



PEER *connections*

A PUBLICATION OF THOMAS M. WERNERT CENTER | JULY 2021

Building a New Life *Theresa's Journey of Starting Over*

When life didn't go well for Theresa, her response usually involved running away to a new place. Each time relationships would go badly, she would leave everything behind and find a somewhere to start over.

"I would research where I could go and focus on getting myself together," she says. By the time she landed in Toledo, Theresa had moved 15 to 20 times as an adult.

"I knew I had some form of depression," says Theresa. "And, on one of my travels, I met a nurse friend who suggested I might be bipolar." It wasn't until Theresa ended up in the hospital after a particularly bad breakup that she was correctly diagnosed.

Two years ago, following a traumatic incident that negatively changed her life, Theresa moved from Minnesota to Toledo alone. She researched the area and found the support she needed through community organizations like the Cherry Street Mission and A Renewed Mind. "It was a caseworker from A Renewed Mind who suggested TMWC as a good place for me," adds Theresa.

Having struggled with her identity and self-esteem for years, Theresa



really enjoyed the non-judgmental atmosphere she found at the TMWC. "Up until the pandemic, I was attending classes and support meetings, making friends, and finding myself again."

One thing Theresa learned is that her past does not define her future. "I began to look at my mental illness as I would if I had a cold," says Theresa. "I would ask myself, what are the things I need to do for my recovery?" It was important for Theresa to sort through what she was dealing with and figure out how to move forward.

"I really utilized the coping skills, goal setting, and wellness wheel tool I learned in my peer enrichment classes at TMWC. Most importantly, I learned not to give up," she says.

(continued on page 3)

We are Opening *What you need to know*

TMWC is excited to welcome our members back. Beginning Tuesday, July 6, TMWC will be open for members by appointment only Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

These guidelines will be in effect until further notice. We will review frequently and adjust as needed. Please be patient, supportive and understanding as we attempt to keep everyone safe.

- Fully vaccinated members are not required to wear a face mask – The risk of COVID-19 is minimal if you are fully vaccinated. You may continue to wear a mask if you choose.
- We rely on our members to do the right thing. If you haven't been vaccinated, please continue to wear a face mask when visiting the center.



(continued on next page)

Staff Spotlight: Meet Stacey

At the Thomas M. Wernert Center (TMWC), our staff are truly our greatest asset. Without the caring people who spearhead the many programs, services, and activities, TMWC would not enjoy its reputation as a premier peer-support organization.

Stacey is someone who has been with TMWC for more than 20 years. She has served in several roles, currently as Advocacy Director. When asked what has kept her working at TMWC all these years, Stacey's says "It's not just one distinct thing that stands out for me – collectively it is the people. TMWC's loving members, inspiring community leaders and mentors, and compassionate co-workers. I have seen healing first hand and have met hundreds of individuals who have enriched my life and made it more meaningful."

In her role as Advocacy Director, Stacey works with both current



and new members. "I enjoy meeting new members and being able to invite them into a place of comfort absent of stigma and filled with supportive peers," she says. "I feel fortunate to be in a position to advocate for those individuals who may not have a support system developed yet," she adds.

While in college, Stacey studied English with dreams to become a teacher. Those plans changed, however, as her issues with anxiety made it a difficult career choice. "Not unlike many of my peers, mental health recovery became the magnet in my life and my interest gravitated to the possibilities of it and wellness. Many individuals helped me and I wanted to help others," she says.

When not at TMWC, Stacey likes to write and listen to music, especially from the 70s. "I like to spend time with my family and friends, talking to people about their dreams. People may be surprised to know that I still daydream the same as I did as a child."

Never let go of your dreams, Stacey. We are so glad you chose TMWC.

Opening *(continued from previous page)*

- Members attending programming may bring a personal water bottle. Please eat before your appointment as the club room will be closed.
- TMWC will continue to practice social distancing inside our center and on our transportation vehicles.
- TMWC staff will regularly check, sanitize, and wipe down all equipment, counters and high-touch surfaces between appointments.
- Please stay home if you are sick or not feeling well or if you believe you have recently been exposed to someone with Covid-19.

If there is a potential or confirmed COVID-19 exposure at TMWC, our staff will follow all relevant guidelines and directives from public health authorities. This may include the closure of the facility on a temporary basis.



Summer Classes at TMWC

SUMMER GARDENING SEASON

Peer Supporters Kathleen, Janese, and Donna – the three core gardeners at TMWC – are thrilled to welcome you back to the center.

Along with the planting, weeding, and watering, there are many new and fun activities planned. The schedule for Gardening Club this year is Wednesday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Appointments must be made in advance beginning July 1 by contacting Donna at 419 242-3000 ext. 106. Beginning July 15, the Garden Club welcomes back Amy Stone, a master gardener and educator with the Ohio State University Extension office in Lucas County. Amy will be with us twice a month presenting on a variety of gardening topics.

