

Bright Horizons

SPRING 2016



Your support gives women
the courage to escape
domestic violence. PG. 2



Thanks to you,
our clients have found a voice. PG. 2


BHcare
Hope • Health • Recovery

A Message from Our President/CEO



Thanks to your support, members of our OPTIONS and Valley Social clubs have a strong voice in the fight to maintain state funding for our behavioral health services.

Your donations to BHcare help provide advocacy groups at our social clubs in Ansonia and Branford. The advocacy groups work with clients to help them build the confidence they need to speak up for themselves. In March, members of both clubs traveled to Hartford for Lobby Day. They met with legislators and explained why the services they receive are so important. We even had two clients who had the courage to testify before the Human Services Committee.

More than 20 of our members created videos that are playing now on our website and Facebook. In these videos, they share compelling and personal stories that explain how BHcare services help them live healthy and independent lives.

Thanks to you, our clients have found a voice. Thanks to you, they are advocating for themselves. I'm incredibly proud of all of our clients who are taking an active role in advocacy, and I thank you for giving them the opportunity.

Sincerely,

Roberta J. Cook
President/CEO

P.S. Would you like to see our clients' videos? Visit: www.facebook.com/CTBHcare/videos and click play!

Bracelets of "Courage"



Rena Mulrain, owner of the Bead Hive in Guilford, designed three bracelets in honor of The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services. Rena has been in business for 25 years and wanted to give back to the community that has supported her throughout those years. "I've always wanted to support a cause" she said, "and I was familiar with the good works of BHcare and The Umbrella from attending their annual Gala."

Although Rena has no personal experience with domestic violence, she learned about how many women and children seek help from the Umbrella each year, and was moved to help support the program and keep its life-saving services available for victims in our area.

The three bracelets will range in price from \$19.95 to \$29.95 with all proceeds benefiting The Umbrella. They will feature purple beads, an umbrella charm and the word "courage." Courage, meaning the ability to do something that frightens one and/or strength in the face of pain or grief, was chosen by Umbrella staff as a way to acknowledge the victims who had the courage to leave their abusers.



A team of volunteers is helping Rena assemble the bracelets which will be sold at BHcare's Shoreline Benefit featuring Cupcake War in May. They will also be available for purchase at the Bead Hive.

**BHcare's Shoreline Benefit
featuring Cupcake War**
Thursday, May 19, 2016
5:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Pine Orchard Yacht & Country Club
\$50 per person
Get your tickets at www.BHcare.org.

Your Dollar Goes Further During The Great Give® 2016



This year BHcare is participating in **The Great Give® 2016**, the premiere online giving event for nonprofits in the Greater New Haven region. For 36 hours, starting **May 3, 2016 at 8:00 am and lasting until 8:00 pm May 4**, your charitable donation will make us eligible for thousands of dollars in grant prizes when you give to us through giveGreater.org.

In 2015, because of your generous gift, BHcare provided life-saving services to more than 12,000 individuals and families struggling with mental illness, substance abuse and/or domestic violence.

Your support has given thousands of people like Alexis, a resident of our domestic violence safe house, hope for a safe, healthy and happy future. Your donation made it possible for her story to continue.

"I laid in the hallway unconscious for hours. The next afternoon I packed my suitcase and at 3:00 pm on October 29, I walked out of my home never to look back. I gave my kids to their father (not my abuser) because I knew my fiance would come after me.

A few days later, my sister and her friend put me on a bus to The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services. I was met at the bus station with a nice warm robe and new jammies.

As I write you this, I'm sitting at the kitchen table of the safe house. In three days, I leave to start my life all over. Yes, it is overwhelming, but I'm not scared anymore. I'm so excited to be given this second chance."

"I'm so excited for this new chapter in my life. I don't have to live with domestic violence ever again." ~ Alexis



Please consider donating during **The Great Give® 2016** by visiting www.thegreatgive.org anytime during the 36 hour drive, search for BHcare and click "Donate Now."

Thank you for your continued support.

#PeopleMatter

Do you know that every call, email and letter a legislator receives is counted as 200? Your voice, added to those of our clients, board and staff can have a significant impact on the outcome of the Connecticut state budget crisis.

You've probably seen, read and heard about what's happening in Hartford on the news. Connecticut is facing a considerable budget shortfall, and the cuts proposed by the Governor would have a devastating impact on our clients, our programs and services, and our community.

