



**McCall Center**  
for Behavioral Health  
*prevention • recovery • community*



**HELP, Inc.**

## **At the *Heart* of Wellness With McCall & Help**

### **Message from Maria**



Maria Coutant Skinner,  
LCSW, CEO

Dear friends;

June has been a study in the sharp contrasts our country is experiencing. While we are celebrating the extraordinary progress in civil rights our country has made with Juneteenth now a national holiday and the joy filled celebrations associated with Pride month, we are also witnessing the dismantling of hard-fought protections for

### **Celebrating Pride Month**

*Leading with Respect, Love, & Understanding*

It has never been more important to be an ally to the LGBTQ+ community than it is right now. June is designated as Pride month, a time to celebrate the differences that make our community so rich and the strides we have made as a society towards acceptance, understanding, and freedom for all. However, as with many foundational civil rights for traditionally marginalized people, we have a distance to go.

#### **The Debate Over LGBTQ+ Rights Continues**

In March, Florida passed a controversial law dubbed the '[Don't Say Gay](#)' bill. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis said during a press conference that teaching kindergarten-aged kids "they can be whatever they want to be" was "inappropriate". The law goes into effect on July 1st this year.

Transgender participation in sporting events has been a controversial topic as well. Various [states](#), such as Alabama and Florida, have passed laws that bar transgender students from competing in sports categories that don't align with the gender assigned to them at birth. Fédération Internationale de Natation, the governing body for aquatic sports, [voted](#) to bar transgender women from competing in women's events, unless they began treatment to suppress testosterone before the age of 12.

In Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, [police detained 31 men](#) near a Pride in the Park event on Saturday, all of them members of a white nationalist group called Patriot Front. Most had traveled to Idaho from other

women and the LGBTQ+ population, if what Justice Thomas suggested comes to fruition.

I imagine that many of you are feeling afraid, angry and sad in this moment. After last month's tragedy in Uvalde, I wrote about the urge to move through painful emotions and get to a positive, action filled conclusion. I worked to resist that urge and stay with those heart wrenching feelings because it's what the moment required, in fact, it's what my humanity demanded. We are still reeling from that tragedy and are now adding the complex emotions related to the events of June to try and process. These are stressors that impact personal freedom, safety and agency over one's body as well as trauma; both current and historical. It can all feel like too much on our hearts and spirits. It may also feel like a set of topics that

states, authorities said, and the group was outfitted with riot shields, shin guards and at least one smoke grenade.

The recent Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe v. Wade have some concerned that the ruling could be the precedent to [overturn](#) same-sex marriage and other rights. Justice Alito and Justice Thomas have made conflicting statements regarding their intention, however liberal justices in their dissent wrote "no one should be confident that this majority is done with its work."

Being loud and staying proud is crucial for members of the community and their allies; we must speak up and let our voices be heard. If we don't, the consequences can be deadly.

### **R.E.S.P.E.C.T**

In 2021, 42% of LGBTQ+ youth seriously considered attempting suicide, including more than half of transgender and nonbinary youth. This shocking statistic comes from a 2021 [survey](#) conducted by The Trevor Project, which surveyed nearly 35,000 LGBTQ+ youth ages 13–24 across the United States. This same survey found that lower suicide rates were reported when LGBTQ+ youth had their sexual orientation and gender identity affirmed and their pronouns respected.

It's simple, respecting, accepting, and providing a safe space for everyone to be their true selves improves mental health and the ability to live a happy, productive life. But we cannot simply say "I support the LGBTQ+ community" and think our work is done. Remember it is not their job to educate every person on the injustices they face. It is up to all of us to start a conversation and do some research, especially about topics we don't understand.

Below is some guidance on how to do so respectfully:

1. Start a conversation with an open mind and open heart. Often, we are afraid of offending someone and that stops us from speaking up and asking questions. Be up front and honest with the person you are talking to. Let them know you might not know much about the topic, but that you are willing to listen and learn.

are too fraught to discuss. I understand the temptation to just distract, numb and remain neutral. However, may I submit to you that doing so will not serve you, or the moment.

We cannot remain neutral in times of trial. Nobel Peace Prize recipient and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel said:

***“We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere”***

Wiesel taught us that ***‘action is the only remedy to indifference; the most insidious danger of all.’***

A critical part of our organization’s mission is advocacy for those we serve, especially our friends and neighbors who belong to traditionally marginalized groups. Courageous

2. Embrace the whole person and understand who they are at the core of their being. Try to practice active listening. Check out this [video](#) for a simple way to be an LGBTQ+ ally.
3. Speak up. If you hear someone make an insensitive or discriminatory comment, say something. Silence can be deafening.
4. If you make a mistake genuinely apologize right away and correct yourself. Remember it’s progress not perfection after all.

### **Finding the Root Cause is Key**

Fear and stigma keep many people from living an authentic life. Struggling for self-acceptance and understanding from friends and family, many individuals self-medicate with substances to manage mental health symptoms. Symptoms that arise from the inability to be their true self.

At McCall and Help, Inc. we work with all of our clients to identify the root cause of any substance use disorder. Once the substance is gone, we try to understand if mental health symptoms come from undiagnosed anxiety, depression, or other triggers. It is a beautiful transformation when we see a client heal and be able to come out of their shell to become their true self.

If you or someone you love is struggling with their gender or sexual identity, we have trained and experienced counselors who can help. Give us a call today!