COMPUTER LAB CLASSES

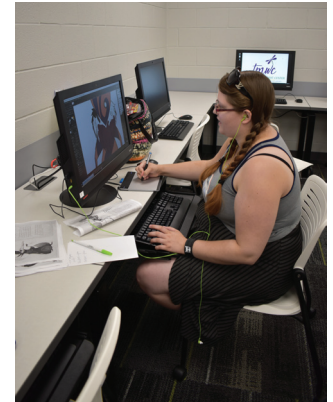
TMWC is opening its Computer Lab to members by appointment only, limited to five people per session. Sessions are Monday through Friday at 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 1:00 p.m. A number of online courses will be available, including learning the basics of using a keyboard and typing, navigating the Internet, and more. Contact Todd at 419-242-3000, ext. 114 to schedule your session.

FITNESS

Plan to join Lindsay, your fitness coordinator, for a workout in the fitness room. Sign-up for one of the sessions below by contacting her at ext. 110.

Monday

Session 1: 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.,
Session 2: 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.,
and Session 3: 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



TMWC members participating in Garden Club, Computer Lab, and Fitness. Also pictured is the July 8 and 9 American Flag Ribbon Craft.

Tuesday through Friday

Session 1: 9-10am; Session 2: 10:30-11:30 am; Session 3: 12:30-1:30 pm; Session 4: 2-3 pm.

JULY CRAFTS AND OPEN ART

The Art Studio is open for five members at a time to work on their art projects, Monday through Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Craft classes are scheduled on Thursdays and Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Each session is limited to five members.

July 8 or 9 – American Flag Ribbon Hangings
July 15 or 16 – Sand Art Terrariums
July 24 or 25 – CD Sun catchers
July 30 or August 1 – Decoupage Seashell Trinket Dishes

Theresa *(continued from page 1)*

A firm believer in 'you get out of something what you put in,' Theresa decided that giving back to the community is important to her. "As I began adding things back into my life, I decided to make giving back second nature," she says.

Following through on her goal, Theresa was elected to the TMWC Board of Trustees in January 2021. "I wanted to get involved beyond my own recovery and help TMWC grow. I want other people to know about the great help and support TMWC is to its members."



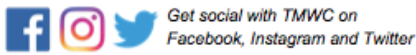
THOMAS M. WERNERT CENTER
FOR MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY & SUPPORT

208 W. Woodruff
Toledo, OH 43604
Phone: 419.242.3000
Fax: 419.242.0750

www.wernertcenter.org
info@wernertcenter.org

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Toledo, OH
Permit No. 175

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



MISSION

To improve the quality of life for persons living with mental illness by offering hope and peer-driven programs which address recovery through education, advocacy and peer support.

VISION

To be the most innovative peer-driven mental health recovery and support center.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Lisa Urrutia – President
Oswald Companies
- Laurie Beck – Vice President
ProMedica
- George Monger, CPA – Treasurer
William Vaughan Company
- Evamae LaVoy – Secretary
Community Volunteer
- Mary Beth Alberti – Past President
Arrowhead Behavioral Health
- Jenifer Brown –
Boehringer-Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals
- Taylor Burns – ABLE
(Advocates for Basic Legal Equality)
- Amanda Denniss – Community Volunteer
- Warren Fray – Community Volunteer
- Georgia Humbarger – Community Volunteer
- Tammy Hochradel – Community Volunteer
- Theresa Nelson – Community Volunteer
- Patricia J. Robb – Interim Executive Director

SUPPORTED BY:



Make a Contribution

The Thomas M. Wernert Center (TMWC) is an Ohio Mental Health & Addiction Services Certified Consumer Operated Service funded by the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Lucas County, the Greater Toledo Community Foundation, sponsorships, grants, and individual and corporate donors.

If you would like to make a contribution, please visit our website at www.wernertcenter.org and complete the online form, or contact Patti Robb, Director, Development and Communications at 419-242-3000, ext. 112 or probb@wernertcenter.org. TMWC is a 501 (c)(3) organization. All donations are tax deductible, based upon IRS guidelines.

JOIN THE THOMAS M. WERNERT CENTER TODAY!

If you, or someone you know, is interested in becoming a member of the Thomas M. Wernert Center (TMWC), please contact Stacey at 419-242-3000, ext. 105 for more information. Please note that the TMWC is not a clinical agency.

Peer support relationships are different from clinical relationships in that they are based on mutual sharing of lived experience with mental illness. Individuals can become an active member who participates in the many programs, services, and activities we offer if they meet the following criteria:

- You must be 18 years of age or older.
- You must live in Lucas County, Ohio.
- You must have a diagnosed mental illness and are receiving mental health services
- Be ready to begin or expand your mental health recovery.