

GLOVERSVILLE

Family Counseling Center welcomes new staff members

The Family Counseling Center of Fulton County recently welcomed three new staff members to their team during the first quarter of 2024. The group joins an organization focused on building a healthy community through support, engagement, and empowerment, and includes the following individuals:

◆ Emily Prawdzyk, Mental Health Therapist

◆ Rachel Van Avery, Senior Director of Behavioral Health

The new team members join a growing organization with deep roots in the community. Founded in 1976, The Family Counseling Center continues to be focused on helping individuals and families build better, healthier lives through the organization's Behavioral Health Clinic, Children and Family Services Program, Domestic Violence Program and more. Programs and services offered by the agency address behavioral and mental health with the goal of personal empowerment and long-term success. In 2023, The Family Counseling Center worked with nearly 5,500 clients.

Rachel Van Avery has joined The Family Counseling Center's leadership team in the newly developed role of Senior Director of Behavioral Health.

This position will aid in preparing The Center's organizational infrastructure as they prepare for future growth. The role oversees the Mental Health Clinic Director and new Substance Abuse Clinic Director.

"Rachel's 20 years of experience in healthcare provide us with a wealth of knowledge and expert perspective," said Michael L. Countryman, Executive Director, in a news release.

Van Avery's experience includes ten years with Bassett Medical Center along with management roles at Albany Medical Center.

"I am inspired by the entire agency and admire their dedication. We want to develop a place for our clients to come and obtain services without having to go elsewhere. This helps to break down barriers to care and ensure more engagement in treatment," said Van Avery in the release. "The urgency of addressing behavioral health services is undeniable and I am motivated to continue to cultivate the agency's culture of care and adaptability in order to meet our community's needs. I am elated to be a part of this process and pave the way to success for our agency."

Van Avery will also play a vital role in the agency's efforts to become a

Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC). CCBHCs are specially designated clinics across the country that provide a comprehensive range of mental health and substance use services. CCBHCs serve anyone who walks through the door, regardless of their diagnosis and insurance status.

"We are excited to welcome all of our new team members to the Family Counseling Center. They are important, dedicated individuals who work tirelessly each and every day to help create positive change in the lives of our clients and our community," added Countryman in the release.

The Family Counseling Center of Fulton County has been serving the community since 1976. The mission of The Family Counseling Center is to offer the skills, support, and guidance needed to assist all individuals and families in its service area with living their healthiest lives. The Center is licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health, providing services to children as young as five years old. For more information about the Family Counseling Center, its services, or how you can become a volunteer, please go to www.thefamilycounselingcenter.org.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Rachel Van Avery recently was named Senior Director of Behavioral Health at The Family Counseling Center in Gloversville.

Raffle winner



PHOTO PROVIDED

Liberty Foundation recently held its annual "Feather Your Nest" raffle drawing through a live stream on Facebook. Overall, an impressive \$14,000 in cash prizes was awarded. The winner of \$10,000 grand prize was Elizabeth Peterson. Other winners included two \$1,000 prizes to Robert Dence and Jacob Conyne. Also awarded were four \$500 prizes to Carol and Gary Cuyler, Fred and Molly Quist, Wendy Warner, and Shelley Szabo. Funds raised annually by Liberty Foundation through the selling of 300 raffle tickets help support vital programs and services for people with disabilities supported by Liberty ARC.

AMSTERDAM

St. Mary's Healthcare receives Stewart's Holiday Match funds

St. Mary's Healthcare has received a \$1,000 Stewart's Holiday Match Grant to feed local children and support the hospital's youngest patients and their families. The grant will help St. Mary's stock its mission cupboards and "Annie's Closet."

The cupboards provide nonperishable food items for patients and employees who need extra help with groceries. Annie's Closet is filled with supplies to support parents and

their babies. Located in the St. Mary's Obstetrics and Gynecology Health Center, the closet is actually an entire room, filled with diapers, infant goods, personal care items and more.

