



Wisconsin Peer Specialists

Igniting Recovery 



Special points of interest:

- Wisconsin now has 140 Certified Peer Specialists
- Recommended reading
- Peer Specialist Trainings
- Next Peer Specialist Certification Exam is August 3, 2011

Employer Testimonials on the value of working with Peer Specialists...

Autumn West is a 20 bed Safe Haven in Milwaukee. A Safe Haven is an alternative shelter for persons with severe mental illness and other debilitating behavioral conditions who are homeless and have been unwilling or unable to participate in housing or supportive services. The program is HUD funded and provides a safe environment, meals, 24/7 resident managers and a case manager. We started with one volunteer peer specialist in December of 2006. I met Mary at a Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force meeting and invited her to visit Autumn West and brainstorm about how to incorporate peer specialists into the Autumn West Program. Mary then started to visit on a regular basis and get to know the residents and staff of the program. Mary had recently finished her training as a peer specialist and we began to explore how to incorporate the specialists into our program. Mary easily related to the residents because she had many similar experiences including mental illness, homelessness, and substance abuse recovery. Mary became a regular fixture at Autumn West on Sunday evenings. She planned events, brought special treats and encouraged warm conversations and sharing's. Residents looked forward to Mary's visits. Through a relationship with Our Space, eventually we were able to add another peer specialist. In January of this year the peer specialists were hired by community Advocates to work at Autumn West, the peer specialist are now part of our team and participate in staffings. The specialists conduct recovery groups, assist residents with WRAP plans, organize, and participate in outings.

Recently a resident that I was meeting with informed me that he thought he may have Bi Polar disorder. When I asked why he thought this he said that he had attended a group lead by a specialist. The group was about symptoms and the resident believed he experienced these symptoms. A referral was then made for psychiatric care. The peer specialists are valuable members of our team and help residents and our staff to decrease the stigma and move people into recovery.

Jeanne Lowry
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Employer Testimonials continued...



Over the past five years at Mental Health America of Wisconsin (MHA), I have had the privilege of working closely with our Peer Support Specialists (PSS). As MHA employees, they meet individually with program participants, lead our support group, participate in family nights, co-facilitate our Nurturing Parenting and Wellness Recovery class and operate our Specialized Family Resource Center. With their personal experiences and wisdom, they have added an invaluable component to our agency. Their depth of understanding, honesty and encouragement has allowed them to form very powerful relationships with our program participants. I have witnessed the lifesaving impact our PSS's have made on many. PSS's will always be part of our recovery team; our good work cannot be done without them.

...Kristina Finnel, MSW, APSW
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GRASSROOTS EMPOWERMENT PROJECT



I have had the opportunity to work with Peer Specialists as Members of the of the Board of Directors and employees in my roles as Executive Director of Grassroots Empowerment Project . These individuals bring richness to our organization in the following ways:

- A stronger focus on recovery within our workplace. Building a more supportive working environment for all
- Improved accountability to the mission of our organization-consumer empowerment
- A change in the communication style-from just discussion to true dialog
- An equally shared vision and values for the success of our organization
- An ability to resolve differences and conflict in a respectful and honest manner

This has had a positive impact on the way we work within the community and has strengthened our commitment to the following:

- True collaboration
- Respect for differences
- Engaging in dialogue
- Share Power
- Mutual support

I have found that my own professional and personal development has been enriched because I work directly with Peer Specialists and their absolute commitment to recovery for all.

...Molly Cisco, Executive Director
 Madison, WI
www.grassrootspower.org
 (800)770-0588

Peer Specialist Trainings...

Wisconsin has four state approved training curriculums. Please visit their websites for detailed information.

