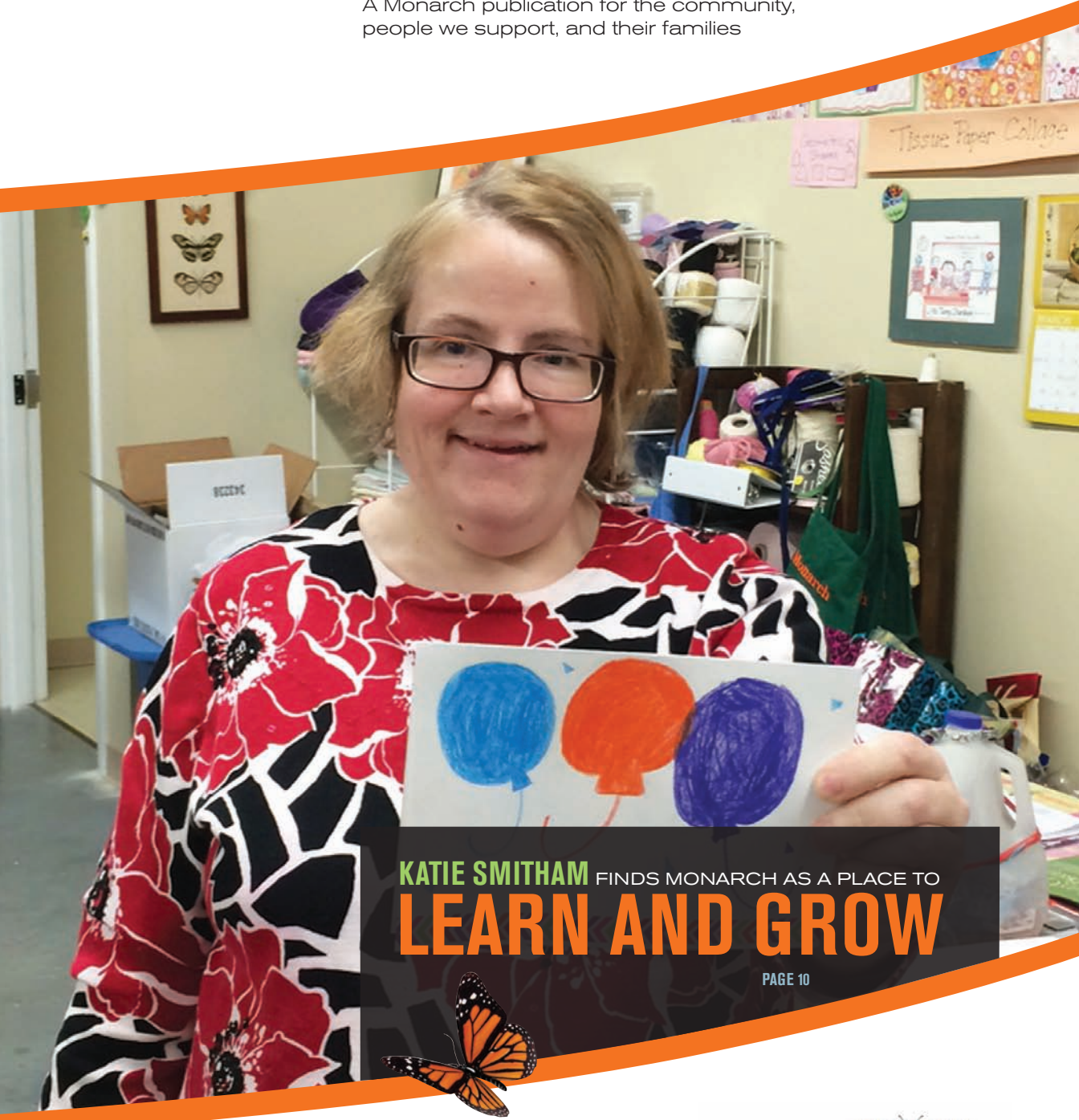




Reaching Dreams

A Monarch publication for the community, people we support, and their families



KATIE SMITHAM FINDS MONARCH AS A PLACE TO
LEARN AND GROW

PAGE 10




Monarch

INSIDE: Monarch celebrates 10 years of providing behavioral health

STRAIGHT FROM PEGGY



When I came to Monarch in 1995, we primarily served people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). We had our share of challenges, especially for people with I/DD who also were experiencing mental illness. There was only one psychiatrist, it seemed, in the entire state

who knew how to serve people with I/DD. Our folks often waited weeks and months to get psychiatric services.

As a foster parent, I experienced teenagers and children also in need of mental health services. The wait time was long, and often my foster children were treated poorly because they received Medicaid. Some of the children had been traumatized and had extraordinary needs for services that simply were unavailable. I encountered firsthand the inadequacies of mental health services and knew the lack of these services was detrimental.

About eleven years ago, when I attended meetings with the local management entity (then Piedmont Behavioral Health, now Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Solutions), I heard a monthly announcement asking if any provider was interested in offering comprehensive care. When I asked what that was, I was told an array of mental health services that would offer a one-stop shop for children and adults with mental illness.

