

# LGBTQ have options for recovery in York

SABRINA VALENTE  
FOR NO SWEAT YORK

Recovery is possible, treatment is effective and no one who suffers from a mental health or substance use disorder should ever feel hopeless. That's the focus and the message of National Recovery Month, celebrated in September to raise awareness about mental health and substance use disorders and celebrate those who recover.

One community that faces unique challenges for recovery is the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer -- or LGBTQ -- community. Studies, such as this one from Columbia University, have shown that LGBTQ individuals

are 2.5 times more likely to have a mental health disorder at some point in their lives when compared to heterosexuals. Lesbian women are more likely to experience major mental health disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder and major depression than straight women, and LGBTQ young adults abuse substances at a rate that is up to three times higher than heterosexuals, depending on the substance.

Perhaps the most alarming statistic is that LGBTQ youth who come from highly rejecting families are up to eight times more likely to attempt suicide than their peers.

One reason for this is

minority stress: chronically high levels of toxic stress associated with being part of a minority group. This stress comes from many places, but is most often a result of prejudice and discrimination. LGBTQ people often face verbal and physical harassment in their schools and workplaces or have had negative experiences with coming out ranging from homelessness and isolation to violence and a daily barrage of messages that tell them who they are and how they love is inherently wrong. Over time, these stress responses can cause poor physical and mental health.

There are a number of things that families,

friends, and others can do to support their LGBTQ loved ones.

**Family Support**  
Family support is critical in the recovery process. Research from The Family Acceptance Project shows suicide risk for LGBTQ youth decreases in a supportive and accepting family environment. An accepting family is also associated with higher levels of self-esteem and protection against depression and substance use. If parents or caregivers are having a hard time accepting their LGBTQ child, reaching out to an organization like PFLAG, Parents and Families of Lesbians and Gays, or talking to a professional about their feelings can

be helpful.

## Community Support

Another important piece of the recovery process is finding community support. No one can face life entirely on their own; everyone needs to find a tribe to help them along their journey. Connecting with others who are LGBTQ and understand that experiences can go a long way towards not feeling so alone. The LGBT Center of Central PA has several groups for adults that meet on various Wednesdays at Heidelberg UCC in York, and Planned Parenthood runs THE CURVE, an LGBTQ Safe Space Program for youth ages 14 through 21 on Thursdays.

## Professional Support

Sometimes a person needs to talk to a professional. When considering where to seek treatment, LGBTQ individuals may want to ask behavioral health agencies if they — like TrueNorth Wellness Services — employ therapists who are open and affirming and comfortable working with their unique needs.

Recovery from mental health and substance use disorders is possible. Treatment works, so don't be afraid to take that first step.

Sabrina L. Valente, MA, is the Family-Based Program Manager with TrueNorth Wellness Services, a behavioral health and wellness nonprofit serving southcentral Pennsylvania.

# Students win medals in various events

STAFF REPORT  
YORK DAILY RECORD

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) is a national Career and Technical Student Organization that provides personal growth, leadership development, and career preparation opportunities for students in Family and Consumer Sciences education.

Under the supervision of FCCLA Advisors Ms. Mindy Miller and Ms. Heather Ryan, the York County School of Technology Chapter of FCCLA sent a large delegation to the National Leadership Conference in San Diego, California in the summer of 2016. The delegation brought back to York Tech, a host of medals in various events, as follows:

» Nutrition & Wellness: Sammi Jenks (Red Lion Jr. HS), Gold  
» Leadership: Nizah Dillon (York Suburban

MS, YCST Class of 2016), Gold

» Job Interview: Breanna Sterner (North-eastern MS & YCST Class of 2016), Silver

» Promote & Publicize FCCLA: Kiana Rivera (Dallastown MS) & Joslyn Miller (Red Lion Jr. HS), Silver

» Chapter Service Project Portfolio: Breanna Barley, Brittany Gembe & Brianna Garner (all of Dallastown MS), Silver

» Teach & Train: Kaitlyn Hopple (Red Lion HS), Silver

» Life Event Planning: Anna Laughman (Spring Grove MS) & Micaela Hall (Dover MS), Bronze

The "Empower" theme of FCCLA focuses on how students must make the right choices and recognize that they hold the key to doing great things as individuals, FCCLA members, students, leaders and members of their families and communities.