[McCall Center for Behavioral Health](#)

(860)496-2100

[CNV Help, Inc.](#)

(203)756-8984

### **Find more resources here:**

- [SAGE: Advocacy and services for LGBTQ Elders](#)
- [The Trevor Project](#)
- [CT LGBTQ Resources](#)
- [Black & LGBTQ: Approaching Intersectional Conversations](#)
- [How to Support Bisexual Youth](#)

action on behalf of one another activates our ability to effectively process complex feelings. We witness what that looks like and the immense positive impact every day. It is the opposite of neutrality and indifference; it is solidarity, and it is so very powerful. Each of us are capable of courage, hope and action, indeed we are wired for it. I know you might be scared, but know that there is healing there, my friends. So, on the eve of our nation's annual celebration of independence, I exhort you to take action for a better, more just tomorrow.

With love and gratitude,  
Maria

## Celebrating Juneteenth

Did you know that Juneteenth is the first new federal holiday approved since Martin

## Northwest Corner Gives July 1st - 29th

Mark your calendars. On July 1st through July 29th you can give BIG (or little)—everything counts! Donations will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to our campaign goal thanks to Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation NCCF!!

This year we hope to raise \$20,000 for Adolescent Intensive Outpatient (IOP) Services at our organization. It will allow us to provide treatment to families and teens (ages 13-18) with substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders. Despite the growing need for services, families are struggling to find treatment for their child. IOP treatment services for adolescents are desperately under resourced. Follow this [link](#) to help us reach our goal of \$20,000!!

To learn more, click the image to watch this video!



## You Are Invited!!

Come out and enjoy the music with great friends, knowing your purchase will help provide access to lifesaving treatment for all of those in need, regardless of their ability to pay. We thank you for your support!!

**When:** Friday, September 16th, 2022

**Where:** Warner Theatre in Torrington

Luther King Jr. Day in 1983? Combining the month of June and nineteenth, Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1965, when Union Army Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and told slaves of their emancipation. (Even though the slaves had been freed two years prior in Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, it was not acknowledged.)

The African American community has been celebrating the holiday, also known as Emancipation Day since 1865. It has often been left out of history books, but the Black Lives Matter movement changed that and on June 17th, 2021 President Joseph Biden made Juneteenth National Independence Day a US federal holiday.

This year, the Juneteenth federal holiday was observed on Monday, June 20, 2022, and was the first time staff at McCall and

**What/Who:** National recording artist Lucinda Rowe and accompanying band will perform "The Music is You, The Music of John Denver"

The event begins at 7 pm with a VIP reception in the Studio Lobby followed by the concert at 8 pm. VIP and regular admission tickets are available. The VIP ticket will include admission along with appetizers, soda, coffee, and water.

To purchase tickets, visit [www.warnertheatre.org](http://www.warnertheatre.org) or call the Box Office at 860-489-7180.

A SPECIAL CONCERT TO BENEFIT

McCall Center for Behavioral Health  
HEIP, Inc.

the Music is You

THE MUSIC OF JOHN DENVER

FEATURING NATIONAL RECORDING ARTIST LUCINDA ROWE WITH MICK CONNOLLY, GARY FIANDRA, CHRIS MORRISON & MARC RUSSELL

WARNER THEATRE

SEPTEMBER 16, 2022 @ 8PM

Help, Inc. honored this historic day.

To learn more about Juneteenth click [here](#)!

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## Did you miss our WZBG Interview?

Click on this [link](#) to hear this month's interview on WZBG 97.3! This month Dale Jones interviewed Katrin Moskowitz DNP, PMHNP, Psychiatric/Family Nurse Practitioner. Katrin speaks about how the medical profession has learned to make the LGBTQ+ community feel seen and heard and how she tries to be an ally! Visit our press room to listen!

Tune in on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 8:20 to hear us in real-time.



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## Stop & Shop Community Bag Program

Every month at every Stop & Shop location a different local non-profit is selected to benefit from the sale of the reusable Community Bag. We were selected as the July beneficiary by local store leadership at the store located at **931 Tarringford Street, Torrington CT**.

**If you are out shopping at this location in July**, don't forget to purchase a reusable bag! We will receive a \$1 donation for every \$2.50 reusable Community Bag purchased. Not only are you helping to give back to the local community, but you are also helping to reduce single-use plastics.

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*In loving*  
MEMORY OF



**D'ARCY LOVETERE**

10.31.1941 - 06.01.2022

MCCALL BOARD PRESIDENT

This section of the newsletter is dedicated to our long-time board member and most recent board president, D'Arcy Lovetere, who passed away on June 1st. She was 81 years old. Born in Winsted, D'Arcy graduated from Housatonic High School and earned a master's degree from Central Connecticut State University. D'Arcy worked for the State Judicial Marshall's Office, ranking lieutenant. Her fierce, independently strong spirit helped her achieve success as an investigator in the Public Defender's Office.

She was an employee at McCall in the 1990's in the Warner House Program, where she put her experience in the Marshall's office to use with the male residents completing their Department of Corrections sentences. As an employee and later as a board member, she was a stalwart supporter of McCall, and believed wholeheartedly in our mission. D'Arcy was influential in guiding the board through the long merger process, always willing to address any issue with the knowledge and sense of humor that she brought to all of her work.

D'Arcy's legacy is one of strength in the face of adversity, courage in the face of uncertainty, and above all, love where it is needed most. All of us who knew and worked with her will miss her and send our deepest condolences to her husband John, her daughters Lisa and Gregg, her son Michael, as well as her 11 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren.

**Our Contact Information**

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