

GMSS REPORTER

Volume 9, Issue 5

December 2023

A YEAR IN REVIEW

A GREEN MOUNTAIN SUPPORT SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GMSS REPORTER

Volume 9, Issue 6 January 2023



Holiday celebrations

Green Mountain Support Services celebrated the holidays with a special event on December 15th. The celebration was held at the Morrisville office and featured a variety of activities, including a holiday dinner, a gift exchange, and a drawing for prizes. The event was a wonderful opportunity for staff and volunteers to come together and celebrate the season.



Calling all bingo players!

Prize bingo will take place Monday, Feb 13th and Tuesday, March 14th at 11 a.m. at the Morrisville office. All are welcome to play.

A GREEN MOUNTAIN SUPPORT SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GMSS REPORTER

Volume 9, Issue 7 February 2023



Calling all bingo players!

Prize bingo will take place Monday, Feb 13th and Tuesday, March 14th at 11 a.m. at the Morrisville office. All are welcome to play.

A GREEN MOUNTAIN SUPPORT SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GMSS REPORTER

Volume 9, Issue 8 March 2023

Brain Injury Awareness

The Facts:

- Brain injury is the leading cause of death and disability in the United States.
- Approximately 2.7 million people in the United States live with a brain injury.
- Brain injury can occur at any age and in any situation.
- Brain injury can result in physical, cognitive, and emotional challenges.
- Brain injury can significantly impact a person's quality of life.

For more information and resources, please visit www.aib.org.



A GREEN MOUNTAIN SUPPORT SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Volume 9, Issue 9 April 2023

Transition within GMSS

As you may have seen, GMSS has recently undergone a transition in leadership. This change in leadership is a natural part of the organization's growth and evolution. We are excited to welcome our new leadership team and look forward to continuing our mission of providing support and resources to our community.

Love, support showcases depth of our commitment

It's hard to believe how much love and support we receive from our community. This love and support is what drives us to continue our mission and provides us with the strength we need to overcome any challenge. We are grateful for the love and support of our community and look forward to continuing to serve you with the same dedication and commitment.

A GREEN MOUNTAIN SUPPORT SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GMSS REPORTER

Volume 9, Issue 10 May 2023

Maskell named DSP of the Year

Green Mountain Support Services is pleased to announce that Julie Maskell has been selected as the recipient of ANCOR's 2023 DSP of the Year award. Julie was selected for her exceptional dedication, compassion, and leadership in providing support and resources to our community. Her commitment to excellence and her ability to inspire and motivate her team are truly remarkable.

A GREEN MOUNTAIN SUPPORT SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GMSS REPORTER

Volume 9, Issue 11 June 2023

UNMASKING BRAIN INJURY PAINT A MASK DAY

Join us for a special event on June 15th at the Morrisville office. We will be celebrating Brain Injury Awareness Month with a special event where we will be painting masks. This is a wonderful opportunity for our community to come together and show their support for those living with a brain injury. We will have a variety of activities, including a drawing for prizes and a special presentation.

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GMSS SPOTLIGHT

Salvia (Shawn) O'Connor, a GMSS AIC participant, was awarded the Best Experience of playing and reading to children in the children's program area while she was working up. With the support of her family, she was able to receive a Certificate of Appreciation from the program area.

Jones selected to join new support project

Liza Jones has been selected to join a new support project. Liza is a dedicated and experienced professional who has been instrumental in many of our projects. We are excited to have her join our team and look forward to her continued contributions.

A GREEN MOUNTAIN SUPPORT SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Volume 9, Issue 1 August 2023

NEW EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

GMSS welcomes Ashley LaRiva to the team!

Professional background and how you bring you to your current position. I am a former teacher and have been working in education for over 10 years. I am excited to bring my skills and experience to GMSS and look forward to supporting our community.

Advocate applauds DSP

Makayla Carpenter has been recognized for her exceptional work as a DSP. Her dedication and commitment to providing support and resources to our community are truly inspiring. We are proud to have her on our team and look forward to her continued contributions.

A GREEN MOUNTAIN SUPPORT SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GMSS REPORTER

Volume 9, Issue 2 September 2023

GMSS CELEBRATES DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

Green Mountain Support Services is proud to celebrate our direct support professionals. These professionals are the backbone of our organization and provide the support and resources that our community needs. We are grateful for their dedication and commitment to excellence and look forward to continuing to support and empower them.

A GREEN MOUNTAIN SUPPORT SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GMSS REPORTER

Volume 9, Issue 3 October 2023

ALOHA!

Join us for a special event on October 15th at the Morrisville office. We will be celebrating our community with a special event where we will be having a luau. This is a wonderful opportunity for our community to come together and celebrate. We will have a variety of activities, including a drawing for prizes and a special presentation.

A GREEN MOUNTAIN SUPPORT SERVICES MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Volume 9, Issue 4 November 2023

Thank you GMSS Service Coordinators

You make the world a better place!

BIG THANKS!

During the recent 'Case management week,' we celebrated and thanked our service coordinators. Their dedication and commitment to providing support and resources to our community are truly inspiring. We are grateful for their hard work and look forward to their continued contributions.

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Looking back but moving forward

Dear GMSS Community, As we move toward the close of 2023, I want to give you some concrete updates on how and what we are doing.

