

# BRINGING OUT THE BEST

## 2021 Sanilac County Community Mental Health Annual Report

2021 brought out the best in Sanilac County Community Mental Health, our community partners, and the individuals we serve. Throughout the largest staffing crisis I have ever seen, our dedicated staff have continuously picked up the slack and supported one another. They have become innovators, providing unique ways to continue to offer great services. They are a supportive group that has turned this agency into a family. While other organizations have struggled and have been forced to reduce services, we have not, and that is all because of our exceptional staff.

This year also brought out the best in our community partners and the way we all work together. We've collectively grown more in tune with one another's strengths and weaknesses. We support one another through discovering and directing resources, utilizing those resources well and jointly supporting the community.

I would be remiss if I did not highlight that 2021 also brought out the best in the individuals we serve. The pandemic has been one of the most trying things we have encountered. Yet through it all the individuals we serve have been respectful, supportive, and willing to try new techniques as we overcome the daily challenges brought on by the pandemic. They further solidify that Sanilac CMH is a family, as they continue to support the agency and one another.

As I reflect over what we have done well in 2021 and what is yet to be attained in the future, I am proud of the "gaps" we have been able to satisfy. When the community needed a space to host a COVID vaccine clinic we partnered with the Sanilac County Health Department to provide that space. Because taking care of our community is the basis for who we are and what we do, we were able to help over 10,000 people gain access to community resources.

I am hoping that we continue to be that community resource in even greater ways. Moving into this next year we are ready to fill the gap in substance use disorder treatment. Our

community has needed a treatment provider since October 2021, and we look forward to adding this service to help our community even more. We are also actively pursuing Comprehensive Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) status which means we can provide additional services throughout the community. This status allows us to not only serve Medicaid recipients, but a broader sector of our community which would include more traditional insurance providers. It will also give us the opportunity to implement the CCBHC model which focuses on the dual care of physical and behavioral health in the same space.

So, as I close my thoughts, I ask that those of you who find your voices silenced in the middle ground of our polarized world, take this unique time that we live in to support one another. Together we can take care of our neighbors, families, and community. Being supportive with each individual you meet is how we strengthen one another and bring out the best in our community and all we do!

**Wil Morris, CEO**



SANILAC COUNTY.  
**Community**  
Mental Health





## Mattie's Story

**Setting goals, learning skills  
& gaining confidence.**

"It's been really good; I've been learning a lot of new skills working with others," states Mattie as she reflects on her time at Creative Enterprises. "I used to be really shy, but now I'm able to talk to others." Mattie has been thriving this last year as a part of the CMH family. Co-workers and staff like to share about how dependable she is, how her confidence has greatly improved, not to mention she has perfect attendance!

"I work in the car wash in the morning, then I go to the work floor and assemble parts when I'm done at the car wash," says Mattie with a matter-of-fact air. She has a very positive and uplifting approach when it comes to work. She is focused on the task at hand and is always willing to try new things with a positive attitude.

This same positive attitude is what shines when she talks about goals for her future. "My goal is to get my license. I would also like to have my own vehicle business, doing auto detailing and vehicle upgrades. I know that there are steps to everything, and that I will need to have my driver's license and get a job that will help me save money to open my business. Everyone here has been helping me with the skills I need to work on. They are so easy to communicate with and they are helping me a lot."

When asked what is the best advice she has ever received Mattie simply states, "If you have a dream and you want to get it, set up steps and goals to achieve it. Everything is a step to achieving it, just like a ladder. You can achieve it if you just keep going." We couldn't agree more Mattie, we are very proud of you!

## Jessica's Story

**Finding your "people", independence, self-awareness & advocacy.**

Jessica has made great strides towards her mental health recovery. She started interacting with the Sanilac CMH family in May of 2019 after two psychiatric hospitalizations. At that time, she was not taking her medication consistently and engaged in unhealthy relationships and living situations. "There were times in the beginning that I wanted to throw my hands up and quit. But then I would come here, and I would get the sense that they all understood what I'm going through" Jessica states with emotion in her voice.

Jessica has diligently worked to set goals and redefine her life and relationships. And throughout that process has realized her self-worth and the impact that positive people can have on her life. "CMH has been like my best friend, and I'm thankful for everything they've done for me. Every time I would get off the 'straight and narrow' they reached out and I knew they cared. I can now see myself different."

In July of 2020 Jessica moved into her own apartment, which was her first time living on her own in six years. This was a turning point in her recovery. "Having something that is yours, it gives you a solid place to be, and brings a stability you didn't know you were missing," she states with a bright smile. "I even have a payee to help me with getting my bills out on time. It used to be when I would see bills that I would get overwhelmed. But the payee, they make sure you have things done on time, it helps me, and I respect them for that."

