



## Quarterly News & Updates

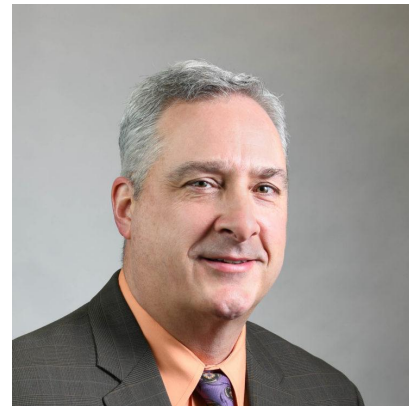
Winter 2023 | Volume 21

[View as Webpage](#)

# Youth Success Story



Like many of the children who come to our agency for help, Shawn had a lot of behavioral challenges when he first enrolled in CMO. Shawn's behavior was not only difficult for his family and school to manage, but confusing and distressing for everyone involved, including Shawn.



*From the Desk  
of...  
James Parauda,  
CEO*

### **Giving Back to Your Community**

Oftentimes, you will hear people say, "I do this to give back to my community." You've also probably heard the saying "It takes a village to raise a child." The purpose of community is to provide a safe environment that supports individuals and families. It is also there to help youth in their development. In addition to being an extension of our

Once the family had a board-certified behavioral analyst (BCBA) in place, they were able to start making sense of some of Shawn's behaviors and what they meant. This allowed them to develop strategies to address and redirect the behaviors so that Shawn would not harm himself or disrupt the home and learning environments.

Another key moment in his journey was when he started attending Midland School, where he received the support, he needed to make progress in the right direction.

A sweet boy with a contagious smile, Shawn has a lot to offer the world and has flourished with the support of his family and service providers. He is very social and joined the student council at his school this year. He also helps at the Right at Home Daycare, where he has been going since he was a baby and is known and loved by the children and staff alike. His absolute favorite thing to do is go to the movies with his family. Shawn has gotten better at using his iPad to communicate and loves telling his care manager Marliese about the movies he has seen and what he plans to see next.

Shawn has been involved with CMO for over five years and has left quite an impression on everyone who had the privilege to work with him. We wish Shawn the best as he moves onto the next stage of his journey!



## Getting to Know TCCMO...

individual family, we are all products of our environment.

There are many formal services in the community that are needed to function in society: police, city councils, public works. There are also informal services in the community that have an impact on our society: recreational activities, Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts, Rotary Clubs and religious groups, as well as many others. The 'giving back' often reverts back to your childhood, when you may have participated in some of these groups as a youngster and you realize it is your turn to get involved as an informal leader for today's youth. You may be able to teach some of the same skills and values you were able to receive and help them develop into a productive and flourishing young adult. This may come in the form of an athletic coach, troop leader, Rotary Club member or a youth group leader. Most of these informal positions are done without pay and oftentimes the inspiration behind the participation is part of giving back to the community.

However, 'giving back' is not only for adults. There are many opportunities for children/youth to participate in volunteering within their communities. Here at Tri County CMO, we encourage youth to volunteer and, in some instances, will provide a monetary stipend to become involved in community service activities. There are many opportunities that range from helping at a local animal shelter or library or organizing a food drive through your church to give to a food bank.

In this edition we would like to highlight our Care Manager (CM) Specialist team! The CM Specialists are a major support system to the many Care Managers we have been working in Somerset, Hunterdon, and Warren Counties.

CM Specialists do not have any youth and families directly assigned to them; instead, they support the Care Managers with tasks that come along with their assigned youth and families. CM Specialists will often help with searching for providers and community resources, transporting youth and families to appointments, covering when a Care Manager is out of office, visiting families, and covering meetings. CM Specialists also help with tracking deadlines and keeping track of data for the agency. CM Specialists also have the opportunity to be promoted to Care Manager after they have become experienced in the job requirements.

The CM Specialist team is supervised by Stephanie Suriani, Program Manager of TCCMO. Stephanie has been an employee of TCCMO for 9 years and was previously at another CMO for multiple years. Stephanie is a Nurtured Heart Approach® certified trainer as well. The other team members include Kristen, Joey, Kylah, Andrea, Chris, Simi, and Magdalena.