You have an opportunity to save our services and ensure our clients continue to have access to much needed mental health and addiction treatment; 24 hour access to our domestic violence hotline, and 24/7 staffing at our domestic violence shelters. Reach out to your legislators today and tell them why the services provided by BHcare are not only a smart investment, they're essential to the health and wellbeing of our community. #PeopleMatter Find your legislator: <http://bit.ly/MyCTLegislators>

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." ~ Winston Churchill

Are you interested in making a strong and lasting impact on your entire community? Do you want to help sustain the delivery of critical services that so many families and individuals depend upon? Are you wondering how one individual can have such a profound and enduring impact?

Giving a bequest, or naming a nonprofit as a beneficiary of your life insurance or a retirement account are easy ways to ensure the continuity of services, missions and programs that are close to your heart.



"Planned Giving is a great way to provide support to BHcare programs and services long after we are gone. We chose to add BHcare as a beneficiary and designated a

percentage of our 401k and IRA accounts to BHcare. All it took was a simple Beneficiary Change form.

We hope you will join us by designating BHcare in your future planning." ~ Craig and Lynne Perry

To learn more about including BHcare in your legacy planning, please contact Arlene Greco (203) 736-2601 x1856 or speak with your financial or legal advisor.

Doctor's Corner

by David A. Sperling, M.D., Medical Director BHcare

Patti Duke, the gifted actress and mental health advocate died of a sepsis from a ruptured intestine on March 29. With her passing we have lost a remarkable actress, a tireless advocate and spokesperson for people with mental illness and a woman who helped shine a bright light on Bipolar Disorder. She writes about her experience with Bipolar Illness in her bestselling book, "A Brilliant Madness – Living with Manic Depressive Illness". Manic Depressive Illness today is known as Bipolar Disorder.

Patti Duke was born Anna Marie Duke in Elmhurst, NY. Her father was an alcoholic taxi cab driver and her mother struggled with violent Bipolar Disorder. The family was poor, wracked by alcoholism and chaos. When Patti was 7, her mother threw her father out of the house and Patti never saw him again. When she was 8, she was given over to the care of a talent agent couple who changed her name to Patti Duke. The couple became her legal guardians, introduced her to prescription drugs, and at some point, sexually molested her. The couple did promote her career and she starred in the Broadway play, "The Miracle Worker" about the life of Helen Keller from 1959 to 1961 and then won an Emmy for the movie version in 1963.

Her mental illness began to manifest itself around 1963 with the development of severe mood swings, multiple suicide attempts, alcoholism, and anorexia. She was hospitalized a number of times for these conditions. She began to stabilize in the 1980s when she was placed on the mood stabilizer Lithium and entered into psychoanalysis. Her personal life began to stabilize, she maintained a longstanding and gratifying marriage, raised three children of her own and two stepchildren, became the President of the Screen Actors Guild, and dedicated her life to advocacy for treatment and research of mental illness. She lobbied Congress on mental health issues, advocated for increased funding for the National Institute of Mental Health, and was an active spokesperson for NAMI.

The psychiatric nomenclature changes over time, but the illness remains the same. What was Manic Depression is now Bipolar, and maybe down the road will be called something else. What is important is not the name per se, but the person with the condition and those impacted by it, how we assess it, understand it, and treat it. Just as Hellen Keller metaphorically came into the light, even though she remained blind and deaf, she was no longer mute. It is our collective voices, our hope, our research that joins us with all who suffer mental illness and prevail.

BHcare is supported by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Guilford Community Fund, the Guilford Human Services Council, the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, The Valley United Way, United Way of Milford, The Valley Community Foundation and the Towns of Bethany, Branford, Derby, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton and Woodbridge.

BHcare is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation Rehabilitation Facilities and is licensed by the Department of Public Health.

BHcare is a partner agency of CommuniCare, Inc.

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer

We apologize for any omissions or oversights. If your department, foundation or municipality has been overlooked, please bring it to our attention.



www.BHcare.org

 [Facebook.com/CTBHcare](https://www.facebook.com/CTBHcare)

 [Twitter.com/CTBHcare](https://www.twitter.com/CTBHcare)

BHcare services operate from two primary locations:

Shoreline Services
14 Sycamore Way
Branford CT 06405
(203) 483-2630

Valley Services
435 East Main Street
Ansonia CT 06401
(203) 736-2601

Serving the towns of Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Branford, Derby, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton, West Haven and Woodbridge.