



MID SHORE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

RESOURCES, GUIDANCE, WHOLENESS, & HOPE

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ANNUAL CALIBER AWARDS CEREMONY CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF SERVICE & LOCAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH LEADERS IN THE MID-SHORE



From left: J Howard-Myers, Alicia Salisbury, Ashley Kessinger, Kelley Moran, Bernie Bernin, Akima Copper, Ashley Strazza, Tim Wright, Brigitte Kealy, Shannon Joyce, Maria Daniels, Jackie Salb, Audra Cherbonnie, Senator Adelaide Eckardt, Ann Simpser, Yvette Hynson, Deborah Becker, Katie Dilley, Delegate Johnny Mautz, Delegate Jay Jacobs
Front: Jazzmine Davis, Crystal Miller

From left: Chief Ron Dixon, Chestertown Police Department, Chief George Bacorn, Denton Police Department, Brandy James, CIT Coordinator Manager, Patrick Matteson, Deputy 1st Class Queen Anne's County Sheriff Office, Warden Charles Scott, Caroline County Detention Center, Sgt. Marlene Gieraltowski, Talbot County Sheriff Office

From left: Katie Dilley, John Plaskon

From left: Jazzmine Davis, Loge Knight, Doncella Wilson, Beth Wall, America McKinney, Stefanie Johnson, and Jamar Abner

CHESTERTOWN, MD – The 24th Annual Caliber Awards was hosted by Mid Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. (MSBH) on June 8, 2022 at Minary's Dream Alliance in Chestertown. This annual event honors the exceptional work and dedication of dozens of community leaders working to enhance the mid-shore region's behavioral health system. The Caliber Awards this year also marked MSBH's 30th year of service to the mid-shore community.

Approximately one hundred people attended the 2022 Caliber Awards Ceremony. The event opened with a welcome from MSBH's Executive Director, Kathryn Dilley, LCSW-C, followed by Susan Johnson, RN, MPH, MSBH Board President, recognizing new and departing MSBH Board and Regional Behavioral Health Advisory Committee (RBHAC) members. Johnson shared moving remarks in honor of MSBH's 30 years of unrivaled

service to the mid-shore. Following opening remarks, 33 local leaders were honored for their unwavering commitment to enhancing behavioral health services for the community's benefit.

First to be honored was Crystal Miller, Rehabilitation Specialist with Wraparound Services, with the *Child and Adolescent Award*. The *Forensic Mental Health Award* was presented to Senior Agent Evonne Pinder with Caroline County Department of Public Safety, Division of Parole and Probation. The *Roundtable on Homelessness Award* was given to Cindi Boone, Housing Program Administrator for Queen Anne's County. The late Lynn Keckler, M.Ed., former Executive Director of His Hope Ministries, received an additional *Roundtable on Homelessness Award* posthumously. The award was accepted by her daughter, Liz Keckler. The *Aging with Behavioral Health Award* was then presented to Marci Stinson of Talbot County Health Department Senior Services.

Among the recipients for the *Special Recognition: Unsung Heroes* category were St. Mary's Health Department Suicide Prevention & Outreach Program Care Coordinator, Victoria Poss and Talbot County Public Schools Director of Bands, Donna Ewing. For All Seasons, Inc. Lead Interpreter, Alberto Ardaya received a *Special Recognition Award* for his advocacy work with the LatinX population. Other *Unsung Hero* honorees included small business owner, Diane Flagler, of La De Da; Truancy Reduction Program Manager, Tammie Leonard; Minary's Dream Alliance & Club FEAR Program Director, Paul L.A. Tue; and Director of Dorchester Community Partnership for Children & Families, Nancy Shockley.

Additional *Special Recognition Awards* honored Omeaka Jackson, LCPC-S, Founder and Director of Harvesting Hope Youth & Family Wellness, Inc.; Abby Tyner, LCSW-C and Kellieann Jones, LCSW-C, owners of Striving for Wellness Together, LLC; and Grace Wright, LMSW, counselor with Eastern Shore Psychological Services for their work bettering the mid-shore region's behavioral health and wellbeing. Caroline County Sheriff Randy Bounds was recognized for his early support of Crisis Intervention Training for all officers and the Caroline County Safe Station, alongside Captain James Henning whose collaboration with MSBH and other partners was critical in getting the Caroline Safe Station up and running.

Several law enforcement professionals received recognition at the 24th Annual Caliber Awards. Brandy James, of Affiliated Santé Group, honored the work of Warden Charles Scott, Chief George Bacorn, Chief Ron Dixon, Major Christopher Amoia, Major Dwayne Boardman, Sheriff Joe Gamble, and Major Scott Mergenthaler for their participation in region's Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). CIT is a unique training program that teaches officers how to respond to mental health emergency calls in the most effective way possible.

Doncella Wilson, founder of Minary's Dream Alliance, Inc, received an *Achieving Excellence through Effective Programming Award* for enhancing the lives of children and families through the Adolescent Clubhouse model. Lauren Weber, Vice President of Philanthropy & Education at For All Seasons, Inc., also received an *Effective Programming Award*. Valerie Albee, founder and president of Mariah's Mission, received the *Achieving Excellence through Consumer Empowerment Award* for her dedicated work providing resources to those overcoming substance use disorders. The *Achieving Excellence through Interagency and Community Collaboration Award* was presented to Marco Belperio, PRP Professional with Eastern Shore Psychological Services; and Staci Cook, Cecil County Local Care Team Coordinator. Angel Perez, Executive Director with Caroline Pride, earned the *Mary Beth Brennaman Award* for his work fostering a more welcoming and accepting community.

The ceremony drew to a close with John Plaskon, former Executive Director of Crossroads Community, Inc. and Corsica River Mental Health Services, receiving the *Lifetime Achievement Award*. Plaskon was recognized for his 33-year career on the Eastern Shore committed to behavioral health improvement.

Executive Director Dilley shared the community's excitement for the event, "This year's Caliber was an absolutely wonderful event! Celebrating MSBH's 30th anniversary as an organization on a day of recognition of our community and provider network, was a gift. The ability to gather in person this year for the Caliber Awards was an added bonus! The Caliber Awards are a great opportunity to gather and celebrate with a group of individuals that represent leadership, unconditional investment in serving the community, and a true desire to promote wellness and access to behavioral health services in the region. Hosting the event at Minary's Dream Alliance in Chestertown was fantastic. Doncella Wilson and her team graciously welcomed Mid Shore Behavioral Health Inc. to join and celebrate at their organization. The experience of gathering and celebrating at this location was a tribute to the expansion of new services in the region and recognition of the amazing contributions to the community that providers continue to support." Dilley continued, "Honoring John Plaskon for the Lifetime achievement award was a personal favorite moment. John's contributions to the mid-shore's behavioral health community during his career, are truly outstanding."

Mid Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. (MSBH) is the region's Core Service Agency charged with continually improving the provision of behavioral health services for residents of Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties through effective coordination of care in collaboration with consumers, their natural support systems, providers, and the community at large. For more pictures from the event, please "like" MSBH on Facebook. For more information about MSBH, visit www.midshorebehavioralhealth.org.

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