This year, we celebrate 10 years of providing behavioral health services. You will learn more about our evolution on Page 8. Did I know how important these services would become in 10 years? No. I knew there was a huge need and people were hurting. I thought if we could hire our own psychiatrists and therapists, we could ensure effective treatment for children and adults. We now provide easy and fast access to care through our Open Access model. We are proud of what we have accomplished, and, most importantly, the ability to offer people help and hope.

Almost two years ago, the state convened a crisis coalition to look at how to better deliver crisis services. At the time

people in a mental health crisis could go to a hospital emergency department (ED) and wait two weeks for a bed. North Carolina residents were upset and the crisis coalition was tasked with looking at this and other mental health crises issues. Recommendations from the task force resulted in a \$4 million allocation from the legislative assembly to open four Facility-Based Crisis programs. These would solve some of the state's problem, creating a place where people are immediately admitted, get a 4-5 day course of treatment and avoid visiting the ED.

There were many applications and a lot of competition. As you will read in this issue, four Managed Care Organizations received awards – Smoky, Cardinal, CenterPoint and Eastpointe – and Monarch was the named service provider in three of those awards. We are so excited to be chosen! This helps us to provide another level of care to meet the growing need. We are eager to open the child and adolescent program in Charlotte, the first of its kind in the state.

Although we are thrilled to celebrate 10 years as a leading mental health provider and be entrusted to offer these much-needed services, we want our work to bring hope, awareness, and help to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

Our society used to think that mental illness was a result of a weak personality or poor morals. Today, we know that mental illness is just like diabetes or any other chronic condition. You can't control that it happened and you can't cure it without medical help. We know today the sooner a mental illness is addressed the more likely a person is to recover fully.

So as we observe this 10-year anniversary, we will continue to help meet the demand. We want to provide people with quality care and send the message that recovery is possible. We are fortunate to see it happen every day.

To read more from Dr. Terhune about Monarch's decade-long tenure of providing behavioral health services and more about industry demands, visit www.MonarchNC.org.

Peggy S. Terhune, Ph.D.
Monarch CEO

Reaching Dreams is the official Monarch publication for the community, people we support, and their families.

Our Mission

We are committed to supporting, educating, and empowering people with developmental and intellectual disabilities, mental illness, and substance abuse challenges to choose and achieve what is important to them.

Our Vision

We will lead the way in the state to creatively support people with disabilities in growing toward their potential, reaching their dreams, and making their own informed choices about where they live, learn, work, play, and worship. Through partnerships and relationships with our community, we will offer a variety of innovative quality services and supports and will promote advocacy, awareness, education, training, employment, and residential opportunities.

LOVED BACK TO LIFE

A man's faith, family and Monarch help him find the road to recovery



Steve and Cynthia Branch (far right) surrounded by family during one of many trips and outings they have taken since his sobriety.

STEVE BRANCH had become unrecognizable, even to himself. His drinking had become excessive. The charismatic man so many admired began to lose friends, jobs, and the ability to cope with daily life. Most importantly, he lost the closeness he had always shared with his family. The people he loved and adored the most were slipping away.

"I have a very close family. I could see how I was tearing them apart. I was out of my character and I was completely under the influence of alcohol," Branch admitted. "For years, I was hiding it, or so I thought. It turned into dishonesty and I told lies to cover other lies. I just wanted that drink... I would wake up in the morning and wanted a drink and I would drink."

Despite his addiction, Branch's wife of 34 years, Cynthia, and his family continued to support him. But their backing was slowly waning. Cynthia, their daughters and Branch's mother, were all distressed by his slow decline and grew tired of his refusal to admit the problem or to seek help.

"People asked me why I didn't leave," Cynthia recalled. "Many said, 'if I were in your shoes, I wouldn't be able to put up with that.' But when you put your faith in God you have to trust Him. We continued to love Steve. Somewhere in there, Steve was still the person I knew and loved. When he wasn't drinking, sometimes that person I knew would come out."

One day, Branch decided enough was enough. He had grown tired of the ups and downs of alcoholism.

"I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I knew there was nowhere else to go. It was like I was on a trampoline where I would hit bottom, but found a way to bounce back up. I did that several times. But this time was different. I saw what alcohol had done to me – and I wanted to stay up for myself and the sake of my family. I didn't want to keep hurting the people I loved and who loved me. Most of all, I made my mind up."

Branch found Monarch's Tanglewood Arbor in Lumberton where he sought counseling for his substance use disorder, non-hospital medical detoxification and other support.

"Everybody was excellent. They took my recovery to heart and I was confident when I walked through those doors that I would be able to make it," said Branch, who also attends Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings several times weekly, helps others in an effort to provide hope, and is working a fulltime job he loves. "Now, I take one day at a time. I wake up each day with the grace of God and I'm clean and sober."

Today, Branch celebrates nearly a year of sobriety. The couple keeps the certificate he earned from Monarch on their bedroom dresser to remind them both of his accomplishment. Family and close friends observe the milestones of his journey. They held a party for Branch after he completed 30 days of sobriety – and there's still a lot to celebrate.

"I got my husband back," Cynthia exclaimed. "I think I got the old Steve back and I'm thrilled."

