APRIL 2026 VOL.14

CONNECTIONS

Community Counseling Center's Quarterly Newsletter

Teamwork Tastes Better: CCC Supports SEMO Foodbank

AGENCY UPDATES
CCC Gives Back to the Communities We Serve

Employee of the 2nd Quarter Announcements

WE'VE BEEN BUSY
Community Outreach & Participation

Making a Difference: A Surge in Suicide Prevention Training

Early 2026 marked a powerful shift in our region's commitment to mental health. The Community Counseling Center (CCC) experienced an incredible surge in participation for our suicide prevention training programs, with more than 100 individuals completing the QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer) training during the first eight weeks of the year alone. To put this progress in perspective, we trained 109 people in the first two months of 2026, compared to 22 people throughout the entirety of 2025. This increase means that hundreds of our neighbors—including teachers, parents, and faith leaders—are now equipped with the essential skills to recognize warning signs and help someone in crisis.

As Rick Strait, our Substance Use Division Director and suicide prevention coordinator, noted, most people genuinely want to help those who are struggling, but often fear "doing it wrong." These training sessions are designed to break down that barrier by building the confidence to start vital conversations that can save lives.

This rapid expansion of our outreach was made possible through the generous support of the Community Counseling Center Foundation. Through donations and corporate partnerships, the Foundation has been able to cover the costs of training materials, ensuring that these high-quality mental health tools remain accessible to anyone who needs them, regardless of their ability to pay.

"Their investment is a direct investment in the safety of our communities," said Michelle Ramsey, Executive Director of the Community Counseling Center Foundation. "Because of their support, we can provide these tools to anyone who needs them."

We are currently on track for a record-breaking year of participation, and we encourage everyone to join this life-saving mission. Our training sessions range from one hour to full-day workshops, catering to a variety of schedules and needs.

If you or your organization would like to participate in future training or learn more about how you can support these programs through donations, please visit our Community Education Program page on our website www.cccntr.com. Together, we are building a safer, more informed, and more supportive community.

SCAN HERE

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

IPS

Individual Placement & Supports

Success Through Support: A Journey to Meaningful Employment

At Community Counseling Center, we believe that employment is an essential part of adult living and a vital component of an individual's recovery process. Our Individual Placement and Supports (IPS) program, which serves individuals living with serious mental illness or co-occurring substance use disorders, is dedicated to helping our clients reach their goals of becoming competitively employed. We are thrilled to share the recent success story of one of our clients, Lisa Steele.

A Path to Independence

When Lisa first began working with her Employment Specialist, Rebecca Martin, she faced several significant barriers, including a lack of formal education and work experience, a criminal history, and logistical challenges related to transportation and resources.

Through the IPS program, Rebecca provided the necessary support to help Lisa navigate these obstacles. Whether it was filling out applications or finding solutions to daily challenges, the program ensured Lisa had the guidance she needed.

Life-Changing Results

Today, Lisa is employed as a Hostess at Outback Steakhouse. For Lisa, this opportunity has provided more than just a paycheck; it has provided a new outlook on life:

Financial Security: Lisa is now able to pay her rent and bills, and she no longer needs to rely on food pantries for support.

Improved Mental Health: Lisa reports a significant shift in her mental health. She noted that while she previously felt worried and depressed, she now enjoys the routine of getting up and heading to work.

A Positive Workforce Experience

Lisa described her time with the IPS program as the best experience she has ever had in the workforce, noting, "You never made me feel inferior for my criminal history or lack of education".

Program Details and Accessibility

The IPS program is an evidence-based model that collaborates with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation to assist individuals with job development plans, work incentive programs, and the cultivation of essential interviewing and job search skills. The program is currently active in Cape Girardeau, Perry, and Ste. Genevieve counties.

If you would like to learn more about the IPS program, please contact our program supervisor at (573) 339-6104.

southeast missouri FOOD BANK help more. reach more. feed more.

Teamwork Tastes Better:
Community Counseling Center Supports SEMO Food Bank

February was Canned Food Awareness Month, and at the Community Counseling Center (CCC), we were proud to once again partner with the Southeast Missouri (SEMO) Food Bank to help tackle the ongoing challenge of food insecurity in our region.