Jessica has come a long way since her first days at Sanilac CMH. She is now able to freely go places without anxiety keeping her away. She has also become much more open with her treatment team and together they are openly talking about her successes and struggles with both her mental and physical health. A few months ago, she noticed a change in her mental health. She spoke up to staff about her concerns, resulting in medication adjustments. "This is the first time I have ever been able to notice a change in my mental health. Because I have that power of being able to notice!" Jessica believes that it likely kept her from a psychiatric hospital and has felt empowered to take the reins of her physical wellbeing as well.

"Whatever you do, don't give up," she says. "Don't be afraid to seek help. There's hope out there".







## Residential Provider Recognition: Harrington House

When Sanilac County Community Mental Health has an individual that needs special care and attention, we know we can work hand in hand with Harrington House Incorporated. "The residents/clients, they always come first, we use that to make every decision," states Linda Williams, Administrator of Harrington House. It is because of that people first decision making, that we would like to recognize them here.

Harrington House has provided contracted adult specialized residential services for Sanilac CMH for over 35 years. Harrington House Incorporated is comprised of two adult foster care homes that provide services for 12 individuals. Peaceful View AFC, located in Marlette, Michigan and Parkview AFC, located in Brown City, Michigan. Both locations provide a stable, warm, and safe environment for Sanilac County's most vulnerable individuals.

"Watching our residents achieve their goals, is the most rewarding part of our job," states Jessica Bowers, supervising manager at Harrington House. Patty King, manager of Parkview AFC notes "we use a lot of teamwork in tandem, and lots of open communication." "Communication

and teamwork, without that there is nothing, you have to have that to thrive," states Tina, manager at Peaceful View AFC. "No problem is too big, when you have that kind of communication and support."

"We encourage our residents to succeed and set attainable goals so that we can guide and direct with compassion helping them to meet those goals. We make sure there is equal opportunity for everyone no matter their ability," states Linda. As you sit and talk with these amazing ladies, their passion for adult foster care shines through brightly. "There are a lot of challenges in the system," says Jessica, "It can be discouraging when you don't know where you are going to live. So, it's very important to be that link for individuals so they can find encouragement, support, and get to the most self-sufficient place they are capable of." "We encourage the individuals we serve and remind them 'Don't give up, it's all worth it in the end,'" states Patty.

It is because of this mindset that we see demonstrated every day that we would like to recognize Harrington House Incorporated as an outstanding residential provider. Thank you for caring for our community the way you do!



## 2020-21 Board Members

**Elva Mills**  
Chairperson

**Robert Kozfkay**  
Vice Chairperson

**Linda Willis**  
Secretary

**Kirk Dale**  
Auditor

**John Groustra**  
Member

**Lynne Brown**  
Member

**Robyn Gorringer**  
Member

**William Gray**  
Member

**Nanette Susalla**  
Member

**Nancy White**  
Member

**Brett Lester**  
Member

**Joel Wyatt**  
Member

## 2020-21 Financials

### Revenue

Medicaid	17,120,516
Healthy Michigan	1,634,128
State Funds	766,347
Contract Revenue	691,707
Industrial Sales	288,000
Local & County	468,540
Grants	105,035
Service Fees	96,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$21,170,273</b>

### Expenditures

Staffing	9,186,119
Residential Services	6,476,076
Operating Costs	2,403,754
Contract Services	1,986,634
Inpatient	983,800
Drawdown	133,890
<b>Total Expenditure:</b>	<b>\$21,170,273</b>

227 E. Sanilac Ave. | Sandusky, MI 48471

810-648-0330

To access services:

888-225-4447

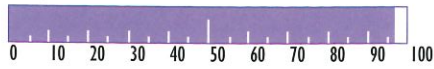
[www.sanilaccmh.org](http://www.sanilaccmh.org)



## Sanilac CMH Interesting Facts:

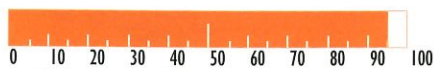
*These responses come directly from a survey provided to the individuals who receive services at Sanilac CMH.*

97%



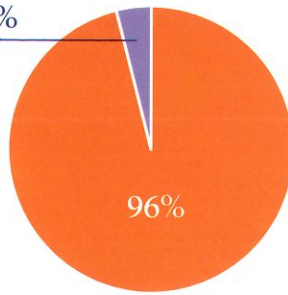
said as a result of services that they could deal more effectively with daily problems

95%



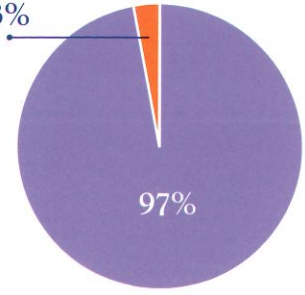
said that as a result of services given, they were better able to control their life

4%



96% of the individuals said they were overall satisfied with the services they have received.

3%



97% of the individuals said that staff believed that they could grow, change and recover.

