March 2019 Newsletter

Get your teams together for a chance to win great prizes and have fun.

Are you a football fan, a soccer fan or even a ping pong fan? (Yes, it is a sport.) Then this year’s Bowlathon to support Mentoring at UCS is the event for you!

The community is invited to support our annual Mentoring Bowlathon at Bennington Lanes on Saturday, April 6th. The theme this year is sports, so come dressed in your team jersey or as your favorite player. This is a fun, interactive way to make a difference and support a program that plays a vital role in the lives of the youth in our community.

The Bank of Bennington is our Title Sponsor once again this year. Funds raised allow Mentoring at UCS to continue to support mentoring matches and provide ongoing assistance to mentors, mentees and families. Local businesses can support the event by becoming event lane sponsors, donating prizes for the silent auction and encouraging employees to create teams and participate. Friendly competition is encouraged. Whether your favorite team is the Patriots, Giants or even the Cowboys, get your team together and put on your caps, jerseys and athletic gear and join the fun.

Registration is $10 per person and each bowler is encouraged to fundraise a minimum of $50. Team Spirit Awards and a prize for the highest fundraiser will be presented in every wave, and the event will include a silent auction. Grand prize for the overall highest fundraiser is a sports package including a pair of tickets to a Yankee’s Game, Red Sox Game and Giant’s Game with transportation included. Start fundraising now and it could be yours.

The annual Mentoring Bowlathon brings the whole community together! It supports a positive future for our kids and every dollar raised stays in the local area to help maintain current matches and to build new ones.

"What you do today can improve all your tomorrows."
Making a difference in the lives of our clients

Rich Jorgensen, Senior Case Manager, UCS Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT)

More than 120 individuals are supported with case management services by five Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT) Case managers. I personally work with twenty six individuals. Case management for me means assisting individuals with their ability to live their lives as independently as possible. This can include helping with forms related to their benefits, or accessing resources for their care, including eye wear and dental care. At times it includes providing transportation to shop and to get to medical appointments and even helping someone learn to make tuna salad!

It is not unusual for a CRT client to have a number of providers, so case management involves service coordination and contact with these providers: their therapist, primary care physician and our psychiatric medical team. The job involves a lot of listening. What is most exciting is supporting someone with their interests and abilities. I know artists, musicians and skilled craftsman. I am none of these, but am happy to be with those folks who derive so much from their ability.

In the last year or more CRT has grown a stronger tie with individuals in the Northshire. I am now working with eleven individuals who live in the area and who are connected with our office in Manchester. Working collaboratively with our co-workers in the office has been very positive. By joining with them we are helping individuals with remaining connected in spite of mental health challenges, most significantly dealing with their anxiety, depression and resulting isolation.

For me, as someone’s case manager, the most important thing is that people know that what matters to them matters to me and that if I can help I will. Helping someone with their care is very special and I like to think that what we do at UCS is very “care-full”, and truly a great place to get care.

Rich Jorgensen is a Senior Case Manager in Community Rehabilitation Treatment at UCS. He has previously worked as a Case Manager and Program Coordinator in Developmental Services and has been
92% of our Developmental Services consumers recently surveyed reported their quality of life improved as a result of the services received by United Counseling Service. We make a difference!

Acting 101 - Clients participate in acting group.

Clients from our Developmental Services Division have been participating in an acting group. The seven thespians meet weekly at Sacred Heart Church in Berlin, NY where they perform improvisation and participate in theater games.

The aspiring actors bring scripts home to work on memorizing their lines and then weekly they read out loud. The group is also learning behind the scenes activities including costumes and lighting. The troupe hopes to hold a performance in the spring.
UCS Received RiseVT Amplify Grant

United Counseling Service (UCS) received a $1500 Amplify Grant from RiseVT. The grant funds were used to assist in funding a client and staff Self-Care Day UCS. UCS received the grant as an organization that will provide an important project that will improve the healthy landscape of our community.

“We are excited to have received this grant from RiseVT and to be able to hold a day where staff and clients can take some time for themselves,” said Lorna Mattern, Executive Director of UCS “As an agency we promote many wellness initiatives to provide staff and clients with tools and opportunities to educate themselves and adopt healthy habits.”

The UCS Self Care Day was held on February 26th and gave staff and clients an opportunity to engage in healthy, mindful activities. Some activities included beading, mindfulness coloring, guided meditation, an essential oil workshop, tai chi and much more. UCS has an award winning Staff Wellness program and has received the Worksite Wellness Award from The Vermont Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports five consecutive years.

Take a Course. Save a life. Strengthen your community.

You are more likely to encounter someone in an emotional or mental crisis than someone having a heart attack. Learn how to help a friend, family member, coworker or neighbor in need.

