

Community Matters

Doing Good in Your Community



Mental health issues and addiction are not easy to discuss or address. Even with increased awareness, these can be unpopular topics and ones that people avoid discussing or addressing. But with the help of grants from The Guilford Foundation (TGF) and the Guilford community's support, lives are being saved and transformed one at a time.

Lifeline

Lifeline is a Guilford-based organization founded by a group of recovering addicts. The mission is to reduce relapse and provide long term sustainable recovery for people who are in or are seeking recovery. The services are most associated with transportation for recovering people. This means drives to treatment, or detox, to social services, the hospital, etc. But there is more. While Lifeline does not diagnose or provide clinical treatment, the small staff and loyal group of volunteers are experts at getting people help with services that best fit their situation. They know how you can receive care, where the care facilities are located, how to navigate insurance issues. They provide coaching and referrals, operate 3 sober houses, and, of course, they know how to get to the care safely.

They've also "been there" so there is a deep understanding of the challenges facing those afflicted by addiction. Take Board member J. Wayne Jarvis (Wayne). Twenty-one years sober, he calls himself a cautionary tale. "I am not telling you that you can't drink," he explains. "I don't have the ability to drink safely. The brain becomes chemically compromised. I kept trying to fix myself. A lot of years I spent trying to fix me and I couldn't."

Addiction does not discriminate, and a lot of support is needed to break the revolving door of relapse, treat, release. Lifeline forms part of that support. "It's really rewarding - what you can do to change people's lives," notes Wayne. "It's amazing to see people who are so hopeless getting their lives back."

Wayne is grateful for TGF and the Guilford community. "When people care, that's when magic happens. When others get involved then what we can do with a lot of help, it's amazing," Wayne notes. "And it doesn't matter how many times you failed. You are no longer powerless against this disease. We won't give up on you."



Left: Wayne, from Lifeline, assists with transportation for recovering people.



Far left to right: Guilford Athletic Center, Clint and Hannah, and supportive members receiving a grant from the Guilford Foundation.

Recovery Move

Also based in Guilford, Recovery Move™ helps address the needs of at-risk Guilford teens and young adults - those struggling with addiction, mental illness, or other traumatic events such as abuse or loss. The concept combines healing through exercise. The program currently serves about 30-40 individuals who participate in workouts (recently expanded to include yoga) followed by meetings.

Clint Zeidenberg (Clint), co-creator of Recovery Move™ and owner of Guilford Athletic Center discovered the healing power of motion when trying to help a loved one fight addiction. "We went to take a CrossFit class. That was 13 years ago, and we never looked back," he says.

This spring/summer Recovery Move™ is offering a girl's group addressing eating disorders that will include a licensed clinician who herself overcame an eating disorder.

There's a LGBTQ class as well. "They are confident here," says Clint. "We are a safe space for these kids who are suffering. They can't tell

their parents. They are afraid of things coming out at school. They enjoy the community we have created for them."

Clint recalls the story of a 15-year-old boy suffering from severe anxiety. His mother came to the facility, but the boy was so withdrawn and non-communicative, he couldn't even get out of the car. On a return visit, the gym had to be cleared entirely of people for the boy to come in. "I asked him to run up and down the gym so I could assess his gait," recalls Clint. "The boy said, 'would you run with me.' So, I did." Over time, healing occurred. The boy's demeanor changed. Today, the boy looks forward to group classes with a big smile on his face.

Exercise followed by recovery meetings form a holistic approach for one's entire well-being. "With young adults, when we have a meeting, they are so much more open to share after a workout," underscores Clint. "The happy hormones, the endorphins kick in, so they have great confidence. We have the meetings right after the workout, so they feel that confidence. It's awesome."