## CMH COMMUNITY PARTNER IN RECOVERY: ALISHA VISLOSKY

We are pleased to recognize Alisha Vislosky as the 2022 Community Partner in Recovery.

Alisha is being recognized for her dedication to students and their families as they navigate the delicate balance of life, family, and classroom.

"I didn't have that perfect white picket fence story growing up, recalls Alisha.

"I am a first-generation high

school graduate, and the struggles I faced earlier in life are the reason I went into education. I want to be here to help someone just like me, who needed someone in their corner to create a positive environment for them to succeed."

Alisha is creative, caring, and gives a lot of her personal time to help make sure that students are in the best possible situation to learn. She comes to and organizes IEP meetings and does her best to bridge communication with families and Sanilac CMH. We here at the Sanilac CMH family want to thank Alisa for her constancy and acknowledge her above and beyond efforts to help the students in her school. Thank you!

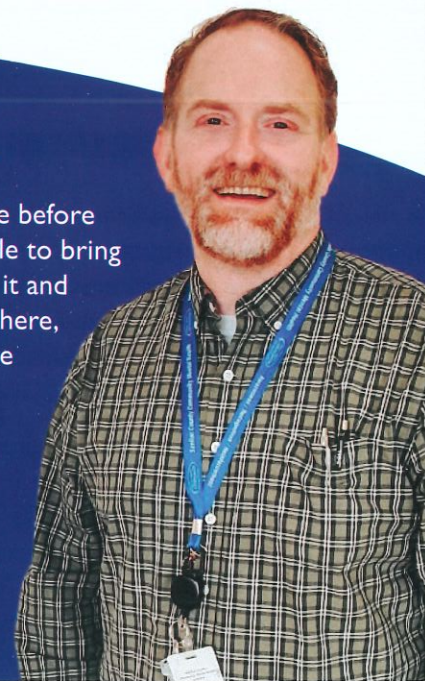
## CMH STAFF OF THE YEAR: NICK HAUXWELL

Nick Hauxwell is the recipient of the 2022 CMH Staff of the Year award. Nick serves as Contract Coordinator and is consistently going above and beyond to assist staff, individuals, and the Sanilac CMH family as a whole. He goes the extra mile to make sure the support/guidance he offers is the best it can be. Nick is the first to volunteer for added tasks, the first to assist his co-workers, and the first to cover for anyone. He always finds time to offer an ear to listen, provide a sounding board for ideas, or to problem solve an issue.

Nick grew up in a military family and served in the Air

Force. "I had no mental health experience before coming here. But I'm thankful that I'm able to bring what I have learned elsewhere and apply it and help make a difference. I really like being here, and my goal is always to be helpful, and be kind."

Nick exemplifies what a great employee is. You can tell by just his demeanor that he is passionate about his job and impacting the lives of others. Thank you, Nick, for being a valuable part of our CMH family!





# Brooke's Story

## Communication, hope, fun & family.

"I'll admit, I was skeptical because I didn't know anything about ABA," states Brooke's Dad, Dillon. "She was hitting all milestones a young child should and then one day it just stopped," Elizabeth, Brooke's Mom, adds in. "She was in her own mind, and there was nothing else. We knew it was time to do something."

Two years ago, Brooke came to the Sanilac CMH family and started learning and gaining new skills in ABA. ABA stands for Applied Behavior Analysis and is a therapy that helps kids with autism, giving them the tools and support they and their families need for success. "Our first meeting, she flipped out and didn't want to engage at all. And now she's so engaged! She's trying to communicate rather than get frustrated, and all around she's a different kid than when she started. Back then she struggled to bring out what she was thinking and feeling. Now, she is saying no thank you, or I'm upset, or I don't want to do something," exclaims Brooke's Mom as we walk down the hall to look at a door full of artwork that Brooke has created for one of her therapists.

"When you first get the

diagnosis it's scary," declared Elizabeth. "I drove myself insane because I knew there was something different, and it was so overwhelming because I just wanted to fix her. But now I don't see it as a death sentence to the hopes I had for her. Now I see it and realize just how special she is, and she is showing us all what she is capable of! At this point she is surpassing what I thought was ever possible. And now it's like 'what are we doing next?' because she is capable of more than I first thought."

"The biggest change I see is her communication," says Dad. "She makes eye contact now, before, she would look right through you. And it was hard and frustrating at first, but just roll with what the ABA people are telling you, they know what they are doing, and it works. She is telling us stuff we didn't know she knew and it's just blowing our minds!"

Along with reaching huge communication goals, Brooke is in school and excelling. One of her favorite daily activities is to pretend she is an ABA staff member and model their behaviors. "She's like a little mom here," says CMH staff member Kate, "she comforts the other kids, and will sooth them when they have a hard time – just like a little mini staff member."