To learn more about their courageous journey and to view Steve and Cynthia's story, visit Monarchfilms.org. ●

By Natasha A. Suber, director of marketing and communications at Monarch.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Peggy S. Terhune, Ph.D.
CEO, Monarch

MANAGING EDITOR

Natasha A. Suber

CONTRIBUTORS

Adina Blake
Eileen Bress
Emily Fullmer
Blake Martin
Brittany Smith
Laurie Weaver

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Donna Wojek Gibbs

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Special Olympics athlete-leader from Elizabeth City appears on "Good Morning America" with Michelle Kwan



Photo: Special Olympics North Carolina

Zach Commander named co-captain for Special Olympics Unified Relay Across America

EARLIER THIS YEAR, Zach Commander was selected as one of three Special Olympics athletes nationwide to join a team of co-captains who are promoting the first Unified Relay Across America, sponsored by Special Olympics and Bank of America. The honor included a trip to New York City.

The relay offers anyone in the country a chance to carry the Flame of Hope to be lit in Athens, Greece and delivered to Los Angeles for the Special Olympics World Games. Over the course of 46 days, in a hand-to-hand exchange, more than 20,000 participants will run, walk or bike a segment of the relay as it passes through all 50 states. The relay will end in Los Angeles in time for the Opening Ceremony of the 2015 Special Olympics World Games on July 25, 2015.

"Special Olympics NC (SONC) is extremely proud that Zach was chosen," explained Megan O'Donnell, SONC vice president of communications who traveled with Commander to New York. "He is an outstanding athlete-leader within the Special Olympics movement and passionate about making our country more inclusive for people with intellectual disabilities. Zach's enthusiasm and dedication to making the Unified Relay a success can be seen in his actions."

Commander, 43, who is supported by Monarch in Elizabeth City, has been involved with Special Olympics North Carolina for 30 years. He is eager to continue his duties as an Athlete Co-Captain for the Southern Route of the Unified Relay and is especially excited to share

the message about Special Olympics, the relay and to visit Los Angeles. He never dreamed upon accepting the assignment that he would take his first trip to New York City, where he would appear live on ABC's "Good Morning America" with fellow co-captain Michelle Kwan, world-champion figure skater and Olympic medalist.

"My trip to New York was truly amazing. I had a chance to visit the Empire State Building, the heart of Times Square, where people never seem to sleep," Commander said laughing. "I got to help announce the national launch of the Unified Relay on "Good Morning America" with Michelle Kwan, who I grew up watching compete. I was there to celebrate my birthday too. It was incredible!"

Commander said he is taking his role seriously and has spent the last few months getting in shape for the relay by eating healthy, working out three days a week with a trainer, and spending his spare time in the gym and at the YMCA. He's already lost 25 pounds. Most importantly, he said, he wants to use his position to advance the important message of inclusion and to support Special Olympics.

"I want to help unify the general public and try to get as many people involved as possible, so we can strengthen the global Special Olympics movement," Commander said. "It makes me feel wonderful to see others participate and support this incredible effort. I can't wait to carry the torch at the World Games."

For more information about the Unified Relay Across America, visit: <http://www.unifiedrelay.org/>. ●

MONARCH RECEIVES NC COUNCIL'S **EXCELLENCE IN BEST PRACTICE SERVICES AWARD** FOR OPEN ACCESS



MONARCH WAS RECENTLY RECOGNIZED for its Open Access service with the Programs of Excellence in Best Practice Services Award. Monarch CEO Dr. Peggy Terhune accepted the honor on behalf of the organization.

The award was presented by the North Carolina Council of Community Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse (MH/DD/SA) Programs on Dec. 4 during its annual conference in Pinehurst. Alliance Behavioral Healthcare nominated Monarch for the recognition. Monarch was among seven award recipients in varying categories.

Although Terhune accepted the award for the organization, she credits Monarch's Senior Clinical Director Ben Millsap; and Monarch Senior Clinical Operations Directors Kara Froberg, Chris Thompson and Alan Bozman, the psychiatrists and numerous staff who work together to coordinate the program statewide.

Terhune credits Monarch's Senior Clinical Director Ben Millsap; and Monarch Senior Clinical Operations Directors Kara Froberg, Chris Thompson and Alan Bozman, the psychiatrists and numerous staff who work together to coordinate the success of Open Access statewide.

Monarch's Open Access encourages individuals who need mental health services to simply walk in without an appointment for the first visit. The goal is to help those who need it the same day by providing a comprehensive clinical assessment, a treatment plan, a psychiatric evaluation with prescriptions if needed, and a referral to the proper level of care. While this process takes longer than a traditional appointment, it reduces what could otherwise be months of waiting for other providers.

Annually, the NC Council seeks to identify innovative and effective community programs that have been instrumental in serving persons with disabilities in North Carolina. Winners are selected by a committee which includes directors and board members of Managed Care Organizations for MH/DD/SA services. ●

Find us on





ANNUAL DREAMS TAKE FLIGHT GOLF TOURNAMENT CONTINUES SUCCESSFUL RUN



NEARLY 120 GOLFERS, a sellout crowd, arrived ready to compete at Tillery Tradition Country Club in Mt. Gilead on April 24 to play golf and support Monarch. The organization hosted its Seventh Annual Dreams Take Flight Golf Tournament, presented by First Citizens Bank.

