



# Family Services of Warren County

We're here for you and your family

## “WHAT’S HAPPENING” NEWSLETTER

Special points of interest:

- Executive Director/ Medical Director
- Boot Drive
- Board Member
- Staff Outing/ Renovations
- Staff Highlight: Darla Miller

### FSWC partners with WCSD

We are pleased to announce that for the 2021-22 school year, Family Services of Warren County (FSWC) has a new partnership with the Warren County School District (WCSD), specifically at their Career Center. Christopher Messina (pictured below) is a full-time therapist at our agency who has been contracted out to the Career Center as their school social worker. The primary responsibility of this position is to increase student engagement through collaboration with students, their families, teachers, and administrators to address attendance, behavior, and other concerns. The school social worker provides counseling on-site, in the home setting when needed, works with community partners to reduce barriers experienced by students, and incentivizes student engagement through various rewards programs. School social work utilizes a strengths-based approach which views each student in their environment to better address their basic needs, increase their supports, and improve academic performance.

Funding for this position is made possible through a federal grant obtained by the WCSD, and FSWC was awarded the opportunity to fulfill the grant requirements.

Mr. Jim Evers, Director of the Warren County Career Center shares, “Mr. Messina is doing a fabulous job for us. Students have responded very well to him and are often seeking him out to share issues and concerns they are having. This added social work position is already seen as a huge success.”



## **From the desk of the Executive Director**

The past six months have been busier than usual at FSWC. We have been fortunate to retain all our therapists, while adding one full time and one part time therapist position. Our drug and alcohol program is working closely with the new state mandates for the ASAM alignment to improve service delivery and continuity of care. Clients who meet criteria for Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) or outpatient are referred to an individualized number of service hours to meet their needs, including referral for additional care or in house services. To meet these demands we are working to increase our family therapy component, provide additional case management, and weekly mindfulness training and yoga class to help our IOP clients learn mindfulness skills.

Another big change here at the agency is our men's and women's bathrooms. The board voted to utilize some of the PPP funds obtained through the COVID relief to upgrade the bathrooms. We also painted the inside of the elevator and added words of encouragement on the walls. FSWC is committed to improving our space to make it inviting, safe, and tranquil for our clients.

### **Upcoming plans:**

1. We are still on track to begin our Certified Recovery Specialist Program. We are awaiting start up monies to be approved from CCBH, our payer.
2. We have signed a contract with CELERITY for an electronic health records system in late October 2021. We hope to have the system up and running within the next four months.

## **What is the role of our Medical Director?**

A medical director's role within a substance abuse treatment organization is relatively similar to MD roles in general health care facilities. However, MDs for rehabilitation facilities have more specialized responsibilities related to substance use and addiction treatment modalities. They also need to adhere to SAMHSA guidelines to receive state or federal funding. Other duties may include organizing community outreach events, creating resources for communities in need, applying for grants and reporting facility data.

A medical director provides oversight to treatment planning, assessments, and are available to consult with anytime a medical need arises with either clients or staff. They ensure that all medical staff members follow guidelines and provide high-quality care while also making sure their staff members' needs are met. Additionally, MDs must meet and enforce the expectations and requirements of their health care institution.

Essentially, the job of an MD is a balancing act that provides support for agency staff and clients while abiding by PA drug and alcohol guidelines and aiding the agency to reach its goals.

## 3rd Annual Boot Drive



Once a year our staff and board members hit the streets of downtown Warren with boots and giveaways in hand. In only a few short hours during the lunch and dinner rush we outdid our last two years by bringing in just over 2,000 dollars! The monies raised will go directly to benefit our clients. We have clients in need over the holidays and we are able to provide gift cards to Walmart. Due to the increased giving this year, we are investing in updated technology in our conference and group rooms. We are streaming videos more often and use our large wipe on wipe off board. It make sense to combine the two together and purchase a Smart board which combines these abilities. FSWC can't thank the people in our county who donated by simply throwing change and cash into rubber boots on September 24th. The generosity of our community is incredible.

## Welcome New Board Members

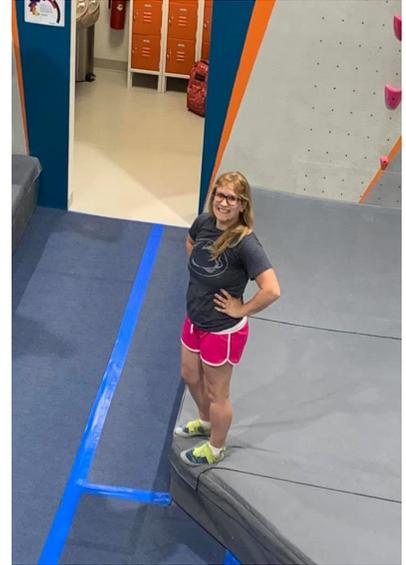


*2021 has been a year of change for our board of directors. We have been so fortunate to have added some great people to our board, as well as a new board president, Joe McClellan. Joe is a long time resident of Warren County and currently works as a teacher in the Warren County School District. He has been a member of our board for three years, most recently moving from the position of Secretary to Board President in May of 2021. "The mission of the agency is a very important one, and I'm glad to be a part of an agency that works every day to improve the health of Warren County residents through professional counseling services." Joe and his wife Rachael reside in Warren with their two daughters Reagan and Thatcher. In his spare time, Joe enjoys jogging, weight lifting, cooking, and playing ukulele.*

*The board has also added Mr. Jim Evers, Director of the Warren County Career Center. Jim is a long time educator and administrator and brings years of experience to our board. Mrs. Amy Tabor works at United refinery as the Title Manager Treasury Operations for five years. Amy has 15 year management experience and has worked in finance for over twenty years. Her knowledge of finance and desire to give back to her community makes her an ideal board member. Finally, our newest member is Mrs. Joan Stitzinger, Executive Director of the Hi-Ed. Joan has many years experience running a non-profit which makes her membership on our board invaluable. Thank you to all our next board members for volunteering your time and efforts to help make FSWC a success.*

# Annual Staff Outing

Family Services held our first ever staff outing in June of 2021 and supported two local businesses as well, The Goat Fort and Bent Run Brewing Company. FSWC Board of Directors fully supported the idea of increasing staff morale, team building, and self care. The owner of The Goat Fort (indoor rock climbing) was very hospitable and gave our team hands on instruction while focusing on the importance of “play” and having fun. As he would say “channel your inner child”.