We are awaiting the written report on the Developmental Services Quality Review, but Jeff Coy, the Lead Team Reviewer met with the service coordination team on November 7 to give preliminary feedback and had this to say: "Overall, this was a very strong review." He noted clear gains in several areas. We look forward to receiving the final written report and will share highlights from that once we have.

A quality review of our Adult Family Care program is happening this month.

Our lean FY 24 (July 23-June 24) budget is working. With four months of the budget year now completed, we are functionally breaking even. We continue to 'recover' from the last couple of years; we are hurt by both decreased revenue (remember the moratorium on intakes?) and legal and consulting fees associated with repairing the agency. Over time, we expect to see

continued improvement.

We are pleased to be welcoming Salvador "Sal" Acosta to the team as our new Quality Director. Sal has twenty years of experience leading compliance and quality improvement initiatives across a number of settings including in the private sector and at the State of Vermont Department of Health Laboratory.

What's going on at Wolcott? Some of you know that the agency purchased property in Wolcott two years ago. Its intended purpose was to support a new contract with DAIL to provide statewide crisis bed services – though we weren't able to sign that contract because of our designation status. The site is closed now as we are making electrical and site upgrades to support the installation of the WheelPads which, when complete, will give



ELIZABETH WALTERS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

each unit an accessible bedroom and bathroom.

To celebrate our fresh start as an agency, the board has approved a new logo – one that preserves our history but that is cleaner, easier to read, and more pleasing to the eye. Be on the lookout in early 2024 for big changes to our website, email addresses, and signs. A shout out to Mary Serkalow for her work on the website redesign and to Beth Hammond for finding significant cost savings so that we can make these changes with funds available within our approved budget!

Please let me know if you have questions. When I stepped into the Interim ED role in March, I promised you timely, transparent, and truthful communication. That remains and will remain my commitment to you. Please also let me know if you have thoughts or ideas to share. We are strongest when we share and work together and, as I write this at the end of the Thanksgiving weekend, I am mindful of how very much I appreciate each of you. Thank you for all you do to support the people at the heart of our mission.

UPCOMING GMSS BOARD MEETING

The GMSS board will not meet in December. The next board meeting will be held Thursday, Jan. 18th, 2024 from 6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. via Zoom. 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 or offer comments.

GMSS REPORTER

Baby on the way!



GMSS Service Coordinator Corey Cayton was recently surprised with a basket of baby supplies. Cayton and his wife, Lea Ann Macrery, are eagerly awaiting the arrival of their baby.

Nominations open for Kevin O’Riordan award

Kevin O’Riordan was the executive director of GMSS for eighteen years and, shortly before his death in 2014, the Board of Directors created the “Kevin O’Riordan Award.” This award is given annually to an employee or shared living provider who exemplifies caring, professional commitment, and effective advocacy for the people we support, and who strives to ensure individuals with disabilities are meaningfully includ-

ed and valued within the community.

To recommend someone for this year’s award, please send a nominating letter (up to 300 words) to elizabethw@gmssi.org. Nominations will be accepted until December 20, after which the board will review all letters and choose this year’s recipient.

The winner will be announced in early 2024.

NEW EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

GMSS welcomes Ana Hammond to the team!

About Ana Hammond: I am a culinary artist currently working as a manager chef in Stowe. This job was recommended to me by another DSP. I love to create things, food, art, clothing, and some-
Ana Hammond
 DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL
 times fun!
 I am from Colombia, South America. I grew up in Burlington and spent summers in Newport. I have lived out here in Hyde Park, Stowe, and Morrisville. I have three little dogs that love to wear Mexican hats. I love plants and world music. I also like comedy!

NEW EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

GMSS welcomes Salvador ‘Sal’ Acosta to the team!

Professional background that brought you to your current position: I have enjoyed working in the health field for almost 20 years supporting quality, compliance, and regulatory activities. The fields include pharmaceutical, medical device, public health, and contract research organizations. I have a BS in Chemistry from The University of California, Davis, am a certified green belt in Lean Six Sigma and a certified Public Manager.

Passion(s): I am passionate about continuous improvement and enjoy utilizing Lean Six Sigma and project management methodologies.

Physical location: I grew up in Idaho, attended college in California, and moved to Vermont in 2003.

A random tidbit of fun: I spend a lot of time outside with family and friends. Long distance running is my main activity all year around. Gravel riding, snowshoeing, sailing, and hiking are other outdoor activities I enjoy.

Anything else you want to share?: My experiences and knowledge are broad which allows me to connect and have great conversations with many individuals.



Salvador ‘Sal’ Acosta
 QUALITY DIRECTOR

SAVY MEETING

Come join us for a SAVY meeting! Meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month at 10 a.m. in the Roberts Room at GMSS. SAVY is a member-run group for individuals with disabilities which gives them a voice to speak on issues that are important to them. The group teaches members to speak up for themselves, spreading the word about self-advocacy and providing the opportunity to work on projects that benefit themselves and their community.

UPCOMING TRAININGS

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

* Wednesday, Dec. 13th

December Employee Anniversaries

Lindsay Barup – 2016 (7 years)

Sheila Coolum – 2017 (6 years)

Danielle Draper – 2021 (2 years)

Brent Labree – 2013 (10 years)

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

gmssi.org