

GMSS REPORTER

Volume 9, Issue 1

August 2023

NEW EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

GMSS welcomes Ashley Lafirira to the team!

Professional background that brought you to your current position: I have my Bachelor's degree in Nursing. I attended Vermont Technical College and Excelsior College. I've been a nurse for 15 years and have a diverse background in long term care, mental health and substance abuse services and home health care. I wanted to continue in a community health setting and GMSS did just that and will better support our family needs and flexibility as my daughter starts Kindergarten this fall.

Passion(s): I enjoy community health nursing and I enjoy mentoring and teaching. Family is very important to me. I am also passionate about animals, particularly elephants.

Physical location: I grew up in Middlebury, VT, then moved to Jericho where I lived for 8 years, until I made my way up this way in 2015, then got married and started a family.

A random tidbit of fun: Personally, I am a homebody. I love being outside, staying active, being with my pets, gardening, painting and anything crafty. I have a 5 year old daughter, so much of my time is spent with her, she's not a homebody, so she challenges me to get out more.

Anything else you want to share?: I am a veteran. I served in the Army National Guard for 13 years. I am also very passionate about elephants. I think they are the most wonderful, intellectual, intelligent and important creatures on earth. My dream is to take a trip to Kenya and learn more about them.



Ashley Lafirira
RN

NEW EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

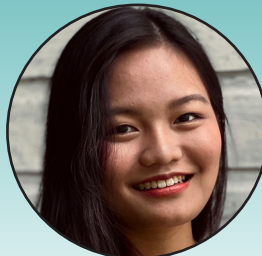
GMSS welcomes Naw Ruth Doe to the team!

Professional background that brought you to your current position: I have a background in public/global health, anthropology, research, outbreak investigation and response, UX/UI design, data quality control and more.

Passion(s): To make a difference in whichever field that I'm in.

Physical location: I've spent most of my time in Burlington, VT.

A random tidbit of fun: I enjoy traveling and exploring new places, trying out various cuisines and bubble teas, and taking my dog out for walks.



Naw Ruth Doe
DATA INTEGRITY
SPECIALIST

Advocate applauds DSP

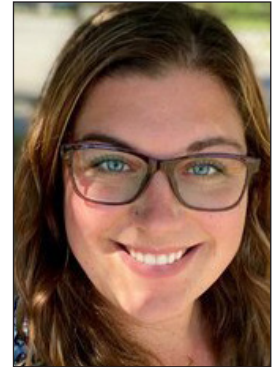
An unsolicited letter from Joe, a friend and advocate:

"I want to pass along my compliments regarding Makayla Carpenter. I'm just back from visiting J's, joining his care provider and Makayla for his annual contract reauthorization. While I've seen Makayla many times on Zoom, this was our first in-person meeting, and I have to tell you how impressed I was!

Makayla is a real professional – in her abilities and temperament. Her communication, compassion, and competence were outstanding throughout the entire long visit. She was clear and specific when she explained things; she was open and friendly; she was flexible and adaptive to J's various needs during the visit (including enjoying playing with his pets); she listens very effectively; she was thorough; and she kept the entire process positive.

I don't know if you have any type of 'employee-of-the-month' award, but I would certainly nominate Makayla! She tells me she has a promotion coming soon, and I'm sure it is well deserved. Continued success with the agency's progress."

Way to go, Makayla! Thank you for all of your hard work.



**MAKAYLA
CARPENTER**
Service Coordinator

GMSS REPORTER

GMSS welcomes new board member

It has certainly been another busy month! The flooding affected a large number of people in our community, some ruinously, but we are profoundly grateful that people are safe, and for the communication, collaboration and compassion shown by our community.

Our board, now reconstituted, met in person on July 20 and appointed Michelle Streeter to serve. We are now in compliance with the requirement that 51% of the board must be people who qualify for developmental services or a family member of someone who qualifies. This is an important milestone on our path back to full designation. The board's next meeting will also be in person, at GMSS, on Thursday, Aug. 17 at 5:30 p.m. All community members are invited to attend and there will be time in the agenda for public comment. The board can be reached by email at board@gmssi.org.