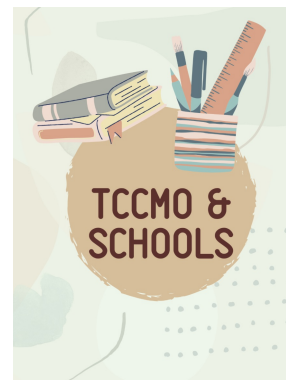
- Kristen has been with TCCMO for almost ten years! Kristen began as a Care Manager with her own assigned youth and families for most of her time as an employee. Kristen then transitioned into the CM Specialist role almost three years ago to be able to support other Care Managers in their role and feels that she is better able to provide this support because she recognizes the stressors as she was previously in that role. Kristen has a second job as a mental health clinician as well. Kristen is also part of the newsletter committee, is a Nurtured Heart Approach® certified trainer and is a member of the Race and Gender Equity committee. Kristen is very artistic and has completed a few art projects in both office spaces.

- Joey is newer to TCCMO and has been an employee for four months. Joey shared that he has been interested in the mental health field for a while. This is why he pursued a degree in psychology, which he is very proud of. Joey appreciates having the opportunity to work with members of the community and to be directly in contact with youth and families. Joey shared that he also enjoys working at TCCMO because of the broad range of needs that TCCMO helps youth

Volunteering will not only help the individuals, pets or groups you are supporting, but will also make you feel good about giving back to the community and being part of the village. There are also many awards, recognition and scholarships given for volunteering in the community.

I encourage you to look into volunteer opportunities within your community. Here are some links to get you started:

<https://www.ymca.org/>  
<https://4-h.org/>  
<https://www.warrencountynj.gov/our-county/volunteer-opportunities>  
<https://co.hunterdon.nj.us/253/Volunteer-Opportunities>  
<https://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/human-services/volunteer-services>



## HOLIDAY CHEER AT TCCMO

TCCMO celebrated the holidays with some of our enrolled families and providers at the annual holiday open house at The Elks Lodge in Flemington. The guests enjoyed music, food, and activities. The youth in attendance had numerous opportunities to win fun

with. Joey and Kyla started as employees on the same day!

- Kyla has previous experience working with children and feels proud that she has a job that is helping youth and families. Kyla shared that she appreciates the encouraging and supportive environment as an employee of TCCMO. Kyla attends dance classes when she is able.

- Andrea has been a CM Specialist for six months and was recently promoted to Care Manager! Andrea has previously worked as a behavioral assistant (BA) and community mentor within the Children's System of Care. Andrea, like Kyla, shared that she appreciates the supportive culture of TCCMO. Andrea is a hard worker, resourceful, and enjoys exercising and painting.

- Chris began at TCCMO three months ago. Chris shared that he utilized mental health support as an adolescent which led him to desire to be able to support others in a similar way. Chris enjoys working with the family unit and recognizes how important that is to a youth's success. Chris said that TCCMO's approach of the Wraparound Model of Care is valuable to helping youth and families with their various areas of need. Chris was excited and proud to share that he recently became engaged to his fiancé!

- Simi has been a CM Specialist for nine months and has previous experience working in the medical field. Simi enjoys being able to work directly with youth and families and build a connection with them. After work, Simi likes to relax and watch TV to decompress.

- Magdalena is the newest edition to the Specialist team and started one month ago. Magdalena previously worked in a residential treatment setting and has been in the mental health field for some time. Magdalena said that so far, she appreciates feeling the welcoming environment of staff at TCCMO and recognizes how much TCCMO cares about youth and families. Magdalena is a mother and enjoys doing cross fit. TCCMO is thankful for this group of dedicated CM Specialists that do so many tasks and are quickly learning to be as helpful as they can be!

giveaways as well. CMO staff also set up a sensory room with various sensory items for youth to play with. The attendees were visited by surprise guests Santa, Spiderman, and Marshall from Paw Patrol®.

The TCCMO and FSO staff also celebrated the holidays together at the staff party with the Grinch as a special guest. The staff enjoyed a trivia game, prize giveaways, music, and food.





## Community Corner – Center for Family Services

As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, Family Guidance Center of Warren County, Inc. merged into Center for Family Services. All current Family Guidance Center of Warren County services will continue under the Center for Family Services umbrella. The merger will support the growing needs across New Jersey, particularly in the areas of substance use treatment and mental health services.