1. **Consumer as Provider (CAP)** www.socwel.ku.edu/projects/SEG/cap.html
2. **Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)** www.dbsalliance.org
3. **National Association of Peer Specialists (NAPS)** www.naops.org
4. **Recovery Innovations (RI)** www.recoveryinnovations.org

It is crucial that Certified Peer Specialists be knowledgeable in the following Domains & Objectives:

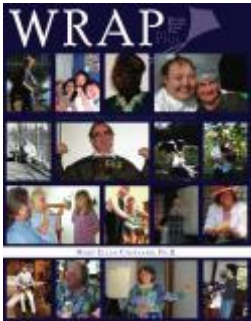
- Self-knowledge and the role of the Peer Specialist
- Ethics and boundaries
- Cultural Awareness
- Advocacy and ability to locate information
- Teamwork
- Consumer choice and empowerment
- Crisis and safety
- Recovery

The trainings are comprehensive and prepare people for taking the WI Peer Specialist Certification Exam.

Please visit www.wicps.org to find out when trainings will be held. We post schedules when we receive them.

We also encourage you to visit the websites of the four state-approved training curriculums.

Recommended Reading...



WRAP Plus is an extensive enhancement of the original book that includes my findings about mental health recovery and WRAP since then. This book includes intensive instructions-not found anywhere else-on how to develop a WRAP that will work for you, and how to LIVE WRAP on a day-to-day basis. Filled with NEW IDEAS for successfully developing, using and updating the popular Wellness Recovery Action Plan for prevention, recovery and wellness, this book includes stories from those who are LIVING WRAP to stay well and are learning to anticipate and address life's hurdles. For more information go to:

www.copelandcenter.com.

ISBN 978-0-9795560-8-1

Size 8.5 x 11

Paperback: 292 Pages

Journal to the Self: Twenty-Two Paths to Personal Growth - Open the Door to Self-Understanding by Writing, Reading, and Creating a Journal of Your Life by Kathleen Adams

"Journal to the Self" is a wonderful smorgasbord of ideas for personal journal writing and for writing in general. Taking proven journaling techniques from a myriad of resources and condensing them into a single tome, Kathleen Adams effectively gives her readers the opportunity to explore different facets of journal writing.

ISBN-10: 9780446390385

ISBN-13: 978-0446390385 **Paperback:** 239 pages



KUDOS...

if you know of a Wisconsin Peer Specialist or organization that employs Peer Specialists, that you would like recognized in the newsletter and on the website; please send us their name and contact information. We would like to feature them in an upcoming issue.

Summer Quotes...

A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken.

– James Dent

Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Employment Initiative

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WI Peer Specialist Program Coordinator



Visit:

www.wicps.org

**Funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, CFDA# 93.768, WI Department of Health Services/Pathways to Independence*

Newsletter is available in other formats.

Announcements...

Recovery Dane, A Dane County Human Services mental health information and referral program, has ongoing groups and workshops and supports Peer Specialists. Visit their website: www.recoverydane.org
Phone: 608-237-1661
Email: info@recoverydane.org

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) Chapter Support Meetings... Saturdays at the Sauk City, WI Library. 9:30-11 am. Peer led, Peer run. For further information contact Paul B. 608-370-6199 or email dbsa.saukcity@yahoo.com

The Copeland Center...Ongoing Webinars and training about the **Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)** Sign up for their e-newsletter and updates. WRAP around the World Conference is in Philadelphia, PA August 1-3, 2011. Visit the website for more information.

www.mentalhealthrecovery.com

2011 Peer Specialist Certification Exams

August 3, 2011

Application deadline is
July 13, 2011

Applications received
after the deadline date
will be automatically
scheduled for the next
available exam in 2012.



Resources ...

Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Exam Application and Guidelines
UW-Milwaukee School of Continuing Education
Web: www.sce-peerspecialist.uwm.edu

The Wisconsin Association of Peer Specialists (WAPS)
Web: <http://waps.health.officelive.com/default.aspx>
Phone: 715-298-4553

Wisconsin Bureau of Prevention, Treatment and Recovery
Phone: 608-266-2717
Web: http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/mh_bcmh/index.htm

United We Stand Wisconsin (UWS)
Group: <http://groups.google.com/group/united-we-stand-wi/topics>

NAMI Wisconsin
Phone: 608 268-6000 or (800) 236-2988
Web: www.namiwisconsin.org