



PAPRS NEWSLETTER

PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION SERVICES

2026 BOARD MEETINGS

- ★ JANUARY 16
- ★ MARCH 27
- ★ APRIL 10 * (CONFERENCE OPEN MEMBERSHIP MEETING)
- ★ JULY 17
- ★ NOVEMBER 6



STAY UP-TO-DATE WITH
PAPRS ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

📍 1078 Wyoming Avenue,
#228, Wyoming, PA, 18644

📞 717-655-7662

🌐 www.paprs.org

NETWORKING MEETING:
MARCH 12, 2026



REFLECTIONS FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

BY: SARA DOBSON - MS, CPRP

Reflecting on all that transpired last year, I hope this message finds you all well and supported. It was a full and meaningful year for PAPRS, with steady progress behind the scenes and lots to be proud of together. This year, the Board made

several important operational decisions to strengthen the organization for the future. We partnered with Hiline for bookkeeping services and began the transition to a new member management platform and website host, GrowthZone, which we're excited to launch in spring 2026. Financially, PAPRS remains on solid footing, and we've been working closely with our bank to ensure our accounts best meet the organization's needs.

PAPRS hosted another successful virtual conference in 2025, featuring thoughtful and engaging keynotes and presentations from colleagues across the state. Several Board members and PAPRS staff had the honor of attending the PRA 50th anniversary celebration and conference, where speakers reflected on the history and future of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and those who helped pave the way.

I want to extend gratitude to our Board members who rolled off this year for their service and dedication. We're also pleased to share that the Board confirmed Laura Gardner as President-Elect, filling out our officer roles. Our appreciation extends to the entire PAPRS staff, whose commitment keeps everything running smoothly—from organizing trainings and continuing education opportunities, to preparing professionals for the CPRP exam, to managing the many moving parts of new systems and day-to-day operations.

Looking ahead in 2026, we're excited to welcome back two former Board members - Skyler Deitrick and Lisa Ann Quintana, and grateful to have two current members - Debi Weisgerber and Caitlin Needham - returning for second terms. Planning is well underway for our April virtual conference, Thriving Together. Thank you to everyone who submitted session proposals, award nominations, and artwork for the creativity contest; your participation helps make our conferences truly great.

PAPRS STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

➤ Denise Astaneh
denise.astaneh@papr.org

EDUCATION MANAGER

➤ Rochelle Reimert
rochelle.reimert@papr.org

OPERATIONS MANAGER

➤ Aaron Burkhardt
aaron.burkhardt@papr.org

PAPRS LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT

➤ Sara Dobson

PRESIDENT- ELECT

➤ Laura Gardner

SECRETARY

➤ Karen Yob

TREASURER

➤ Jocelyn Giancola

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

➤ Kim MacDonald-Wilson

BOARD MEMBERS

- Philip Debrasky
- Skyler Deitrick
- Ginny Dikeman
- Sara Dobson
- Laura Gardner
- Jocelyn Giancola
- Kaitlyn Ivanac
- Kim MacDonald-Wilson
- Caitlin Needham
- Lisa Ann Quintana
- Corinne Schnee
- Rita Scouten
- Hazel Smith-Guild
- Debra Weisgerber
- Patrinia Wilkerson
- Kim Wilson-Roberson
- Karen Yob

ADVISORY MEMBERS

- Amy DeMay
- Donna Duffy Grimm
- Eileen Joseph
- Rita Kraus
- Peggy Maccolini
- Lu Mauro
- Jennifer McLaughlin
- Susan Poznar
- Maureen Walsh

We're also looking forward to launching our new website and member platform with a fresh look and new exciting features, continuing committee work around education, outreach, advocacy, and member engagement, and (fingers crossed) receiving final word that psychiatric rehabilitation is officially included in the Pennsylvania state plan.

A heartfelt thank you for being part of PAPRS and for all you do to support the work of Psychiatric Rehabilitation across our state. Please reach out anytime—we're always glad to hear from you and grateful to walk alongside you in this work. You can always reach us at our new general inbox - info@papr.org.

In Partnership,
Sara Dobson
PAPRS Board President

PAPRS PARTICIPATES IN COMMUNITY WELLNESS EVENT

BY: DENISE ASTANEH

PAPRS was proud to be part of the annual 5Kate/Trunk or Treat/Wellness Fair held at Nay Aug Park in Scranton. Executive Director Denise and Board Member Debra Weisgerber represented PAPRS by participating in the wellness walk and hosting an informational table, sharing resources, and connecting with community members throughout the day. The event, organized by The Katie Foundation and Katie's Place Clubhouse, honors the memory of Katie and promotes awareness, compassion, and support for mental health. With



activities for all ages—including a wellness fair, Trunk-or-Treat, and family-friendly fun—the day reflected a strong community commitment to reducing stigma and supporting individuals living with mental illness. PAPRS is honored to stand alongside local partners in fostering understanding, hope, and wellness.



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!

**EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2026, PSYCHIATRIC
REHABILITATION SERVICES ARE OFFICIALLY PART
OF THE PA MEDICAID STATE PLAN!**

**THIS MILESTONE STRENGTHENS OUR COLLECTIVE
WORK STATEWIDE, AND AFFIRMS THE VALUE OF
COMMUNITY-BASED, RECOVERY-ORIENTED
SERVICES.**

SEE OMHSAS BULLETIN [HERE**](#)**



2026 PAPRS CONFERENCE

2026 PAPRS VIRTUAL CONFERENCE:



IMPORTANT DATES

3/2/26 REGULAR REGISTRATION BEGINS

4/9/26 2026 PAPRS CONFERENCE BEGINS

4/10/26 ANNUAL OPEN MEMBERSHIP MEETING

4/18/26 2026 PAPRS CONFERENCE CONCLUDES

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Registration (3/2-6/30)

- Member (Total Conference -36 credits): \$450
- Non-Member (Total Conference - 36 credits): \$550
- Member (Full Conference -21 credits): \$300
- Non-Member (Full Conference - 21 credits): \$400
- Member (By session): \$45
- Non-Member (By session): \$65

**New this year - registration will remain open through June 1st so attendees can register for on-demand sessions following the Conference*

2026 CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Dr. Farkas is the Co-Principal Investigator of the Research and Training Center and Professor in Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at Boston University. With over 35 years of experience in psychiatric rehabilitation and recovery, she has authored or co-authored over 100 articles, 4 textbooks, and numerous book chapters and training packages. Dr. Farkas is a recipient of multiple national and international awards for pioneering scientific advances that have helped transform research on mental health and rehabilitation systems and being at the forefront of a paradigm shift that has helped practitioners, families, and society, as a whole, to see capacity and potential in people who were once perceived to be beyond hope."



Ladji Ruffin is an American entrepreneur, public speaker, and a prominent advocate for criminal justice reform and reentry services. He is recognized as a pioneer in creating supportive services for individuals and families impacted by the justice system following their release from incarceration.



Cody Byrns is a best-selling author, speaker, life coach, and podcast host, internationally recognized for his powerful story of overcoming adversity. In 2013, Cody's life was drastically changed after a severe car accident left him with life-threatening injuries, including severe burns to almost 40% of his body. Having endured countless surgeries and rehabilitation, Cody has chosen to use his experience to uplift others. As a thought leader, he speaks worldwide, equipping people to live free from the bonds of scars (physical and emotional) and empowering them to walk out of past hurt and defeat toward their God-given potential. He also founded a non-profit burns foundation that helps multiple survivors recover.



Dr. John Gaines is an inspirational speaker, author, and advocate for at-risk youth, known for overcoming a traumatic childhood in poverty and addiction in Tacoma, Washington, to earn a Doctorate in Business Administration and dedicate his life to inspiring others to "PUSH" (Perseverance Until Success Happens) through adversity, becoming a prominent voice in youth empowerment and trauma-informed care.

PAPRS SPONSOR BENEFITS FOR 2026

All Sponsors will receive the following benefits:

- ~ Listing on the 2026 Virtual Conference website and our PAPRS website
- ~ Recognition as a sponsor in conference materials, promotional messages, and web pages
- ~ Recognition on PAPRS social media and general communications

DIAMOND SPONSOR - \$10,000

- ~ Premier logo placement on the digital home page of the Cvent Attendee Hub
- ~ Sponsored Session: Sponsor a keynote and one additional live or on-demand session - branding available in session background or lower thirds
- ~ 8 regular conference registrations (21 credits per each registration)
- ~ Virtual Booth with company info, video, downloadable content and chat
- ~ Ability host Office Hours (attendees can self-schedule meetings)
- ~ Branded push notifications
- ~ Scrolling full page ads between sessions
- ~ Pre-roll sponsor video or splash video
- ~ Sponsor ribbon/badge highlighting in the Attendee Hub

PLATINUM SPONSOR - \$5,000

- ~ Logo on the Cvent homepage/Attendee Hub
- ~ Sponsor Live or on-demand session
- ~ 4 full conference registrations
- ~ Virtual booth in the trade-show hall (logo, profile, downloadable content)
- ~ Ability to use Cvent Appointment Scheduling
- ~ One scrolling full page ad

GOLD SPONSORSHIP - \$2,500

- ~ Logo on the Cvent homepage/Attendee Hub
- ~ 3 full conference registrations
- ~ Virtual booth (limited) with description, logo and document/video upload
- ~ Scrolling Full page ad

SILVER SPONSORSHIP - \$1,000

- ~ Logo in the Attendee Hub Silver sponsor section
- ~ 2 full conference registrations
- ~ Virtual booth listing (logo and description)
- ~ Scrolling Full page ad

BRONZE SPONSORSHIP - \$500

- ~ Logo in the Attendee Hub Bronze sponsor section
- ~ 1 full conference registration
- ~ Scrolling Full page ad