"The Stewart's Holiday Match Grant will help St. Mary's meet some of the most basic needs of children in our community," said Maureen Rhodes, executive director of the Foundation of St. Mary's Healthcare. "The grant and Holiday Match program are won-

derful reminders that we have such kind, generous neighbors in Stewart's Shops and their customers."

Each year since 1986, from Thanksgiving until Christmas, Stewart's has collected and matched donations from customers in its shops. As a result, since its founding, Stewart's Holiday Match Program has awarded over \$38 million to support children under 18 in Stewart's market areas.

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Family Counseling Center to host blood drive

The Family Counseling Center will be hosting a community blood drive on Wednesday, May 8.

The blood-drive comes at a time when healthcare systems are in desperate need of donations. To schedule an appointment for the May 8 blood drive or for others in 2024 scheduled at The Family Counseling Center, please use the link here: <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=FamilyCounselingCenter>

"We are thankful for the many partners who have scheduled events with The Family Counseling Center," said Peter Lawrence, Deputy Executive Director at The Family Counseling Center, in a news release. "Our Events Center was designed to be a hub of community activity, health, and education. The ability to have a central location in downtown Gloversville for outreach events such as the blood drive is a boon to the community as a whole. We look forward to offering more events and working with more partners."

Michael L. Countryman, the organization's Executive Director added, "The Family Counseling Center has been at the heart of the community for over 45 years. We are thrilled to continue to offer mental and behavioral health options to our neighbors through our programs and services."

If you would like to keep up-to-date on similar events, please follow The Family Counseling Center on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/FamilyCounselingFultonCounty/>

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BROADALBIN & PERTH

B-P Lions support Camp Abilities and Scout Troop 51

GALWAY — At their meeting held at C&R Restaurant this evening, the Broadalbin-Perth Lions hosted members of the Saratoga Springs Lions Club and Boy Scout Troop 51.

The Saratoga Springs Lions gave a presentation about Camp Abilities, an adaptive and educational sports camp for blind and visually impaired youth. Camp Abilities-Saratoga is entering its 11th year and has been recognized by Lions Clubs International as one of the 10 most impactful programs of its kind in the United States, and is in the top 30 programs of its kind in the world.

Two scouts from Troop 51 reported on their experiences at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Summer Camp, their enrollment funded by the Lions. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation camps combine environmental education, hunter education programs, and outdoor recreation into



Left photo: Broadalbin-Perth King Lion Bob Townsend, left, presents a check to Saratoga Springs Lions (Past District Governor) John McDonald, center, and Tony Catalano, right, to support the upcoming 11th year of Camp Abilities Saratoga. Camp Abilities is an adaptive and educational sports camp for blind and visually impaired youth and has been recognized by Lions Clubs International as one of the 10 most impactful programs of its kind in the United States. **Right photo:** Broadalbin-Perth Lions President Bob Townsend, left, presents the Lions' sponsorship check to Troop 51 Scouts Kaden Sweeney, center, and Tucker Pettit, right, who attended the 2023 NYS DEC Summer Camp. The Scouts accepted the check on behalf of two yet unnamed scouts who will attend the 2024 camp this summer. Supporting the Scouts and environmental education are causes in which the Lions are involved globally and take action locally.

a fun week long adventure. A hands-on approach is used to teach about the environment. Campers have the opportunity to learn outdoor skills including backpacking, camping, and canoeing. They explore

New York's diverse habitats, have the chance to learn basic ecological concepts, and how human activities affect the environment.

Campers solve challenges, explore environmental con-

cepts, practice outdoor skills, and spend the week immersed in nature.

Broadalbin-Perth Lions President Bob Townsend said that supporting both Camp Abilities and sending Scouts to the

NYS DEC Summer Camp were prime examples of acting locally and embracing the Lions' global causes of youth, vision, and environment.

"The continued support of the greater Broadal-

bin-Perth-Mayfield community is what allows us to provide for these programs through a variety of service and fundraising activities, and we are grateful," said Townsend in a news release



PHOTO COURTESY BROADALBIN-PERTH LIONS/LION ED BALABAN