



PortagePath  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

October 2019

# Newsletter

Don't Forget  
to **Vote YES**  
on **Issue 14** on  
**November 5th!**

## 3rd Annual KJ's 5K Successful!

Portage Path wants to **sincerely thank** each and every participant, sponsor, volunteer, and staff member for your generous support with both time and funds for this year's KJ's 5K! We had nearly **300 people registered** to participate, including 32 on our own Portage Path "Paws for Prevention" Team! We had over 60 volunteers helping with KJ's 5k from the community, Portage Path employees and Board Trustees. All of our sponsors, donor, participants, partners, and raffle combined **raised \$34,000 for suicide education, prevention and stigma reduction through Portage Path Services and initiatives.**

### Congratulations to all winners:

**Largest Team:** Radius Hospitality

**Fastest Team:** Running2bwell

### Overall Youth (6-16)

1. Jackson Bahry
2. Ari Tompkins
3. Julie Brewer

### Female (Adult)

1. Teresa Ferguson
2. Brenda Stauffer
3. Diane Gerspacher

### Male (Adult)

1. Vladimir Suchan
2. Keith Johnston
3. Darrell Gammon



Shari Kennedy, mother of KJ Hamblin stands with Portage Path President, Tracy Yaeger, PhD, during the benediction



Portage Path trustees Diane Gilger, John Zoilo and Heather Barnes



Our first runners take off at the start of the race



KJ's 5K overall winner, Teresa Ferguson crossing the finish line

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Vote YES on Issue 14 on November 5th!



## Get in Touch

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# Paramedic Students on Rotation at PES

Starting this October, paramedic students began rotation at Portage Path's Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) as a part of their Paramedic Education Program. Each Monday and Friday, a paramedic student will be joining the team at PES to observe, practice, study patient charts, and observe emergency evaluations.

PES is just one Clinical Site the students gain experience at along with Akron Children's Hospital, Cleveland Clinic Medina and Cleveland Clinic Akron General. In these settings, students observe many departments of care including the burn unit, respiratory therapy, cancer care, hospice, emergency departments and others. Students also gain experience at multiple Field Clinical Sites such as area fire departments and the Medina Life Support Team.

"All of our clinical partners are huge and without them, we don't exist. Our paramedic students get a ton out of this clinical rotation (at PES) specifically. As an industry, we don't do a great job of interviewing and assessing behavioral health patients in the field and making that distinction of whether it is a behavioral health emergency or a medical issue. For them to have that experience and that exposure of what the professionals truly do in those interview and assessment pieces is huge for them to take out into the field", explains the director of the Paramedic Education Program Brandon Schoborg, MBA, NRP.

"I've seen more here today than I have in the last year I've been on a squad from the behavioral health side", shares paramedic student Spencer Heppner on his first day at PES.

We are thankful and appreciative of the opportunity to help educate future paramedics, doctors and others and strive to provide top notch education, and experiences to prepare future professionals.

## PPBH Staff Support NAMI

On Thursday, October 17th, Portage Path staff participated in a pot-luck spirit luncheon with a raffle to benefit NAMI Summit County ahead of their annual NAMI Walks. At the event, staff were educated about the upcoming ADM levy renewal, thanked by PPBH Board Chair John Zoilo for their hard work and dedication, and competed in our annual egg toss!

On October 26th, Our PPBH staff members and friends team participated in this years NAMI Walks Summit County at The Stile Athletics Field House at The University of Akron. This event raises mental health awareness and funds for NAMI - the National Alliance on Mental Illness. This year, Summit County surpassed their goal and made \$119,683!



# Portage Path Awarded Grants

Portage Path has been awarded multiple grants this month. Firstly, Portage Path would like to thank the City of Akron and Akron Community Foundation for awarding Portage Path the “Beyond the Table” grant. The grant will be used to raise awareness about our services, and to reduce the stigma around receiving treatment.

We are also grateful to Peg’s Foundation for awarding Portage Path \$30,000 for a project that will allow us to provide enhanced service to clients at Psychiatric Emergency Services, specifically in the Crisis Stabilization Unit at PES, create a new training program to replace TAPS (Therapeutic Assault Prevention System), and provide Caring Contacts to clients released from PES, and to outpatient clients that are considered high risk for suicide.

We would like to thank Ron Rett from NAMI Summit County for a \$1,000 grant to support our caring contacts program, which helps clients feel supported and lets them know we are here if they need us.

Lastly, we want to thank the Lloyd L and Louise K Smith Memorial Foundation for a \$2,500 grant to support our Crossroads and Bridges programs.

These grants all directly support our mission of guiding people on the path to recovery, and are important indicators that the larger community values the work you all do to help clients every day.



## Dr. Phil's Lighthouse

### For the Sake of your Mood - Get Off that Couch!

By Dr. Phil Scozzaro

I had the opportunity to attend the ADM Appreciation Luncheon this past week. One of the five award winners was Keith Johnston who has founded a group (which can be joined by people in the community) called Running2bwell, who just happened to win the fastest team award at this year's KJ's 5k. He was able to summarize several years of research on the benefits of walking and running on mood disorders.

The connection between physical activity and mood has long been acknowledged in the scientific community. Unfortunately, we have often relied too heavily on medication and talk therapy. While it is true that both of these treatments have proven effective in helping clients with mood disorders, the importance of exercise is also not to be ignored.

By doing even moderate – mild exercise, the client is breathing better and in turn, such activity allows the brain to release endorphins and other “natural feel good” chemicals into the brain/body.

Years ago, a client told me that he would start exercising once his anti-depressant medication “kicked in” after 3 weeks. Although he was advised to not wait that long, he did anyway. Once he returned for a session, he noted that he would continue his therapy and medication and would also start exercising mildly. After one month of exercising 3-4 times a week for 30-50 minute sessions, he reported a significant mood improvement.

If you would like more information on exercise and mood, see your therapist and/or visit the Running2bwell website which explains how you can find a running/walking group in your area and start moving and socializing in a positive manner.