### "She is the shining star."

"I love that she gets a moment to shine; definitely a proud mom moment because she's put in the work."

says Elizabeth. When asked what the best thing to come out of this process is, Mom quickly replies, "Brooke. Brooke was the best thing that's come out and emerged in this process, she is the shining star."







## Rewarding work, with great people.

Scan the QR code to  
watch the video.

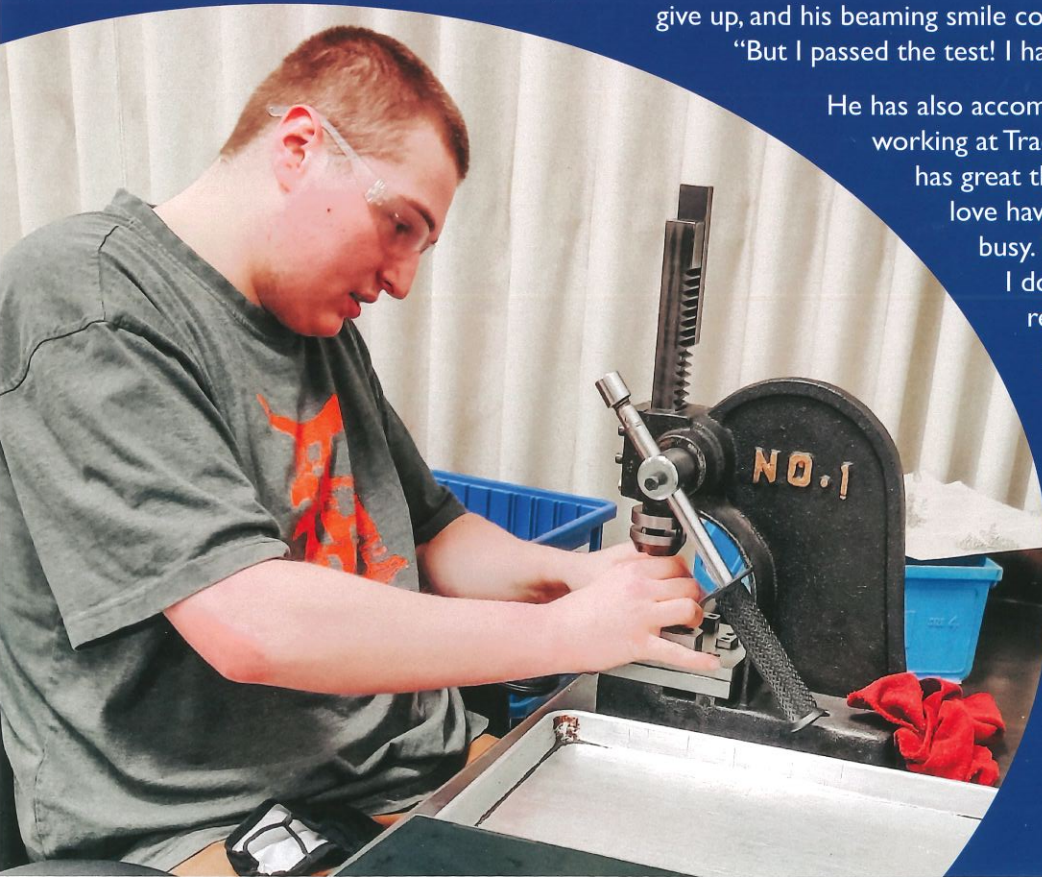
### Tyler's Story

#### Strong work ethic, people skills & the tools to accomplish goals.

Tyler has been a part of the Sanilac CMH family for several years. He is a lover of NASCAR and has worked in both the car wash and assembly portions of Creative Enterprises. "He has a heart of gold and never gives up on anything," states Kristy Martinez, one of the CMH Staff members that has had the pleasure of working with Tyler.

"Being here (at Sanilac CMH) has taught me work ethic, and how to get along with people, and other employees" says Tyler as he tells the story of how he started working in the car wash and assembling parts. These are the real-life work experiences Tyler needed to accomplish his future goals of pursuing employment within the community and obtaining his driving permit.

"I was trying to get my driving permit for a long time, it was hard because I have a hard time reading," recalls Tyler. His positive attitude and determination to accomplish his goals propelled him to never give up, and his beaming smile confirms his joy as he excitedly tells you "But I passed the test! I have a permit!"



He has also accomplished his other goals. Tyler has been working at Tractor Supply for the last 6 months and has great things to say about his employment. "I love having something to do and keep myself busy. I like getting to know people at work. I do freight and put stuff away. I clean and reassemble things and prep things by putting them together." He is currently putting together a battery-operated mower and will gladly share with you the details if you stop in and see him.

The advice he would like to give to anyone who has a goal is "Don't give up, just keep on going, and trying." We couldn't agree more, Tyler. Congratulations on achieving your goals!