Shown are the FCCLA advisors and the York County School of Technology medal winners.

## SYC Rotary welcomes new member



Southern York County Rotary Club president, Dr. Beth Preston welcomes Lindey Sweeney as a new member of the club at its September 16 meeting. Shown from left, Lindey Sweeney and Dr. Preston. The Rotary Club meets Fridays at 7 a.m. in the New Freedom Restaurant. Visiting Rotarians and prospective members are welcome.

## Local student becomes Neumann ambassador

STAFF REPORT  
YORK DAILY RECORD

Olivia Gilbertson, of Etters, has been selected to serve as a presidential ambassador for Dr. Rosalie Mirenda during her last year as president of Neumann University. Gilbertson is a graduate of Trinity High School.

Ambassadors are academically successful students who demonstrate Neumann University's values: respect, integrity, service, excellence, and stewardship. They represent the university at a variety of events, including homecoming, charter day, meetings of the University Board of Trustees, and the scholarship gala where they network with donors and benefactors.



Olivia Gilbertson

A nursing major, Gilbertson, 19, is an orientation leader and co-chair of

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week at Neumann. She said that she is "honored to have been selected to represent a university that has done so much for my personal, spiritual and academic growth."

Dr. Mirenda retires on June 30, 2017, after 21 years as president. She began the ambassador program in 2002 to let alumni, neighbors, trustees and donors see the character and intellectual ability of Neumann students.

## Plants

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indoor growth, said Siol co-owner and principal Jessica Weigley, 38. Lavender plants added a spa-like dash of aromatic beauty.

"We were joking that you could pick the lavender and put it into the bath with you," Weigley said. "Bringing nature indoors is huge. It still requires care and attention, like any other garden. It's just on your wall."

Of course, a full green wall is also incredibly pricy — it can cost customers at least \$10,000, at about \$100 to \$200 per square foot, Weigley said, because of its embedded lighting and watering system.

A much cheaper indoor-garden alternative is pockets made of various materials — including ceramic, glass, plastic, wood, metal and even macrame — that can hang directly on a wall and be filled with plants, said Baggett. They can run about \$20 to \$100 each.

Easy-to-care-for indoor plants include snake plants — also known as sansevierias — with long, pointy green leaves that reach upward; dark green, cast iron plants; dangly-crawling ivy; sagging spider plants; succulents; and foxtail ferns. Snake plants and cast iron plants, especially, require little light and watering. Bonsai trees, bay laurel trees and

small fig trees can also be displayed indoors in both planters and partitioned floor areas padded with soil and rocks.

Those living in smaller homes can get creative: "Vertical gardening is the hottest trend for not a lot of space," said Baggett. "There's the floating shelf — a shelf that's just sticking out of the wall — and the half wall, a waist-high wall, with plants on top of it. Recessed wall niches are also popular."

Miniature gardens, from terrariums — landscapes in glass containers — to fairy gardens,

have caught on for both space-conscious adults and fun-loving kids, he said.

What are fairy gardens? They're small, whimsical sceneries decorated with itsy-bitsy figurines, houses, moss, milkweed pods, pine cones and tiny plants.

Kokedama, a Japanese plant art that means "moss ball" in English, involves forming a moss-covered ball of soil around the roots of a plant and wrapping it with twine. Suspending these moss balls as hanging plants is also a trend, Baggett added.

Those with a retro aesthetic can display succulents and cactuses in vintage tins and decorative pottery. Molded fiberglass bullet planters, popular in the 1950s, have also been making a comeback. The size of an ice bucket, the planter is held aloft on a three-pronged stand.

"Plant stands are handy. You're raising those plants to eye level," said Baggett. "That pulls your eye around that room. It's the same way in an outdoor garden that people use color to pull the eye around the garden."

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