, innovation, and overall compassion in healing/recovery".

Marcie lives in Oneonta with her amazing husband Kevin and their two wonderful energetic children; Holdyn (7) and Paxon (2).

## **Sarah Salice** Art Therapist

### Panelist



Sarah Salice (she/her) is a Registered, Board-Certified, and Licensed (CT) Art Therapist as well as a Licensed Professional Counselor Associate and Certified Group Psychotherapist. She works with adolescents and adults in inpatient and residential settings at Silver Hill Hospital.

Sarah served as a member of the Young Adult Council for the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA), an organization with a mission to provide hope, help, support, and education to improve the lives of people who have mood disorders; she is now the Vice President of the DBSA Associate Board.

Sarah has supported Crisis Intervention Training with the New York Police Department by sharing her lived experience. She is the co-founder and co-leader of The Mood Pros Society, an affiliate of DBSA, support and social group for Mental Health Professionals living with mood disorders. She has supported young investigator research on Bipolar Disorder through the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation.

Sarah continues to work philanthropically with nonprofit organizations who advocate for mental health and are dedicated to reducing the stigma surrounding mental health disorders, and providing information and resources for mood disorders and other diagnoses.

## **Kimberly Marsden** Clinical Counselor

### Panelist



Kim is very connected and familiar with the Marist Community as she has been part of it since 2013 as a student, intern, and professional staff member with the counseling and housing offices. So, it is fair to say Kim has a strong insight into the unique challenges that Marist students face.

She comes to therapy with a compassionate, empathetic approach, meeting clients where they are to start growth and change together. Kim understands the importance of working from a holistic approach, keeping in mind one's intersectional identity, the impact of systemic oppression and the client's unique personal background.

In her free time, Kim can often be found attending events on campus, reading, crafting, and cuddling up with her cat all while usually listening to Taylor Swift.

## **Jasper** SUNY Orange Student Panelist



Jasper is a college student, studying Human Services at SUNY Orange. They've been working as an in-home caregiver for elderly populations for the past three years, and have just begun working with Healthy Families to support expectant mothers and families with child development, connection, and needed resources. They also have personal experience navigating mental health resources and systems throughout their education. They believe in the humanistic theory that people are innately good and that mental and social problems result from deviations from this natural tendency.



## **Angela Turk** Director of Children's Services

### Panelist



Angela Turk, LCSW-R, is the Director of Children's Services for the Orange County Department of Mental Health. Angela has worked for the Orange County Department of Mental Health for thirty-four years. She has been in her current position for eighteen years and prior to that held the position of Clinic Director for the Child and Family Clinic in Newburgh, NY and Clinician for the same clinic. Angela is the Local Governmental Unit for Children's Mental Health Services in Orange County and the Children's Single Point of Access Coordinator. She is the co-chair of Orange County Suicide Prevention Task Force and the Coordinating Council for the OC System of Care.

Angela participates in various community initiatives and task forces to address and improve the current system of care for children, youth and families in partnership including the Children's Community Support Team, Connecting the Dots, and the Interagency Collaborative County Team Meeting and also serves on the Board of the Orange County Youth Bureau. Before coming to Orange County Angela worked for Federation Employment and Guidance Services in Bronx, NY managing a Community Support Services program for adults who were de-institutionalized from a New York State Psychiatric Facility.

Angela received her Master of Social Work degree at Hunter College School of Social Work in New York City in 1984 and her Bachelor of Social Work Degree from Lehman College in Bronx, NY in 1982.

# RESOURCES



Agencies working together to  
bridge service gaps and break  
down barriers.



## Independent Living, Inc. (ILI)

**Our Mission:** Independent Living, Inc. is a consumer-directed, cross-disability advocacy and service organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities.

**Our Vision** is a barrier-free society with opportunities for all people to achieve their maximum potential.



## Rehabilitation Support Services, Inc. (RSS)

**Our Mission:** Rehabilitation Support Services, Inc. is a not-for-profit behavioral health agency whose mission is to enrich and empower the lives of people we serve. Our goal is to improve the quality of people's lives through recovery-oriented housing, work, treatment, socialization, and health and wellness services.

**Our Vision:** Through housing, employment, crisis/respite services, treatment, care coordination, socialization and wellness programs, our rehabilitation and recovery services provide individuals with experiences that will equip them to lead productive and fulfilling lives in their communities.

# 2024 Wellness & Recovery Conference



Introducing the Darcie M. Miller "Excellence in Behavioral Health Leadership" Award

## Celebrating

*Darcie M. Miller*

LCSW-R

Commissioner of the Orange County  
Department of Mental Health

for 36 years of outstanding  
leadership and dedication to  
our community!