Food insecurity continues to be a significant struggle, affecting 1 in 6 families across Southeast Missouri. To support the vital mission of the SEMO Food Bank—which distributes approximately one million pounds of food each month across 16 counties—CCC placed collection bins in our lobby areas at all five of our main clinic locations.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, staff, and clients, the drive was a resounding success. Together, we were able to raise over $350 in monetary donations and collected 230 pounds of food for those in need.

We were honored to have our CEO, Wendy Ice, and Director of PR & Marketing, Crystal Lyerla, deliver these donations directly to the SEMO Food Bank team. We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who dropped a can in the bin or contributed online, as well as to Rebecca Lambert and the entire SEMO Food Bank staff for the essential work they do.

At CCC, we truly believe that we are better together. If you would like to learn more about how you can continue to support the SEMO Food Bank's mission, please visit https://semofoodbank.org/.

Community Outreach & Involvement

CCC has been actively engaged in our communities over the past couple of months:

Promoting Wellness at the 2026 Fitness Fiesta in Perryville

On Saturday, February 7, 2026, the Community Counseling Center (CCC) team was thrilled to participate in the Fitness Fiesta Wellness Expo, hosted by Mercy Hospital Perry at the Perry Park Center.
It was a wonderful morning dedicated to health and community connection. Throughout the event, our team enjoyed interacting with attendees, providing information on our various services, and sharing resources on community education. We loved connecting with neighbors, handing out CCC swag, and engaging in conversations about the importance of mental and physical well-being.
One of the highlights of our booth was sharing tips on mindful snacking—a simple yet powerful tool for maintaining balance in our busy lives. To help attendees practice this habit, we were happy to hand out special CCC chip clips along with informative handouts on the subject.
We are so grateful to everyone who stopped by our table to say hello. Thank you to Mercy Hospital Perry for hosting such a fantastic event that brought our community together for a day of wellness and fun!

Our team wrapped up a busy week of outreach on March 17 at the Ste. Genevieve R-II School District Health & Wellness Expo. We were grateful for the chance to meet face-to-face with community members, share vital mental health resources, and support the wellness initiatives of the Ste. Genevieve area.

On March 14, CCC staff enjoyed engaging with the community at the 2026 Health & Wellness Expo, hosted by the City of Cape Girardeau at the Osage Center. We were proud to be part of this event, providing information on our services and supporting the overall health of our Cape Girardeau neighbors.

Our team had a wonderful time connecting with students, staff, and families during the Cape Girardeau Public Schools Wellness Fair on March 11. It was a great opportunity to share resources and promote the importance of mental wellness within our local school community.

Community
Counseling Center's

Families Thriving Together

Join us for our first Families Thriving Together Workshop, designed for teens (ages 13–17) and their parent(s)/caregiver(s). This engaging, day-long experience will begin with a keynote address, followed by separate breakout sessions for teens and caregivers, a shared lunch, and will conclude with fun, interactive activities to enjoy together.

Parent/caregiver attendance is required for the full workshop in order for teens to participate. Capacity is limited to 50 registered teens, with up to two parent(s)/caregiver(s) attending per teen.

Be sure to review the agenda and scan the QR code to register today!

Digital Detox: How Smartphones and Social Media Impact Mental Health — And How to Reclaim Well-Being

Presenter, Josh Varner
10:00 am - 11:00 am
Teen + Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)

Breakout Sessions

11:00 am - 12:00 pm

It's a Lot: Navigating Anxiety as a Teen Today
Presenter(s), Hope Squad Student Peers
Teen Break Out Session

Raising Teens in Today's World: Bullying, Social Media, and Modern Challenges
Presenter(s), CCC Team
Parent/Caregiver Breakout Session

Lunch (12:00 pm - 1:00 pm)

Learn, Laugh, Connect: Interactive Time for Teens and Caregivers/Parents

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

June 23rd
10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Jackson Civic Center

Scan the QR code to register for the event!

THRIVING TOGETHER
A Community Behavioral Health + Wellness Conference

REGISTER NOW!

JOIN US FOR NEXT YEAR'S CONFERENCE!

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
WEDNESDAY **JULY 22, 2026**	**8 AM - 4 PM**	SHOW ME CENTER **CAPE GIRARDEAU, MISSOURI**

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

BOBBY HENLINE

Bobby is a retired U.S. Army Staff Sergeant, motivational speaker, actor, and comedian. A veteran of four tours in Iraq, Bobby survived a devastating IED explosion that resulted in life-altering injuries. Since then, he has become a powerful voice of resilience, hope, and healing.