The event raises thousands of dollars to benefit the programs and services Monarch provides to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental illness and substance use disorders.

Monarch will host its second golf tournament in New Bern on Sept. 10. For more information about Monarch's Annual Dreams Take Flight Golf Tournaments, contact Blake Martin, chief development officer, at (704) 986-1584 or blake.martin@monarchnc.org. ●



MCOs, Monarch partner to provide enhanced crisis services

N.C. DHHS GRANT TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH URGENT CARE CENTERS (COURTESY OF N.C. DHHS)

THE NORTH CAROLINA Department of Health and Human Service's Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SAS) has awarded funding to four projects to enhance mental health and substance abuse crisis services.

These grants are awarded as part of the N.C. Crisis Solutions Initiative, a statewide effort under the leadership of N.C. DHHS Secretary Aldona Wos, M.D., to identify and implement the best known strategies for mental health and substance abuse crisis care while reducing avoidable visits to emergency departments.

Four Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) received funding and Monarch was the named partner of three of the four following projects:

- Smoky Mountain Center in Asheville, with RHA Behavioral Health, will develop a 24-hour Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center to serve adults and children, and a co-located 16-bed crisis unit for adults. An array of outpatient services and other community supports will also be provided in a comprehensive care center.
- Cardinal Innovations Healthcare Solutions, with Monarch, will develop the state's first 16-bed crisis facility in Charlotte for children and adolescents.
- CenterPoint Human Services in Winston-Salem, with Monarch, will develop a 24-hour Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center for adults and children, and a co-located 16-bed crisis unit for adults.
- Eastpointe in Lumberton, with Monarch, will renovate and expand an existing 11-bed facility, adding five beds while increasing safety and security measures for adults, and develop a co-located Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center.

Projects were selected because of comprehensive planning and contributions from Local Management Entities-Managed Care Organizations (LME-MCOs), providers and other community partners. The projects will receive \$998,458 each year for the 2014-15 fiscal year and 2015-16 fiscal year. The funding is a combination of federal block grants and state appropriations. ●



We're on Twitter! @MonarchNC

We're committed to providing the latest Monarch happenings, industry news about mental health and developmental disabilities, and exclusive tips from our experts. Follow us today!



Pictured (l-r): Monarch Clinical Operations Director Lyndril Leonard, who has led the Lincoln Wellness Center initiative; Josh Martin, operations director for Support, Inc.; Ashley Conrad, executive director for Partners Division, Alexander Youth Network; and Kevin Oliver, executive director for Phoenix Counseling Center.

MONARCH, PARTNER PROVIDERS CELEBRATE OPENING OF THE **LINCOLN WELLNESS CENTER**

MONARCH and several providers, in collaboration with Partners Behavioral Health Management, the local Managed Care Organization for the area, are working together to offer a safe and supportive place for adults, adolescents and children with mental illness, substance use disorders or intellectual/developmental disabilities in Lincoln County to receive care.

The Lincoln Wellness Center opened last fall to provide a multidisciplinary approach and quality care to individuals in Lincolnton whose goals are to function at home, in the community, at work and in school through a series of comprehensive clinical assessments and treatment options.

“Being part of the launch of the Lincoln Wellness Center has allowed us, as Monarch staff, to see an underserved county come alive through collaboration and service to improve the lives of Lincoln County residents,” explained the area’s Clinical Operations Manager Jennifer Greene, MA, LPC. “It has truly highlighted how Open Access can open the hearts and minds of the people we support to treatment and to be able to help their dreams take flight.”

Monarch and the partner providers celebrated the opening of the Lincoln Wellness Center on Dec. 18. The Lincolnton-Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting, and an open house followed the ceremony. Community leaders and local officials said the collaboration of agencies provides an excellent program for Lincolnton. The four providers – Monarch, Phoenix Counseling Center, Alexander Youth Network and Support, Inc. each provide specialties that offer a holistic approach to mental health care.

The Lincoln Wellness Center is located at 311 McBee St., Lincolnton. For more information about the center, call (704) 732-0018. ●

Stay informed about Monarch's services, news and updates by visiting

www.MonarchNC.org



MAKING A DIFFERENCE: REAL PEOPLE. REAL STORIES.

AT MONARCH, we do so much in so many different ways, sometimes it can be hard to explain. As part of our ongoing effort to share information about our programs and services, we are expanding our brand awareness campaign to include a series of video stories that feature the people we support, their families, caregivers and staff.

Making a difference and changing lives for the better are our goals. The best way to convey those messages is through stories of real people, like Steve, who finally decided to contact Monarch for help with a substance use disorder that nearly tore his family apart (see his story on Page 1). We provide residential services and

support for Terrance, who was ready to move away from his parents and into one of our group homes at age 23, as hard as that was for his mom. We offered employment support to Tim who we helped get back to work following six years of unemployment.

Excerpts from this series of short films, "Monarch Making a Difference: Real People. Real Stories." continue to air on several television stations in the Charlotte area. We hope these videos help to explain more about Monarch and why and how we do what we do. To view the videos, visit www.MonarchFilms.org. ●

MONARCH CONTINUES USE OF MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING TO EDUCATE COMMUNITY, PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICIALS

SINCE THE FALL OF 2013, Monarch has trained more than 375 people in Stanly County in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), an innovative program that teaches people to recognize and respond to signs of mental illness, addiction, or crisis in those around them.