Mental Health First Aid is an 8-hour training course which teaches participants an action plan to assess a situation, select, and implement interventions and secure appropriate care for the individual. The program introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, builds understanding of their impact, and overviews common treatments.

United Counseling Service of Bennington County will be holding Mental Health First Aid Training on March 19th and 20th from 1:00PM-5:00PM at 100 Ledge Hill Drive, in Bennington. There is no cost for this training, however, space is limited. For more information or to reserve a spot contact Amie Niles at aniles@ucsvt.org.

This Y/MHFA training is provided free of charge through a grant from Vermont Care Network/Vermont Care Partners through the Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Center for Mental Health Services: Mental Health Awareness Training Grant: Community FIRST (First Signs, Intervention, Referral, Support, Treatment) Vermont. Grant Number: 1H79SM081439-01. Community FIRST is a collaboration between Vermont Care Partners, Vermont’s Designated Mental Health Agencies and Specialized Service Agencies (DASSA), Vermont Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Program (VT LEND), and community partners.
Head Start Happenings
Early Childhood Services located throughout Bennington County

Head Start staff participated in Farm to School Day activities at the State House

Head Start and Early Head Start staff participated in Farm to School Day at the Vermont Statehouse. Staff participated in testimony to the Joint Agriculture Committee, followed by lunch with local representatives, and a session in the chamber where a proclamation making February 6, 2019 Farm to School day and where the program was recognized. The day culminated in an afternoon awards ceremony where the program was recognized for a Farm to School Nutrition Grant Award. The award was a competitive process with Vermont schools and early care centers applying, and only two early care centers being selected. The award consists of $15,000 and professional development for staff and coach support over the next two years of the grant period.

Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance

Rebecca Bishop from Bennington County Head Start & Early Head Start testified last week in front of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees as part of Farm to School and Early Childhood Day. She spoke about the value of the numerous professional development opportunities that they have had access to because of FTSEC, saying, “Program staff is on board and we are able to bring the nutrition training to our families.” Farm to School and Early Childhood is one of nine issues on the Alliance's 2019 Legislative Agenda. Find more information on our website: https://vecaa.org/farm-school-and-early-childhood

See the full Legislative Agenda, here: https://vecaa.org/legislative-age.../.../2019-legislative-agenda.

The Lead Organizations working on this issue are Vermont FEED (Food Education Every Day), Vermont Farm to School Network, Hunger Free Vermont, and the Building Bright Futures Wellness Committee.
Parent Support Group

Every Tuesday from March 5th — April 9th, 2019
11:15am to 12:45pm
UCS Youth and Family Services
314 Dewey Street
Bennington, VT

This 6 week class is open to community members and focuses on trauma based skills for parents. This includes self-care, coping mechanisms, and parenting techniques to help you better understand yourself and your family. If you wish, you may bring your own lunch, there will be time to eat.

Please reply to Taylor Zimmernann by February 26th if you plan on attending.
802-442-5491 ext. 520
Mental Health First Aid Training
March 19-20, 2019
100 Ledge Hill Drive, Bennington, VT
For more information visit [MHFA](https://www.uclcem.com/).

Mentoring Bowlathon
Saturday, April 6, 2019
Bennington, VT
For more information visit [Mentoring Bowlathon](https://www.uclcem.com/).

UCS Presents: Resilience
April 23, 2019
Bennington Free Library
More information coming soon.

UCS, Manchester Community Library and Northshire Bookstore Present: Rachel Lindsay
Wednesday, May 29, 2019 at 7PM
138 Cemetery Avenue, Manchester Center, VT
More information coming soon.

The Barn Sale
September 21-22, 2019
Northshire Civic Center, Manchester, VT
More information coming soon.

UCS Superhero 5K
Saturday, November 2, 2019
Bennington, VT
More information coming soon.

Do you have a story to tell?

We would love to hear from you. Has UCS impacted your life? If you have a story you would like to share please contact Heidi French at hfrench@uclcem.org or call (802) 442-5491 ext. 281.

Support from donors is vital

This year support from our donors is vital in ensuring that we continue to meet the growing needs of our community. Please consider making a donation. Your donation makes a difference and with your help we can build a stronger community.

Donations can be mailed to:
United Counseling Service
PO Box 588
Bennington, VT 05201
Proud to be a Center of Excellence

United Counseling Service (UCS) has been designated a Center of Excellence by Vermont Care Partners. UCS is a private, non-profit community mental health center serving Bennington County since 1958. UCS promotes healthy lifestyles through all its programs and offers care at 16 different facilities, including two primary outpatient facilities in Bennington and Manchester. UCS provides comprehensive, community-based behavioral and developmental services for children, adults, families, and seniors. UCS employs 300 people and annually serves nearly 3,000 Bennington County residents.

Are you interested in a career with a great organization?

Check out current openings with United Counseling Service at [UCS CAREERS](#).