With courage and humor, Bobby shares his journey of overcoming both the physical and emotional challenges that followed his injury. His story is not only a testament to the strength of the human spirit but also a reminder of the importance of mental wellness—and finding light even in the darkest moments.

Prepare to be inspired, moved, and yes—laugh a little—as Bobby delivers a keynote unlike any other.

DARRYL STRAWBERRY

Baseball legend Darryl Strawberry is widely known for his extraordinary success on the field—an eight-time MLB All-Star, four-time World Series Champion, and one of the most powerful hitters in the game. But his impact goes far beyond sports.

Throughout his life, Darryl has held leadership roles in both his professional and personal journey. While achieving remarkable career milestones, he also faced deep personal struggles, including addiction, abuse, divorce, cancer, and even jail time. His story is one of incredible highs, painful lows, and ultimately, transformation.

Darryl will share his powerful and candid message about overcoming adversity, reclaiming purpose, and using life's most difficult moments to fuel growth and inspire change. His passion for helping others and his ability to connect through real-life experience makes his message one you won't want to miss.

SCAN ME

Let's spark conversations, break the stigma, and thrive together as a stronger, healthier community. **See you there!**

FOR INQUIRIES OR SPONSORSHIPS:
Email us at ThrivingTogetherConference@ccntr.com

Employee of the (2nd) Quarter Announcements

Thank you & Congratulations

Cape Girardeau County – Heather Ressel

Heather has been with CCC for 10 years. She has worked in multiple programs. Since 2017, she has been involved in the ERE program. Heather accepted the new innovative title of Jail Navigator in 2022 which was a pilot program at the time. Heather remains the only Jail Navigator in the state at this time. She continues to exhibit outstanding professionalism and is vital in our efforts to bridge gaps. Heather was nominated because "On top of meeting my professional needs, Heather works endless to deal with the needs for clients/Inmates. Heather has went over and beyond. I've witnessed her help released inmates beyond her 4:30pm "end of day" to make sure an inmate get's to Cape without having to walk with a heat index of 100 degrees plus, to talking to family members of incarcerated clients she's working with to understand her clients more. Her work helping our clients find meds, is in itself a display of her dedication to these severely needing persons. Heather deserves to be recognized for her rock star attitude and go get it attitude." When Heather isn't working, she enjoys spending time with her family. She has twin girls (age 6) and is expecting a baby boy this weekend. Heather is involved in her church. She loves all things Disney, pink, sparkly, and leopard print!

Cape Girardeau County – Robyn Smith

Robyn currently serves as the Team Lead for Peer Support Specialists at CCC and has been a valued member of our organization for four years. She began her journey with CCC as a Peer Support Specialist and, through her dedication, leadership, and passion for helping others, was later promoted to Team Lead. Robyn shares that she loves her work because it allows her to help others and share hope every day. She has embraced opportunities that have pushed her outside of her comfort zone and enjoys both the meaningful impact of her role and the work-related incentives that come with it.

Outside of work, Robyn enjoys practicing the guitar and playing the drums, as well as reading, painting, and coloring. She is also a devoted wife and mother of four, with another little one on the way.

Robyn has been nominated because of her unwavering commitment to her team, her positive attitude, and her continued dedication to supporting both clients and colleagues. Her leadership, compassion, and willingness to grow make her an incredible asset to CCC.

Employee of the (2nd) Quarter cont.

Perry County – Julie Cordia

Julie was nominated for her consistently positive attitude and her outstanding dedication to her role. She is exceptionally skilled at retrieving and sending records and has devoted a tremendous amount of time and effort to scanning charts to ensure our records are accurate and up to date. When she isn't doing that important work, Julie is always willing to step in to assist with clients and registrations whenever help is needed.

What truly sets Julie apart is her kindness and positivity. She is always smiling, approachable, and happy to help — even when assisting individuals who may be going through a difficult time. Her compassion, and teamwork make a meaningful difference for both our clients and our staff.

