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PROUD Program Relaunch and Fall Festival in Waterbury

There’s a lot happening at Wheeler’s community health center at 855 Lakewood Road in Waterbury, and a recent two-part special event helped to underscore this point.

On October 20, an afternoon Fall Festival and Health Fair took place and was preceded by an event to mark the relaunch of a federally funded program for expectant moms and mothers of young children, as well as details on enhanced medication-assisted treatment for adults. (See ROUNDUP items in the CARE section). Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) Interim Commissioner Nancy Navarretta, MA, LPC, NCC, and other community leaders attended the morning program, and later on, residents of the Brass City enjoyed the festival and health fair, which featured free food, tours, health screenings, family activities, and more.

“Both events on this day provided an opportunity to highlight programs and services that help individuals and families struggling with substance use issues, emotional challenges, health concerns, and more,” said Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA, president and chief executive officer, Wheeler. “We will always look for ways to inform and remind residents in this city and surrounding towns that our community health center and caring team are here to meet their needs.”

FACT: Since the move to 855 Lakewood Road in 2020, Wheeler has more than doubled its patient caseload.
COMMUNITY

Annual Golf Classic Raises $52,000

In mid-September, more than 130 golfers, sponsors, and volunteers participated in Wheeler’s 36th Annual Golf Classic, presented by Mutual of America Financial Group, at the Country Club of Farmington. The event raised $52,000 to support individuals and families in our care through Wheeler’s Basic Needs Fund.

“Last year, amid the pandemic, we served more than 50,000 kids, adults, families, and communities, across more than 90 percent of Connecticut’s cities and towns,” said Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA, president and chief executive officer, Wheeler. “Without our donors and supporters, and their role in events such as the Golf Classic, we cannot meet community needs, including the most basic needs, such as food, clothing, transportation, linkage to vital community services, and more.

“Because of our supporters, we are able to address factors that interfere with patients’ health and well-being—in ways not addressed by other means of funding, and we are helping to further improve health outcomes for individuals and communities,” Trocchi added.

COMMUNITY ROUNDUP

• Wheeler is one of nearly 20 community partners in an effort led by Connecticut Children’s to improve the lives of children in North Hartford by helping to break cycles of poverty and violence. The five-year, multi-partner, cross-sector effort is made possible through a new $30 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

• As part of International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31, Mott Corporation volunteers joined others to place 1,374 white flags at the State Capitol. Each flag represented a life lost to overdose in 2020, a 14.5 percent increase over the previous year.

• Wheeler Chief Financial Officer Athena Dellas Szczesniak, MBA, received a 2021 C-Suite Award from the Hartford Business Journal and spoke at an October 6 event about her philosophy of servant leadership.

HEALTH

A Vision for Accessible Care in Bristol

Wheeler is adding another chapter to its decades-long history with the Bristol community and has a vision to purchase Centre Square property between North Main and Hope streets for a new flagship health center. The site would house a brand-new community health center and consolidate services currently located at 10 and 225 North Main streets. Administrative offices also would be located here.

“We are eager to provide residents of this city and surrounding towns with accessible care in one convenient location,” said Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA, president and chief executive officer, Wheeler. “From medical and behavioral health services, to addiction treatment and linkages to area resources, we are committed to promoting the health and well-being of area residents.”

Today, in addition to community health centers at 10 and 225 North Main streets, Wheeler operates community justice and intervention programs, as well as Child First, an intensive, home-visiting model for young children and their families, and school-based health centers in every Bristol Public School.

FACT: Wheeler’s first federally qualified health center opened at 10 North Main Street, Bristol, in 2013.

HEALTH ROUNDUP

• Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities will continue to access essential dental services, thanks to a collaboration between Wheeler and Harc, Inc., and a new $50,000 S.M.I.L.E. Grant from the Delta Dental of New Jersey Foundation.

• An initiative funded by the City of Hartford and coordinated by the United Way of Northeastern Connecticut, in collaboration with Wheeler, is raising awareness of the need for flu and COVID-19 vaccines.

• Wheeler’s nursing team received a 2021 Excellence in the Workplace Award from the Connecticut Nurses Association and was recognized for compassionate leadership, particularly during the pandemic.
Federal Grant Expands Mental Health Services

A two-year, $5-million federal grant will expand mental health services for children, adolescents, and adults through Wheeler’s community health centers in Bristol, Hartford, New Britain, Plainville, and Waterbury.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as one of more than 200 organizations nationwide, the Community Mental Health Centers grant will provide patients with rapid access to behavioral health and other forms of care, outreach, and engagement. Wheeler was one of six awardees in Connecticut.

The Wheeler program will include: the addition of a Behavioral Health Access Team (BHAT) at each Community Mental Health Center site for walk-in crisis and early intervention services and connection to psychiatric services; enhanced referral pathways through partnerships with a number of faith-based and grassroots organizations; after-hours psychiatric services; enhanced referral pathways through partnerships for walk-in crisis and early intervention services and connection to Access Team (BHAT) at each Community Mental Health Center site.

Wheeler was one of six awardees in Connecticut.

Some of our other stories highlight exciting areas of service delivery, challenges, as well as highlight the array of primary care and behavioral health services at our 855 Lakewood Road location.

People across our state have suffered immeasurably throughout this pandemic. Our services help mitigate and address critical needs as we move forward.

Thank you for everything you do in support of our mission and vision. We are stronger and better because of YOU.

Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA
President and Chief Executive Officer