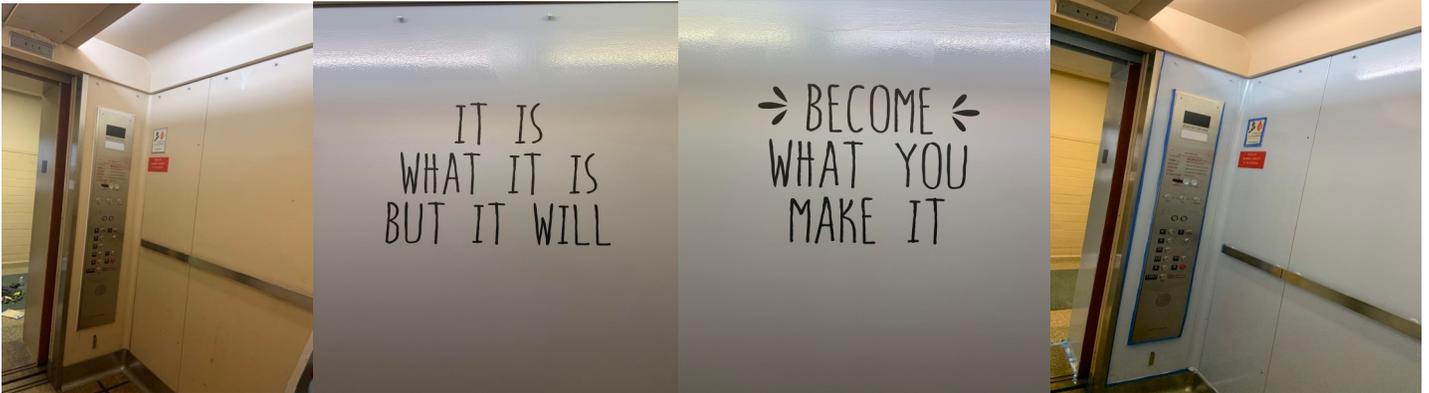


Bent Run Brewing Company provided our team Mexican themed food for “TACO TUESDAY”. The weather was perfect and our staff were able to enjoy outdoor yard games, while making memories together. Please enjoy a few pictures from our afternoon.



# Office Renovations

At Family Services, we continue to look for ways to make our environment more trauma informed, safe, and inviting. During a recent Saturday, one staff member and one client whom needed to complete community service hours, cleaned and painted the inside of our agency's elevator. Since our office is on the second floor of the Curwin Building on the Warren State Hospital Grounds, the elevator is utilized for clients who are unable to use the stairs. Our staff voted on which decal was most uplifting and would make the elevator feel a bit more welcoming, and after the paint was dry the thoughtful words were applied.



If you've ever been to our office, you may know that the restrooms located in our building were not the most pleasant to look at. After a few months this summer, we can proudly announce that our Men and Women's restrooms have been fully renovated and revamped. We would like to graciously thank Nehemiah Restorations, local to Warren County, for completing this very large and tedious task.



We look forward to more renovation projects in the future and appreciate the time and attention that our clients/community service workers donate to our agency. We couldn't do it without you!

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## Meet Darla Miller, LPC

This month, Family Services is highlighting Mrs. Darla Miller, LPC, who has been with agency on a part time basis for six months. Mrs. Miller has been working as a counselor for 24 years, is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor and holds a License in Pennsylvania as a Professional Counselor (LPC). She holds a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling and a master's degree in education. Mrs. Miller has worked for both private and non-profit agencies, as well as government programs, participated in state committees, served on a local daycare board and has had extensive involvement in welfare to work initiatives. She also teaches online human service courses through the University of Phoenix, preparing pre-professionals for case management positions.

Mrs. Miller is currently in the process of completing the training levels of the Gottman Method Couples Therapy, proven assessment techniques and interventions in working with couples, and soon will be a Certified Gottman Therapist (CGT). Marital and relationship stressors have become prominent in recent years, and all relationships suffer strain at times. Couple's therapy seeks to provide and maximize tools to assist clients successfully navigating conflict, increasing successful communication patterns, and establishing shared meaning and goals in relationships.

Executive Director of FSWC Kimberly Holt, LPC, shares "We have seen an increase in marital and couple issues, especially during the pandemic. With the increase in referrals, it made sense to invest in such a high quality training as Gottman's Method for Couples Therapy. We are so pleased that Darla has joined our team and is working to meet the increased demand in this area." Darla resides in Warren with her husband Brett and several fur babies. They adopt elderly and/or disabled dogs from various shelters who are the least likely to be adopted. Darla enjoys spending with her three adult children, baking, re-purposing household items, and writing on social media about the comical side of life. Darla started a Facebook group that focuses on ways to save money taking when vacationing on a cruise ship and the membership has increased to over 30,000 people.

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