We want you to stay tuned for some upcoming announcements about how we plan to restore GMSS as a part of the community for those we serve. As those who have been part of GMSS for a long time know, there was a time when we didn't work hard enough to support individuals to build meaningful relationships within their communities. We also weren't supplying our DSPs with enough resources or help. The result was that there were a lot of people hanging around the office all the time – the people we serve didn't get to experience the world as they should have, and the office was so crowded it was sometimes hard for staff to get work done. Unfortunately, rather than addressing those shortcomings constructively, a blunt 'solution' was imposed; the people we support were told that the office was not a place for them to be unless they had a meeting scheduled with a staff member. That was wrong. We should have addressed our shortcomings properly, not by closing our doors and in turn creating more problems. We are working to fix this. There is a way to make GMSS welcoming while also ensuring the people we serve are supported to experience rich, community-based lives and while also ensuring that staff can get their work done.

GMSS is part of the community, for all of us, and we want the people we support to feel welcome once again – whether to schedule an activity or event, or simply to pop in to enjoy lunch with a friend in a warm, accessible place. Again, stay tuned for upcoming announcements!

Path to Full Designation – In

closing, I again am sharing the data that was sent to the Commissioner and senior DAIL leadership team in our most recent monthly report. It reflects fantastic work! GMSS is getting stronger every day.

Compliance with shared living home inspection regulations

DS – 61 Homes [97% compliance]
59 Compliant (56 fully approved; 2 housing in progress and timely; 1 accessibility in progress and timely)

2 Non-compliant (in progress but incomplete)

BI – 6 Homes [100% compliance]
6 Compliant (5 fully approved; 1 accessibility in progress and timely)

AFC – 47 Homes [98% compliance]
46 Compliant (43 fully approved; 1 housing in progress and timely; 3 accessibility in progress and compliant)

1 Non-compliant (accessibility in progress but incomplete)

Monthly in-home visits by service coordinator

Across all programs, 110 of the 110 (100%) people receiving residential services had completed service coordination/visit notes for the month of June.

Of the 110 completed visits, all but two were conducted in-home. One was done virtually due to the participant's extended stay in the hospital and one was completed at the



ELIZABETH WALTERS

*INTERIM
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR*

individual's home but outside.

Compliance with CMS regulations for CIR reporting

67% (8 of 12) of the CIRS submitted to DAIL in June were submitted on time and without error. Errors identified by our QA team include:

- * one instance in which the guardian had been notified but that notification was not documented on the CIR

- * one CIR was submitted one business day late

- * one participant visited an ED but the CIR was mislabeled and was not submitted to DAIL

- * on one CIR, red ink, rather than blue or black, was used in two sections

MONITORING OF RESPITE PROVIDERS

Random review of five notes was completed again this month and that showed service coordinators have continued to attend with care to respite oversight.

Service coordinators and SLPs have also been reminded to monitor respite utilization throughout the year to ensure that respite funds are used appropriately and will be available as needed.

Adult family care and brain injury participant reassessments

AFC – 6 ILAs were due in June and all 6 were submitted within the required time frame. All program participants have current assessments in place.

BIP – 0 reassessments were due in June. All program participants have current assessments in place.

INTAKE

We successfully welcomed one DS participant at the end of June. Several other applicants for intake are currently in review and we anticipate welcoming our next participant imminently. The two most notable challenges we have experienced are (1) delays in getting all the records needed to evaluate our ability to serve someone and (2) shared living providers who are surprised by the amount of training we require before we will permit a transfer from another agency and who need extra time to complete that training.

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UPCOMING GMSS BOARD MEETING

The next GMSS board meeting will be held Thursday, Aug. 17th from 5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m. at the Morrisville office. All members of the GMSS community are welcome to attend board meetings. The board will designate a public comment period at each meeting during which community members may ask questions.