MHFA training is an eight-hour course centered on a five-step action plan that helps individuals assess the signs of mental illness or addiction and connect people to appropriate local resources for help.

"We are not all therapists," says LaVictor Talbert, one of Monarch's four certified MHFA trainers. "But we can all learn about what to watch for and the steps we can take to help someone who may be experiencing signs of mental distress."

Talbert, along with fellow trainers Michael Smith, Sheri Carter and Eileen Bress went through an extensive week-long certification process to learn the MHFA curriculum and how to engage participants around an often difficult topic — the

impact of mental illness and substance use disorders on the lives of millions of Americans.

To date, with support from the United Way of Stanly County, the Stanly County Community Foundation, and the Enterprise Holdings Foundation, Monarch has trained local community members, Stanly County Schools personnel and Stanly County Community College staff.

In addition, Monarch received one of eight national grants awarded by the National Council for Behavioral Health to train public safety professionals in MHFA. As a result, a total of 130 Stanly County Sheriff's deputies, Stanly County EMS first-responders, Albemarle Police officers, and Albemarle Fire Department staff now better understand how to assess and respond to people with mental illness.

Monarch plans to continue to share MHFA across North Carolina. Keep an eye on www.MonarchNC.org for future training opportunities. ●

Monarch veterans reflect on a **DECADE** of providing behavioral health services

Former Stanly Foundations Behavioral Services, now Monarch, celebrates 10-year anniversary of providing services to thousands statewide

A DECADE AGO, a small office on 100 Hearne Street in Albemarle housed an even smaller group of professionals who had a desire to meet the tremendous need for mental health services in Stanly County.

"We got started on Jan. 31, 2005. Two weeks later, we saw our first consumer, a child in Stanly County," recalled Monarch's Chief Clinical Officer Daniel Brown.

Foundations co-founders Brown and Ben Millsap, now a senior clinical director at Monarch, said that at the time the plan was to stay small and only provide outpatient services to those in Stanly County. But over the course of 10 years, the demand for mental health services had drastically increased and so has the goal to expand services. Monarch's CEO Dr.

Peggy Terhune and other Monarch officials realized the overwhelming need that other communities had for these services and knew growth was necessary.

Today Monarch's behavioral health division, formerly Foundations Behavioral Services, employs a staff of nearly 500 with a budget that increased from \$150,000 to \$35 million and, most importantly, served 23,000 people in North Carolina last year.

"It's incredible to think we went from the phone literally not ringing an entire day, to now having five centralized operators who answer thousands of calls every day," Millsap shared.

Brown and Millsap recall the first major breakthrough for the organization came in 2006 when it received its first Request for Proposal (RFP) from a Managed Care Organization and was awarded the services. Millsap explained the initiative catapulted the organization across county lines for the first time.

"It changed the course of the agency from a singular purpose of choice and competition in one county, to us becoming a behavioral health agency," Millsap said.



▶ **Visit our YouTube channel to see an interview with the original behavioral health team.**



Jan. 31, 2005

Monarch, then known as Foundations Behavioral, opens doors as an outpatient behavioral health service.

Feb. 2006

Foundations is awarded first RFP to provide Community Support Services in 5 counties, expanded staff from 5 to 70 people.

One of the organization's largest milestones, Brown and Millsap agreed, was the launch of Monarch's Open Access program. The service allows people to walk in for the first time without an appointment for a comprehensive behavioral health assessment, treatment planning, psychiatric evaluation, medication, if needed, and appropriate referrals to the proper level of care all within the same visit. Brown said Monarch's model has changed the conversation about mental health care and access throughout the state.

"We have providers seeking us out and asking how we are able to accomplish this approach," Brown continued. "We're gaining state and national recognition for what we've done with Open Access."

With 10 years under their belts, both men are proud of what Monarch has accomplished but are continually looking to the future.

"The most significant change for us in the next five years will be around integrated care. We are working diligently to integrate evidenced-based practices within behavioral health with the primary care world.

We want to have a seamless healthcare system that effectively provides a holistic approach to the body and the brain," Brown explained.

Additionally, Brown predicted in the next five years Monarch will continue to roll out electronic health records, crisis services, establish more crisis clinics and Facility Based Crisis Services – Monarch was recently awarded three contracts to provide this service in Mecklenburg and Forsyth counties and to expand current services in Robeson County.

Brown said the past 10 years have proven that Monarch is an agency committed to excellence.

"We try to make it a different experience for each person walking through our doors," he said. "Our mantra is about access. It makes a difference in people's lives how they can access services today and we want to continue to contribute to that positive difference with incredible care for those who need it most." ●

By Brittany Smith, communications specialist; and Natasha Suber, director of communications.



Photo by JIM LISK/staff

Foundations staff, left to right, are: director Daniel Brown, counselor Bill Lowrance, Hayley Allen, Gina Furr, Brenda Ward, Laura Zygo and Ben Millsap.

The above photo appeared in the Stanly News & Press announcing the opening of Foundations Behavioral Services in 2005.