FRIEND OF PAPRS - \$200

- ~ Scrolling Full page ad

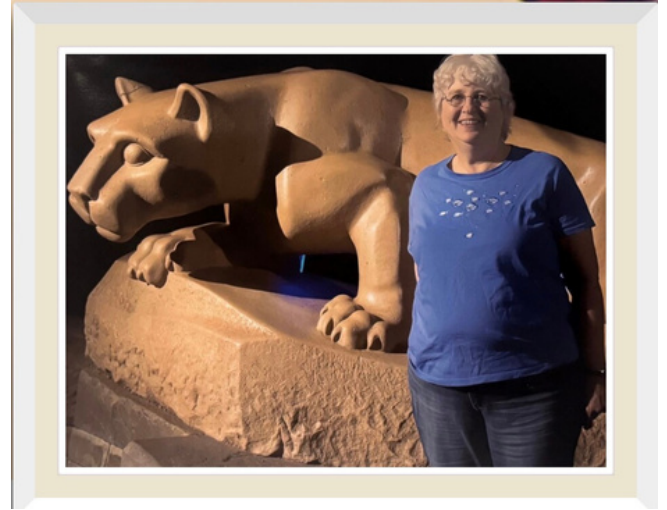
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
JEN MCLAUGHLIN, CONFERENCE CO-CHAIR, PAPRS:

330 NORTH SECOND ST., SUNBURY, PA 17801

PHONE: 570-286-0111 X 30024 E-MAIL: MCLAUGHLINJ@CSGONLINE.ORG

In Memory of Beth Ricker

It is with deep sadness that we share the passing of our colleague and friend, Elizabeth ("Beth") Ricker, MSW, LSW, CPRP, CFRP. Beth was a dedicated member of the Pennsylvania Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services (PAPRS) community and a steadfast advocate for psychiatric rehabilitation across Pennsylvania. She served on the PAPRS Board of Directors beginning in January 2012, generously contributing her time and expertise to the Training & Technical Assistance, Membership, and Finance Committees. Among her many strengths were exceptional time management and organizational skills, which kept teams focused and initiatives moving forward. We honor Beth for her unwavering commitment to our mission and for the meaningful support she offered to individuals seeking resilience and recovery.



Beth was a Certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practitioner (CPRP) and a Certified Family Rehabilitation Practitioner (CFRP), and she was among the original recipients of the CFPP credential in Pennsylvania. Her professional background included crisis intervention, case management, and social work within a state hospital setting. After many years serving as an OMHSAS licensing representative, she most recently held the role of HealthChoices Team Leader in the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) Harrisburg Field Office. In that capacity, she led the Capital and Bedford/Somerset HealthChoices contracts and spearheaded the 2014 creation of the Respect Poster Contest, promoting the message: "Resolve to Eliminate Stigma: Practice Empathy, Compassion & Truth."

Beth also served as the lead for psychiatric rehabilitation services (PRS) licensing in the Harrisburg Field Office, providing technical assistance to both established and newly developing PRS programs. She participated in statewide PRS initiatives, including the workgroup that drafted the regulations published on May 11, 2013 (Chapter 5230), and the subsequent PRS implementation team. Her contributions extended to the OMHSAS Peer Support and PRS Documentation Training Workgroups, as well as the Psych Rehab & Peer Support Training and Technical Assistance Workgroups. She supported the development of PRS regulations for transition-age youth and young adults, served as the Harrisburg Field Office lead for ADA issues, and contributed to the Targeted Case Management workgroup responsible for developing TCM regulations.

From 2010 to 2015, Beth presented numerous workshops for PAPRS and the Pennsylvania Clubhouse Coalition. She previously served as the Operations Manager of PAPRS before continuing her distinguished career with OMHSAS, where she remained a highly respected leader and colleague. In every role she held, Beth was a vital force in advancing psychiatric rehabilitation from its earliest days in Pennsylvania. Her integrity, warmth, and mentorship touched countless providers, colleagues, and peers, leaving a legacy that will endure for years to come.



PAPRS IS GETTING A NEW LOOK!

WE KNOW THAT EVERYONE IS VERY BUSY, SO IS PAPRS!

**We are excited to announce our transition to a
new website and membership platform.**

What does this mean to you?

- An Engaging Website with new features to enhance your membership.
- Updated Resources
- Directory
- Employment Board
- Event Management – Phase two will include an LMS system to offer even more training opportunities.
- New Membership Platform allowing organizations and members to connect with each other.

Let us share what you can do to make this transition successful:

- Please log in to your profile and make sure all the fields are up to date and accurate.
- Download all certificates for back-up documentation
- Key/Organizational Contacts – Please make sure that your PRA account matches your PAPRS account regarding individuals.
 - Moving forward, once the database is up and running, we will be utilizing the information from PRA as the validity check of membership. If an individual is not on the PRA roster, they will be in non-member status until verified.
 - Also, if an individual is on the PRA roster, you will still be responsible for ensuring they have been added to the PAPRS account.
 - Now is a good time to ensure accuracy in both accounts

We appreciate your support in ensuring a smooth transition, and we look forward to many exciting developments. If you are looking for anything from our membership database or from the website...one of those functions that you always wished was there...please reach out to us and let us know what it is. We have significantly more functionality than before.

Please email Rochelle Reimert at rochelle.reimert@papr.org.

OUR NEXT PAPRS NEWSLETTER: SPRING 2026