Mold growth after a flood

Mold and mildew are general terms used to describe kinds of fungus. There are hundreds of different types of molds that vary in color and appearance. Mold is common in nature, and can also be found indoors. Mold can grow on foods, building materials, upholstery, clothes and other surfaces. If your home or building has been flooded and you were not able to dry it out within 24 to 48 hours, assume you have mold growth.

Protect yourself from mold by wearing protective clothing, including masks (N-95), gloves and goggles. Children, people with breathing problems and people with weakened immune systems should not help clean up after a flood. Use portable air cleaners with HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filters to reduce your exposure to mold in the air. Learn how to select the right air cleaner for your home or building in the EPA's Guide to Air Cleaners in the Home (www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/air-cleaners-and-air-filters-home). Have your heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) system checked before you turn it on to prevent spreading mold throughout your home or building.

More Information at www.Health-Vermont.gov/Flood

Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living Engagement Sessions

The Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) has partnered with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to offer virtual Engagement Sessions for **individuals receiving services, families, guardians, and advocates**. These sessions will be an opportunity to meet with PCG and DAIL directly to ask questions and share concerns about the **Supports Intensity Scale - Adult Version**.

Who is invited? Vermont Developmental Disabilities Services Home and Community-based Service Consumers, Families, Guardians, Self-advocates.

When will they be held? August and September 2023

Where will they be held? Virtually, via Zoom.



If you have questions or require accommodations, contact jessica.bernard@vermont.gov. Please make accommodation requests at least one week in advance of the session.

Engagement Session Dates and Zoom Links

Tuesday, August 22, 3pm
Join here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86036350650?pwd=Y29PQUVhMjU0NDYwY0Y0dVZGRyQT09>
Call in: (305) 224-1968
Meeting ID: 860 3635 0650 Passcode: 843192

Friday, August 25, 12pm
Join here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83430013659?pwd=QUlNWTl1bGp1MjU0NDYwY0Y0dVZGRyQT09>
Call in: (646) 931-3860
Meeting ID: 834 3001 3659 Passcode: 428733

Tuesday, August 29, 10am
Join here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83171697546?pwd=SkR1NHJaeHNFYVBI0E13dmE0UDl6Zz09>
Call in: (305) 224-1968
Meeting ID: 831 7169 7546 Passcode: 093489

Wednesday, September 6, 6pm
Join here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88670100501?pwd=QnloT1lobFpqVWZMmFpVWpSbE9yZz09>
Call in: (309) 205-3325
Meeting ID: 886 7010 0501 Passcode: 265555

UPCOMING TRAININGS

* **Therapeutic Options** – All dates in Morrisville. All sessions will be held from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

- * Wednesday, Aug. 16th
- * Wednesday, Sept. 13th
- * Wednesday, Oct. 11th
- * Wednesday, Nov. 15th
- * Wednesday, Dec. 13th

* **SLP Medication Administration Refresher** – all dates in Morrisville.

- * Monday, Aug. 7th (2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.)
- * Wednesday, Aug. 17th (10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)

* **DDSD Training for Service Coordinators** – Friday, Sept. 8, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., in person only at office; lunch will be provided.

August Employee Anniversaries

EMPLOYEE ANNIVERSARIES

Timothy Budziak – 2022 (1 year)
Lynn Burnham – 2020 (3 years)
Christina Green – 2020 (3 years)
Kareen Luangrath – 2011 (12 years)
Cheyenne Pothier – 2016 (7 years)
Amy Touchette – 2004 (19 years)
Kimberley Werner – 2022 (1 year)
Timothy Zried – 2022 (1 year)

Green Mountain Support Services
93 James Road
Morrisville, VT 05661

Phone: (802) 888-7602

Fax: (802) 888-1182

Email: newsletter@gmssi.org



Ensuring Our Neighbors with Disabilities
are at Home in their Community.

gmssi.org