April 2008

Arc Services changes its name to Monarch. Foundations and all other services under one name. Opened a home dedicated to moving people out of psychiatric institutions.

June 2010

Awarded Assertive Community Treatment Team services.

April 2012

Acquired services for the Guilford Center in Greensboro, NC. This was the beginning of Monarch's Open Access Program.

Oct. 2012

Launch of Open Access. Brown said this "Changed the face of our service delivery by helping people get into services quicker and changed the conversation throughout North Carolina."

KATIE SMITHAM

FINDS MONARCH AND MCACC AS A PLACE TO

LEARN AND GROW



Katie Smitham has made lots of new friends at MCACC, including Nicholas Hart (pictured).



**MONARCH CREATIVE ARTS
AND COMMUNITY CENTER
CELEBRATES THREE YEARS
SINCE PROGRAM DEDICATION**

KATIE SMITHAM takes her morning coffee with a little cream and sugar. At the beginning of each day at Monarch's Creative Arts and Community Center (MCACC) in Southern Pines, you'll find her enjoying a cup and visiting with her friends.

While she sips her coffee, her morning starts with the Daily Huddle, where all 45 of MCACC's program participants convene with staff to share special announcements, celebrate birthdays, and hear about upcoming activities.

Smitham, 40, was diagnosed at a young age with an intellectual disability and schizophrenia, which is now being successfully managed with medication. She came to North Carolina from Michigan last fall after her mother's death. At that time, Smitham's uncle, Tom Stewart, who lives in Pinehurst, knew the group home and employment program she had been part of in Michigan were not providing adequate care for her. Stewart immediately petitioned to become Smitham's legal guardian and brought her to Pinehurst.

"When she got here, we said to her 'you're part of our family now and we're going to get you into a good program,'" Stewart recalled. Local contacts pointed him to Monarch's group homes and day programs as quality sources of support.

Today, Smitham lives in one of Monarch's homes and attends MCACC each day. Stewart says he has seen Smitham change for the better in just the short time since her move and he sees her making progress toward the independence she says is a goal.

Smitham's days at MCACC are extremely busy, but rewarding. She, like all MCACC participants, has chosen the activities she will participate in based on her individual

interests and goals. Her daily schedule varies throughout the week and may include a morning Zumba exercise class, learning new recipes in cooking class, and making pottery in the pottery studio.

This summer marks three years since a ribbon-cutting ceremony and program dedication was held at MCACC. The 12,000 sq-ft. center was the dream of local families along with Monarch leaders and staff. It was designed to offer cultural arts and engagement opportunities for day program participants and the public.

Local artists, community college faculty, staff and volunteers work with participants who attend the day program to help demonstrate and enhance their creativity through dance and drama, fitness, pottery and jewelry making, painting, cooking, gardening and other engaging activities. Local residents and community organizations are invited to join classes and workshops offered for the people supported.

There is a job club where participants explore various types of employment and classes that teach them to make items that are sold in the Monarch gift shop. This exposure helps attendees to learn to work in a retail environment. The large MCACC garden becomes an outdoor training environment during growing season as program participants learn about seeds, soil, and planting and harvesting fresh food.

Smitham, who loves music and cooking, says her favorite class, however, is the Adult Basic Education (ABE) class; taught onsite at MCACC four days a week by an instructor from Sandhills Community College.

"We learn about money and shopping and math and history. It's very interesting," she said. Earlier this year, when the group was gearing up for MCACC's annual St. Patrick's

Day party, ABE students researched traditional Irish recipes for things like soda bread, shepherd's pie and cabbage dishes.

In addition to the many classes offered onsite, the people Monarch supports at MCACC are also active in the local Southern Pines and Pinehurst communities, providing more than 700 hours of volunteer service in 2014 to organizations like Meals on Wheels, Back Pack Pals, First Health Hospice, Habitat for Humanity and others.

Three years ago when Monarch's Creative Arts and Community Center was dedicated, a day like Smitham's is exactly what Monarch's leadership envisioned for day program participants across the state.

"We want to provide even more exciting programming options that include blended, integrated and community-based creative services based on individuals' requests and what they want to do. We will also continue to identify competitive employment for the people we support," explained Jim Kelley, Monarch's chief operating officer. "There are so many opportunities that alternative, community-based programs, like MCACC, can offer."

In the coming months, Monarch will continue to transform programs to include more creative arts, educational, and programming that is centered on the interests of participants. As that happens, individuals who attend programs like Forsyth Industrial Systems (FIS) in Winston-Salem, and Southeast Industrial Center (SEIC) in Lumberton will enjoy new activities and opportunities to explore and learn as they develop important life skills, just like Katie Smitham does every day at MCACC. ●

By Laurie Weaver, director of grants and foundation relations.

PEOPLE WHO *Care*

University of South Florida students partner with Monarch for Service Spring Break

WHEN 19 STUDENTS from the University of South Florida (USF) first walked into Mecklenburg's Briar Creek home this past March, everyone was a little unsure of what to expect. The students had driven more than 500 miles from Tampa to Charlotte to spend time with the people we support in Monarch's residential and transitional housing program.

But soon after the group conducted an icebreaker game and set up board games around the house, the sounds of laughter and conversation could be heard all around.