Bollinger County – Jenn Perkins

This award comes just in time for Jenn's 2-year anniversary with the company which occurs in February. She has been with Marble Hill PSR since her employment began. Jenn is always willing to jump in and help her team. She takes on extra tasks and asks others on a daily basis where she can help. She is also a reliable source of support for our clients who attend PSR. She has worked hard to meet clients where they are at and make clients feel like they are getting some one-on-one attention even while in the group setting. As her direct supervisor I would like to say I am extremely proud of how far she has come in this field.

When asked what she loves most about her job and working for CCC she said "watching the clients work toward and achieve their goals, no matter how big or small, is very rewarding. I enjoy being part of a support system for them."

In her free time Jenn enjoys kayaking, traveling, and camping with her family and taking care of pugs Yogi, Cheech, and Maui. Fun fact, a group of pugs is called a grumble, so she often refers to these crazy boys as The Royal Grumble.

Madison County – Sarah Adams

Sarah is the kind of person who shows up for her team and our clients every single day, and often well beyond office hours. She's always available, always willing to help, and truly cares about the people around her. Sarah's nomination comes from a moment that truly speaks to her compassion and character. During a client's end stage illness, Sarah stepped in with grace and empathy. She ensured the client could remain in their home for as long as possible, planning every detail for safety and comfort, and preserving this individual's dignity. Sarah coordinated care seamlessly, dedicating countless hours to make sure every detail honored the client's wishes. Sarah doesn't just do her job; she advocates fiercely for our clients and meets them exactly where they are. Her heart, dedication, and commitment make a real difference, and we're so proud to have her on our team!

What her coworkers had to say: "Sarah is passionate about the people we serve at CCC. She encompasses of the heart of who we are." "Our clients respect her, appreciate her and trust her." "She continuously goes above and beyond for her clients and employees while maintaining a professional standpoint."

Make a real difference

in our community's mental health. Support the Community Counseling Center Foundation.

The Foundation raises money to provide resources that go beyond the Community Counseling Center's (CCC) regular budget, state appropriations, and other funding sources. These are things CCC wouldn't be able to provide without the Foundation's help.

CCC Community Counseling Center Foundation

Serving Cape Girardeau, Bollinger, Perry, Ste. Genevieve & Madison Counties.

Some examples of how we help:

Funding goes beyond the CCC's regular budget to provide extras like:

- New interventions for school counseling and outpatient therapy.
- Essential items for at-risk youth through street outreach.
- Household items for clients transitioning from residential care.
- Activities and Christmas gifts for residential clients.
- Security improvements for residential facilities.
- Community outreach and awareness initiatives.

Every donation helps provide Southeast Missouri residents with access to mental health care and the tools they need to thrive.

Let's come together to offer hope, promote healing and support those who need it most.

Will you do something *today* that will change someone's *every day?*

Join Us!

Scan the QR Code to learn how your contribution will change lives

CCC Recruitment Team Out & About

On March 3rd, Kristie Miller, Director of Recruitment and Hiring, visited Cape Central High School to participate in a career event hosted by ABC Today. It was a rewarding opportunity for CCC to connect with local students, share information about our services, and help them begin thinking about their future career paths after graduation.

Engaging with the next generation: On March 18th, our Director of Recruitment and Hiring, Kristie Miller, visited Kelly High School. It was a rewarding experience to meet with students, and the creative Bingo-style activity made for an excellent way to spark meaningful conversations about future career goals.

Building the future of mental health care: Kristie Miller and Savannah Musgrove joined SEMO Career Services on March 5th to meet with students and share career and internship opportunities at the Community Counseling Center.

On March 31st, our Director of Recruitment and Hiring, Kristie Miller, hosted a booth at the Woodland School District career event. It was a productive day connecting with students from Woodland, Marquand, Leopold, Delta, and Meadow Heights, sharing information about rewarding career paths within the behavioral health field.

CCC
Community Counseling Center

WE'RE HIRING!

Questions? Email us!
employment@ccccntr.com

CCC Recruiting Team

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63 Doctor's Park
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703
573-339-6110
employment@ccccntr.com

SCAN TO APPLY

Community Counseling Center is an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Connecting with local talent: Our recruitment team was back at the Cape Girardeau Career & Technology Center on March 12th for another successful Workforce Wednesday event, scouting for dedicated individuals to join the Community Counseling Center.

Contact Us

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