Thanks for choosing us!

United Counseling Service has received the 2019 Readers Choice Awards in two categories. Thank you to all of the readers who voted us the #1 Place to Work and the #1 Community Service Organization.

An established leader and provider of health and human services in Southern Vermont, United Counseling Service provides nearly 3,000 people each year with a broad range of mental health, developmental and children’s services along with early childhood education. Approximately 300 employees are making a positive difference at 16 facilities operating throughout Bennington County.

Our employees are creative, thoughtful, energetic, forward thinking and empowered. UCS is living its mission: Building a stronger community by empowering individuals to live healthy and meaningful lives. UCS is a great place to work and a great place to get care. Thank you for recognizing us!
UCS welcomes Rachel Darby to Psychiatric Medical Team

United Counseling Service welcomes Rachel Darby, MSN, PMHNP-BC as the newest member of the Psychiatric Medical Team (PMT). The PMT supports all Divisions of UCS by providing medical treatments for psychiatric conditions and ensuring clinical standards of services are being maintained. The team also provides psychiatric consultation to Southwestern Vermont Medical Center (SVMC).

“We are excited to have Rachel on board,” says UCS Executive Director, Lorna Mattern. “She has a deep concern and passion for psychiatric care and will enhance our ability to help our clients.”

Darby attended Southern Vermont College where she received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing and received her Masters of Science in Nursing, Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner from Walden College. She most recently worked in the Emergency Department at Rutland Regional Medical Center. She is a California native and resides in Sunderland with her 3 children and enjoys yoga and music.

“I am so excited to join UCS and to serve the residents of Bennington County,” said Darby. “This is a great opportunity to make a difference and work with committed and caring people.”

Mental Health Series shared around the state

Vermont Care Partners is a statewide network of 16 non-profit community based agencies providing mental health, substance use and intellectual and developmental disability service and supports. United Counseling Service is the designated agency serving residents of Bennington County.

In observance of Mental Health Awareness Month in May, a series of commentaries provided by the Vermont Care Partners was published in the Bennington Banner.

What is Mental Health?

Know the Warning Signs

How to Help a Friend Who May Be Struggling with Mental Health

Taking Charge of our Mental Health
Make a Difference - Take Mental Health First Aid

United Counseling Service offers Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training. MHFA teaches about recovery and resiliency - the belief that individuals experiencing these challenges and do get better, and use their strengths to stay well.

MHFA is an 8-hour course which teaches participants an action plan. The program introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, builds understanding of their impact, and overviews common treatments.

To sign up for upcoming training or to schedule one for your group or organization, visit ucsvt.org or contact Amie Niles at aniles@ucsvt.org.

Why take Mental Health First Aid? Watch now.

This 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.

Changes ahead for funding

by Heidi French, Director of Community Relations and Development

The State of Vermont is in the midst of mental health payment reform. Mental Health Payment reform supports a cultural shift in the way state funded mental health providers, such as United Counseling Service do business.

Payment reform is not about adding new money to the system, it is about reducing barriers and increasing flexibility to meet the needs of individuals and families. Payment reform will provide one bundled payment supported by aligned programmatic requirements, indicators and outcomes. Payments will be linked to quality and performance and will support the goal of promoting and improving the mental health of Vermonters. Ultimately payment reform should provide better health care, better care and lower costs.

To learn more about Health Care reform visit DMH Payment Reform.

Rachel Lindsay shared her powerful story

Vermont-based cartoonist Rachel Lindsay, presented her graphic novel RX and discussed her personal journey with bipolar illness, the treatment of mental illness, the role of art and expression in the healing process, and the often unavoidable choice between sanity and happiness.

A powerful new voice in the mental health realm of the Graphic Medicine community, Lindsay has spoken about RX at Columbia University, Harvard Medical School, The Miami Book Fair, Mount Sinai Hospital's Icahn School of Medicine, the Massachusetts Independent Comics Expo, and the California Institute of Integral Studies, among others. RX is also the featured book for US National Network of Libraries of Medicine's mental health month.

Lindsay is a graduate of Columbia University, where she created the first graphic novel thesis in any undergraduate or graduate program.
The event was presented by United Counseling Service, Manchester Community Library and Northshire Bookstore and was held Wednesday, May 29th at the library in Manchester. Her presentation was followed up with a Q&A session. The Northshire Bookstore had RX available for sale and donated 10% of the proceeds to United Counseling Service.

Bennington County Head Start and Early Head Start participated in Northshire Literacy Fair

By Kelly Roemmelt, Early Childhood Education Coordinator

Bennington County Head Start and Early Head Start participated in the Annual Literacy Fair held at Manchester Rec Park on Saturday, May 11th. Alexandra Langstaff of Hulaballoo got the party started. Alexandra went through the playground banging her drum and was able to get the attention of children. Alexandra has amazing energy to engage any aged child. She uses directional games and fun loud music to get the entire crowd involved.

Children enjoyed decorating caterpillars, butterflies and making cards for their special someone. The Northshire Day school had an excellent letter game for younger children. Let's Grow Kids had wonderful information for parents who were new to the area or who were unaware of the importance of Let’s Grow Kids and all that they do. Each child received a free book and was entered in to a raffle to win a basket of fun items including bubbles, a jump rope, sidewalk chalk, frisbee, bubble toys and a book!

Special thanks to Stewart's Shops for sponsoring this event.
Director of Early Childhood Services celebrates 15 years

Staff at United Counseling Services celebrated Betsy Rathbun-Gunn’s 15 years with the organization. Betsy has been instrumental in the success of the Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. Students from the classrooms created wonderful pieces of artwork for her and we all enjoyed a little cake.
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@ucsvt.org or call (802) 442-5491 ext. 281.

Save the Date

Adult Mental Health First Aid
June 12-13, 2019
Bennington, VT
Visit UCS MHFA

The Barn Sale
September 21-22, 2019
Northshire Civic Center, Manchester, VT
Visit The Barn Sale Facebook Page
UCS Presents: Downstream
October 25, 2019
Bennington, VT
More info coming soon.

UCS Superhero 5K and Kids’ Dash
November 2, 2019
Bennington, VT
More info coming soon.

For a full list of upcoming trainings and events please visit ucsvt.org.

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.

For more information about giving, please click here to email Heidi French, Director of Community Relations and Development, or call at 802-442-5491.

DONATE NOW

or

Donations can be mailed to:
United Counseling Service
PO Box 588
Bennington, VT 05201

Turn your Father’s Day shopping into a force for good. Shop at smile.amazon.com/ch/03-0199213 and Amazon donates to United Counseling Service of Benning County, Inc..
Are you interested in a career with a great organization?

Now accepting applications for “Camp Be A Kid” summer employees!

This summer camp begins July 9th and runs to August 8th (with a full week of training before the camp officially begins) and serves around 40 children between the ages of 4 and 12. The majority of these children have suffered trauma both past and current so alongside with our team of Clinicians, the Community Support Workers attend a week long training session prior to the start of camp. They will learn about de-escalation strategies, trauma approaches, CPR/First Aid, and other useful tools for working with our youth. Working at the Camp allows for a fun summer with lots experience gained. The most exciting experience is to be able to observe our clients gain skills, making connections, and building resiliency as a result of the therapeutic work and dedication of our hard working team!

Qualifications Include: High School Diploma or equivalent required. Experience preferred however not necessary.

Check out all current openings with United Counseling Service at UCS CAREERS.

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.