The students' trip to Monarch was part of an alternative spring break sponsored by USF's Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement. Rather than trips to the beach or exotic getaways during spring break, the center helps groups take trips focused on social issues ranging from hunger and homelessness to disability awareness. The visit was planned entirely by the students and occurred during spring break and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month which is observed in March.



Barry Matheney, a junior and one of the site leaders for the group, said when they were initially planning the trip the students knew they wanted to work with people with disabilities and mental illness, but weren't quite sure where to go.

"A name we kept hearing over and over again was Monarch," Matheney said. "After doing research we saw it was an overarching organization that worked with different communities and counties within this area, so why not go straight to the source of all the impactful work being done here?"

In addition, the students are affiliated with various sororities and fraternities at USF making Charlotte a natural fit because it is the headquarters for the Pi Kappa Phi Ability Experience, a training course they took part in during their trip that teaches participants how to better serve people with disabilities.

Another junior, Katie Hawks, whose goal is to get a master's degree in a field of study that will qualify her to work with students with autism and intellectual disabilities, said her experience in Charlotte helped reinvigorate her and reinforced her career goals. "It cemented it for me and helped me see this is something I enjoy and love doing," Hawks said.

Brandi Arnold, the group's site leader, said at first she was a little nervous and unsure of what to expect before the trip, but as the week came to a close, culminating in a bonfire with the people we support, the collective consensus from the students was their visit to Monarch was a positive experience.

"We have learned so much from this organization and its participants," she said. "We didn't know they would teach us more than we would teach them."



Melinda Pompey, operations director for Monarch in Mecklenburg, said it was a learning experience for everyone involved. She said she is grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with the USF students, who had a profound impact on the people supported.



"They brought fun, conversation and new faces into the lives of the people we support and were so willing to jump in to help and get to know those in our residential program," Pompey said. "The conversations were a big deal for most of the people we support. Just having someone interested in what they have to say and interested in them as a person, meant the most and had the most impact."

Matheney said the trip also helped the students gain a greater understanding of disability awareness and gave the students the opportunity to build meaningful relationships with people they normally would have no interaction or whom they would not have met.

"The greatest lesson we want to leave with, is it's not someone's ability that determines their worth as a person," Matheney explained. "There really is no difference between someone with a mental disability and one of us. We're all still people on this earth that have a wide variety of challenges and emotions. Ultimately, we just want a greater understanding of what it means to be human and what it means to serve each other."

To see photos and a video of some of the events captured during the students' visit to Monarch, check out Monarch's YouTube Channel or Facebook page. ●

By Brittany Smith, communications specialist at Monarch.



Expanding our blanket of support across North Carolina. Monarch is a statewide 501(c)3 non-profit. The shaded areas of the map indicate Monarch's physical service locations.

ANNUAL REPORT

2013-2014

Count the Reasons Monarch Matters

23,000 individuals supported by Monarch

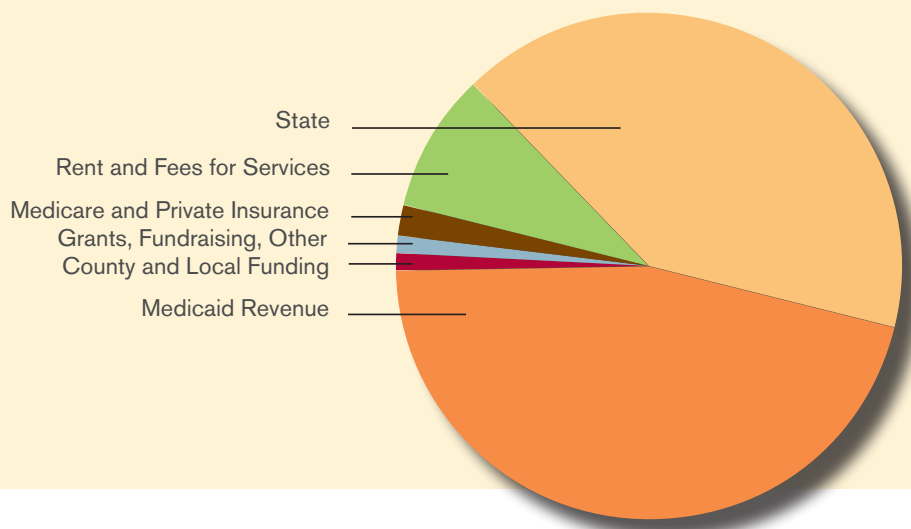
2,900 children receiving services and supports

231 people placed in jobs by Monarch

\$698,853 reflects economic impact for Monarch volunteer hours

92.6% report they would get services from Monarch, even if other choices were available

93.6% report they would recommend Monarch to a friend or family member



Would YOU like to join us to help the people we support live their dreams and achieve what is important to them?

For your convenience, a reply envelope is included in this issue of *Reaching Dreams*. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Blake Martin, (704) 986-1584.



In April, participants from Monarch's Forsyth Industrial Systems (FIS) attended the campaign party for the "Krispy Kreme Drive for 45." Krispy Kreme teamed up with former NASCAR driver Kyle Petty to support Victory Junction Camp, which provides a safe and fun environment for chronically and seriously ill children. Founded by Kyle and Pattie Petty, the camp honors their son Adam Petty, former NASCAR #45 driver who lost his life during a tragic racing accident.