Center for Family Services has an over one-hundred-year history as a leading non-profit social services provider offering a strong and innovative continuum of care with comprehensive and evidence-based services. With its beginnings in Camden, NJ, Center for Family Services has expanded its footprint to 15 counties throughout the state, allowing more individuals, children, and families to receive life-changing services. The top workplace team at Center for Family Services has a professional commitment to high-quality services. Dedicated employees balance best practice and cutting-edge approaches, providing personalized and compassionate care with a goal to help each person reach their full potential.

For more information, visit [centerffs.org](http://centerffs.org) or contact the Access Center at 877.922.2377.



## Pride in

## Celebrating Black, Indigenous, and People of Colors' (BIPOC) Contributions to Mental Health

As we continue to see a cultural

# Partnership UNITED WAY

The holidays are a time for family togetherness and giving! In the spirit of the holidays, we were so grateful to partner with the United Way of Northern NJ to help families during this season of giving. Community Engagement Coordinator Nicole Russo and Director of Training Reggie Rosarion can be seen here picking up some winter coats and toys for our CMO-enrolled families. Holiday donations were provided for 60 youth! The United Way of Northern NJ and Tri County CMO are always looking for ways to team up and support the families that we serve.



---

## ***FYI - social media***

TCCMO is excited to embark on our new social media upgrade in 2023! TCCMO has been active on **Facebook**, **Instagram**, **YouTube**, and **Twitter** for a couple of years now. In 2023, TCCMO plans on launching our very own LinkedIn and additional social media channels to better communicate with our supporters and followers. See you on Social!

shift, it's becoming more imperative to discuss mental health. This is very important in contexts to previously underserved communities that are composed of more vulnerable groups. For example, according to Resources to Recover on their BIPOC Mental Health Fact Sheet, in 2019 a study found that African Americans have the highest lifetime prevalence of PTSD (8.7%) compared to their white (7.4%), Latino (7%), and Asian (4%) counterparts. Most importantly, these discussions are important for acknowledging the strides made by BIPOC individuals and groups toward the mental health field. Because it is Black History Month, we are highlighting a few people of color who have made serious impacts in the field of mental health.

- Bebe Moore Campbell was an American author and mental health advocate who worked tirelessly to shed light on the mental health needs of the Black community and other underrepresented communities.
- Doctor Herman George Canady was credited with being the first psychologist to study the influence of the rapport between an IQ test proctor and the subject. Doctor Canady found that the race of the test proctor could create bias in IQ testing.
- Doctor E. Kitch Childs provided therapy for members of the LGBTQ community, individuals with HIV/AIDS, and other marginalized members of her community. Doctor Childs' research was centered around the experiences of Black women and feminist theory.
- Doctor Mamie Phipps Clark and Doctor Kenneth Bancroft Clark are known for their "Doll Study" in which over 200 Black students participated. Their study provided invaluable evidence for the ending of school segregation in the Supreme Court Case Brown vs. The Board of Education. They cited that segregation was psychologically harmful towards Black children.

These powerful figures, and numerous others, have made

#TCCMO



incredible strides for the mental health field, and it is so important that we, as an agency, acknowledge them by name along with their individual contributions. As we go forward into Black History Month, please join us in acknowledging these pioneers for social change.

## **Growing Greatness: 2023: WHERE WE ARE CHOOSING TO SEE THE GOOD**

Perspective. It is defined as a particular attitude toward or way of regarding something. It's not in the definition, but inherent in its meaning is CHOICE. We can look at things one way, or another. Ten different people can look at the same thing and see ten different things. When we choose to view things from a different perspective, we are also choosing to adjust our mindset.

Your mindset plays a major role in how you handle life's stressors and challenges. There are two different types of mindsets: a fixed mindset, where you believe that your traits cannot be changed, or a growth mindset, where you believe that your traits and talents can be further developed over time. Research has confirmed that one of the contributing factors into the development of a youth's mindset is how they are recognized for their successes and talents. Providing your youth with a recognition that gives them evidence of their greatness will contribute to your youth having a growth mindset.

