



The Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force is the voice of the community on issues related to the quality and responsiveness of mental health and substance abuse disorder services.

Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force 2019 Karen Avery Forum *Pathways to Employment: Opportunities, Rights and Resources*

Thank you to our speakers for giving their time and expertise to make this forum possible.

Dani Rischall, LCSW, Executive Director Chrysalis, Inc

Dani Rischall has been working in the community mental health field for nearly 15 years. She earned her Bachelors Degree in Social Work from UW - Madison, and Masters Degree in Social Work for Columbia University. Before returning to Madison, Dani spent four years in Washington, DC providing housing services to people experiencing homelessness and mental illness. For the past eight years Dani has been the Executive Director of Chrysalis, a non-profit that promotes work opportunities that support hope, healing, and wellness. In 2016, Dani and her team started Chrysalis Pops, a local, organic, frozen fruit pop social enterprise, that provides meaningful paid work experiences to individuals with mental health challenges.



Lauren Grudzinski, Benefits Specialist, IndependenceFirst

Lauren Grudzinski has been working as an advocate for people with disabilities for over 16 years. For the past 6 years, she has been employed at IndependenceFirst, an independent living center located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where she is a Work Incentives Benefit Specialist. Lauren brings a unique perspective to her job as she lives with blindness, depression and anxiety which let her utilize Social Security benefits and work incentives. Lauren holds a national Work Incentive Counselor certificate from the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). She is a member of the Wisconsin Work Incentive Benefits Specialist Association (WIBSA) and the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL). She received her Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts from the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design."



Shirley Drake, CPS, Supervisor - Office of Consumer Affairs, Wisconsin Community Services

Shirley is a Certified Peer Specialist and State Trainer for the CPS Curriculum. She is passionate about the value of Peer Support and the difference these services can bring to in various healthcare settings. She is also a member of the Project Team at Milwaukee County BHD in planning the relocation of mental health services to the community. She recently became a member of the MHTF Steering Committee.



Marie C. Perry, CPS, Supervisor, Community Linkages and Stabilization Program (CLASP), La Causa, Inc.

Marie Perry is a Certified Peer Specialist, peer specialist trainer, and supervisor. She views employment as a key part of her own recovery journey, and seeks to empower others to return to the workforce. Marie began her work as a Certified Peer Specialist while experiencing homelessness herself, and is particularly aware of the unique challenges individuals experiencing homelessness face when attempting to reenter the workforce. She is currently pursuing a graduate degree in clinical mental health counseling at Northern Vermont University.



J. B. Reid, Grand Avenue Club member, *colour palate* and Planet Fitness

A Chicago native and a resident of Milwaukee for the past 5 years, J.B. has been a member of Grand Avenue Club for the past 2015. His involvement in GAC's Work Ordered Day raised his confidence so much that he was willing to try Transitional Employment, an approach to quality employment that involves a great deal of support from a staff "placement manager" as well as the GAC community. J.B. is now working at two part-time jobs. He is part of the kitchen staff at *colour palate*, a downtown casual eatery on Water Street. He also works just down the block, at Planet Fitness, at the edge of the Milwaukee River.

L.T. Austin, Employment and Education Specialist at WCS' Coordinated Opportunities for Recovery and Empowerment (CORE) Program



Monica Murphy, Managing Attorney School and Civil Rights, Disability Rights Wisconsin

Monica is an attorney with over thirty years of experience representing people in civil rights matters. As an attorney with Disability Rights Wisconsin she represents people with disabilities in a variety of actions including employment and housing discrimination, public accommodations and access, transportation, and education. Monica advocates for the rights and needs of people with disabilities, both individually, and with systems and public policy makers.