FIS members attended the event to show their support for their community. The group posed with NASCAR legends Kyle Petty (center) and his dad Richard Petty (far right).

How we are funded

REVENUE

■ Medicaid Revenue	46%
■ State	41%
■ Rent and Fees for Services	9%
■ Medicare and Private Insurance	2%
■ Grants, Fundraising, Other	1%
■ County and Local Funding	1%

TOTAL REVENUE 100%

Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the state Solicitation Licensing Section at (919) 807-2214. The license is not an endorsement by the state.



WHY I SUPPORT MONARCH

KRISTINA WINKLER admits when she first heard about Monarch, she thought the organization worked with butterflies. But after attending a Civitan Club meeting where Eileen Bress, Monarch's volunteer and community coordinator, shared more information about Monarch's mission, she soon became a supporter. Winkler, who has a brother with disabilities, contributes her time and resources to the Monarch Ability Garden Integrating Community and Land (M.A.G.I.C.A.L.) project in New Bern.

What moved you about Monarch?

I was moved a little bit at first when I heard the speech at a Civitan meeting. I learned quickly that they do a lot with the community. But what really moved me was when I was invited to a dinner social in New Bern. I was sparked by the young lady [Paige Wilhelm, of Albemarle] who talked about her brother with disabilities – that speech reminded me about my own brother and the situation that my family was going through at the time. That night, I learned that my family isn't the only one that needs help from others. This is why I am so moved by Monarch's mission and want to help as much as possible. I see that Monarch will do whatever it takes to help and support others in the community.

Why do you volunteer and donate to the M.A.G.I.C.A.L.

Garden? Because I want to show others there is hope and there is always someone to help no matter the situation. Also, I volunteer and donate because I want to make sure the program keeps moving forward because there are a lot of people who need the resources that Monarch provides.

What motivates you to stay involved? Simply seeing the smiling faces and the joy of the people supported that result just by giving a hug or being there for them.

In your opinion, why is the work Monarch conducts so

important? I believe providing group homes for adults who are mentally disabled gives peace and relief to families who need care for a loved one with a mental illness. The families know they are getting taken care of and their loved ones are able to enjoy life like anyone else.

What would you say to others who are considering their support to the organization?

Just help out at a project or hear someone speak about their passion for Monarch and you will be hooked. Monarch is an amazing organization and you never know when you might need it in your life. ●

As told to Adina Blake, development coordinator and database administrator at Monarch.

Please join Kristina Winkler and become a Monarch Monthly Supporter by visiting www.MonarchNC.org/donate. Simply click the "Give Now" option to get started. For more information, please contact the Monarch Development Office at (704) 986-1584.

An illness should not determine
a person's place in their community

www.MonarchNC.org

What's behind the Clubhouse Model?

Monarch announces partnership with Club Horizon in Wake County

LAST FALL, Monarch announced an expansion of mental health services in Wake County. Club Horizon, a Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR), joined Monarch's current service offerings in the Raleigh area.

Located in Knightdale, Monarch's Club Horizon, is one of only seven programs in North Carolina accredited by Clubhouse International. The clubhouse model of rehabilitation promotes recovery, full community integration, and improved quality of life for individuals who suffer with a severe and persistent mental illness.

Clubhouse services directly address the high risks that people with serious mental illness experience that may include frequent hospitalizations, social isolation, persistent homelessness, incarceration and unemployment. Centered on the concept of a "work-ordered day," each "member" chooses how many days per week he or she will attend the clubhouse to participate in one of several work units to accomplish the daily functions of the clubhouse.

Leslie Carroll, a member of Club Horizon since 2012, has a dream to open her own restaurant one day, and she has been working incredibly hard to make that dream a reality. Carroll tries to attend Club Horizon at least once a week while working to finish her degree in business administration management. She answers the phones every Thursday, and truly enjoys her time at Club Horizon.

"I love working here because we are like a family," Carroll said.

The program operates during regular business hours, promoting mutual acceptance, respect and support. Individuals with severe and persistent mental illness work at their own pace to gain or regain the confidence and skills necessary to lead vocationally productive and socially satisfying lives.

Karen Troup-Galley, Club Horizon program director, started with her first clubhouse in 1993 and moved to North Carolina to lead Club Horizon in 2013. She says she loves going to work every day.



Club Horizon Program Director Karen Troup-Galley (left) poses with Leslie Carroll, a Club Horizon member since 2012.

"Each day is so different. We get to celebrate so many people's accomplishments and help with their struggles," Troup-Galley said.

Clubhouse programs are known to prevent repeated hospitalizations for people who need coordinated and elevated supports in order to function well in the community. Club Horizon has maintained member re-hospitalization rates of less than 10 percent since provision of Clubhouse services began in 2004.

"I love watching members make great strides," Troup-Galley explained. "Everything we do, we do together."

For more information on Monarch's Club Horizon, visit www.MonarchNC.org/club-horizon or contact Karen-Troup Galley at (919) 266-2202 or karen.troup-galley@monarchnc.org.

By Emily Fullmer, community liaison at Monarch.



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