We have talked about the Nurtured Heart Approach® in past articles, and one important "stand" to take while practicing this relational approach is "Absolutely Yes!" A large part of this stand is being in the mindset of "there's always something going right." Being in this mindset requires a shift in perspective at times. It's human nature to focus on what's wrong and what we can do about it, but this has a negative impact on our relationships as well as our own thoughts and feelings about ourselves. The Nurtured Heart Approach® teaches us to be the directors and editors of our own life movies, meaning zooming in and adding the soundtrack to the positive moments. So, if your child gets out of bed, dressed, ready for school and out the door, you can focus on those incredible tasks completed, rather than maybe the one article of clothing left out on the floor or dish not placed in the sink. If you as a parent get the kids out the door, yourself to work, and all but one of your tasks completed for the day, focus on what was positive, not the one thing that did not get done. It's all about perspective.

Wayne Dyer said, "Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change." We cannot change what has happened in the past or what will happen tomorrow, but we can change the way we view the world around us. It might require some training on our parts to become used to looking for what's going right, but it is worth the effort.

Want to learn more on how to shift your perspective? Join us for our upcoming Nurtured Heart Approach® trainings!

# TRI COUNTY CMO PRESENTS...

## Nurtured Heart Approach

THE NURTURED HEART APPROACH® (NHA) IS A PHILOSOPHY FOR CREATING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE.

NHA WAS CREATED BY HOWARD GLASSER IN 1992 AND SINCE THEN HAS SHOWN SUCCESS FOR FAMILIES, CLASSROOMS, HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS, SOCIAL WORKERS, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE SEEKING EARLY INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES.

THE NURTURED HEART APPROACH® FOCUSES ON:

- SELF-REGULATION
- TRANSFORMING THE WAY CHILDREN PERCEIVE THEMSELVES, THEIR CAREGIVERS, AND THE WORLD AROUND THEM
- TEACHING CHILDREN THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE RECOGNITION THROUGH POSITIVE BEHAVIOR
- SEEING INTENSITY TO BE A POWERFUL QUALITY THAT, IF DEVELOPED CORRECTLY, CAN DRIVE CHILDREN TO AMAZING ACHIEVEMENTS

MARCH 15TH 6PM-9PM  
MICROSOFT TEAMS

TO REGISTER PLEASE CONTACT STEPHANIE SURIANI  
VIA EMAIL [SSURIANI@TRICOUNTYCMO.ORG](mailto:ssuriani@tricountycmo.org)  
OR TEXT 908-255-5595



## April is Autism Awareness Month

### Proud to be me- Dance & Movement Therapy

Saturdays + Mondays • 5:30-6:00 PM EST • Virtual

This free dance classes is designed for PreK to middle schoolers with special needs. For more information visit the website below.

<https://sites.google.com/view/ptbmdance-and-movement-therapy/home>

### Sensory Integration

April 6 • 7:30- 8:30 PM • Zoom

This webinar will cover background and practical information for families on how to embed sensory activities into the home in a fun, cost-effective, research-driven way.

To register, contact:

Beth Mitchell

908-889-8800 x203

[bmitchell@jccnj.org](mailto:bmitchell@jccnj.org)

### Beautiful Puzzles

April 25 • 10:00-11:00AM • 5 E. Main Street, Flemington, NJ

Support Group for parents who take care of children with autism. This program is a safe space to talk and share experiences, break isolation, and increase parenting skills. This program takes place on the last Tuesday of every month.

<https://njprevent.com/event/beautiful-puzzles/2023-04-25/>



---

# Tri County CMO Board Members

Leslie Brusser-Board Chair

Don Atkinson-Treasurer

Erin Karl-Secretary

Pam Jacobs

Dan Kerr

Lynne Eaton

Lesley Schwarzman

Melissa Fowler

David Yazujian

Sakina Ladha

Avril Okeke

Daphney Rene

---



## How to Get Referred to Tri County CMO

PerformCare can help a parent or guardian connect their child to Children's System of Care services. PerformCare staff are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide assessment and guidance to families facing challenges to their functioning and well-being.

PerformCare / Contracted Systems Administrator (CSA)

1-877-652-7624

<http://www.performcarenj.org/>

<http://www.performcarenj.org/families/index.aspx> (video guide)

---



Tri County Care Management Organization | 3040 Route 22 West, Suite 210, Branchburg, NJ  
08876

[Unsubscribe sbishara@tricountycmo.org](mailto:sbishara@tricountycmo.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by ramorim@tricountycmo.org in collaboration



Try email marketing for free today!