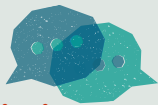




## FALL NEWSLETTER

### SVM Services



#### Mediation Services

- Custody and Divorce
- Family Conflict, Elder
- Community, Neighbor
- Workplace
- Prison Reentry & Reintegration
- Landlord/Tenant
- Families in Recovery



#### Meeting Facilitation

- Crisis Family Meetings
- Group/Community Dialogue
- Listening Sessions
- Story Circles
- Families in Recovery Support Group



#### Education

- Kids First Program for Co-Parents
- Basic Mediation Training
- Active Bystander Workshops
- Responding to Conflict Training
- BALM: Be a Loving Mirror

### A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTOR...

Happy Holidays from SVM!

When people ask me where I turn for hope, my answer is that I look local. There is so much good work happening in the Susquehanna Valley across many different sectors and communities. The work of community mediation is to respond to local needs in local ways. That's how we started our Families in Recovery program, Caregiver Support Group, offered training on dignity and contempt in the face of growing polarization, and much more.

The eagerness of our volunteers and partners to support constructive responses to conflict is critical to our success.

I hope you'll read this newsletter to see all the ways we put your support to good use right here and consider a donation to help us keep going in 2025! We are so grateful.

~Susan

### Impressive Statistics So Far in 2024:



- **12** New mediators trained
- **125** mediations held, virtually and/or in-person
- **45** SVM volunteers donated more than **3000** hours
- **86** rapid response family meetings facilitated with over **604** participants
- **39** people attended the BALM Program for families in recovery
- **33** families in Recovery Support Groups held with **41** adults and **16** children
- **3** families in Recovery Activities with **114** people
- **14** people assisted with prison reentry/reintegration
- **25** new story circle facilitators trained
- **20** story circles facilitated with **188** participants
- **150** people attended Disagree Better workshops facilitated by SVM
- and...**3408** mediation cases since we opened our doors in **2011**.

### Donate to SVM

#### OUR MISSION

SVM is a community mediation center committed to supporting **constructive responses to conflict** in the Susquehanna Valley through mediation, facilitation, training and education.

We believe in people's abilities to treat one another with **dignity** even when they have conflict and profound differences.

You can scan this QR code to make your donation today!



# Programs On a Roll!



## Families in Recovery

### NOTHING CHANGES IF NOTHING CHANGES

Families in Recovery is a new program in 2024 funded by Union and Snyder Counties with the goal of working with the whole family and community supports in relapse prevention. The program includes facilitated family meetings, weekly support groups with programs for the whole family, education programming, including a 8-week communication class called “Be a Loving Mirror” or “B.A.L.M.”, and monthly activities where people can build community and have fun together.

**“ADDICTION MAKES THE ENTIRE FAMILY SICK, AND WHEN WE ALL BEGIN TO HEAL TOGETHER, WE SEE LONG-TERM SOBRIETY BECOME A REALITY.”**

**SHAWNEE ROBEL, FAMILIES IN RECOVERY PROGRAM DIRECTOR (ABOVE)**



RECOVERY SIMULATION



MONTHLY FAMILY ACTIVITIES

## Prison Reentry/Reintegration

### GEARING UP FOR BIG CHANGES

SVM welcomed Drew as the new Prison Reentry/Reintegration Coordinator in July. Since starting, Drew has grown his caseload of clients, providing them resources and support. Speaking about his work, Drew says, “I have the passion to be the person I needed so many years ago. Love and compassion changed my life, and if people have the desire to change, I know it can provide the hope they need to take their next step.”



DREW LAHR

## Family Engagement Initiative

### GIVING FAMILIES A CHANCE TO USE THEIR VOICE

“My role is to bring families together during crises, empowering them to make decisions with support and access to helpful resources,” says Lauryn Longacre, Crisis/Rapid Response Coordinator. Since partnering with Children and Youth Services in 2018, Susquehanna Valley Mediation has focused on meeting people where they are and fostering connections that create positive outcomes.



LAURYN LONGACRE

## Become a Mediator!

SVM’s 40-hour mediator training is scheduled for **February 21 - 23rd** and **March 7th - 9th.**

Our volunteer mediators are crucial to our success and ability to provide our services to our community.

### Who can do it? Anyone with:

- a desire to serve the community & willingness to learn.
- the ability to put personal opinions aside to support others in communication and decision-making.

We’ll teach you the rest!

**To apply, call our office or visit our website.**



CLASS OF 2024 MEDIATORS

# Community Engagement

## Disagree Better

### TOOLS FOR CONTENTIOUS TIMES

This fall, several groups approached SVM, requesting help with skills to have more constructive conversations and disagreement. In response, SVM facilitated a series of communication workshops. Through presentation, small group discussion, partner practice, and storytelling, participants were able to explore disagreement through the Dignity Index, a self-reflection tool that helps people visualize the level of contempt or dignity one uses in their own communication, whether it be online or in-person. One such event, sponsored by the Northumberland County League of Women Voters, had almost 100 people in attendance, actively engaging with each other and the material. This is hopeful work!



### Tips on how to disagree better

- **Know when to engage**
- **Remember to breathe**
- **Listen first**
- **Ask curious questions**
- **Share your perspective without contempt**
- **Know when to step away**



## SVM Story Circles

### SHARING OUR STORIES

So far in 2024, Story Circle facilitators have brought more than 180 people together across the valley to share their stories with one another and build a greater sense of community. And we have big plans for 2025! Anyone who is interested can learn to be a story circle facilitator. Our next facilitator training is Dec. 15th from 1-5 pm. and will be led by JoAnne Henry and Jerry Stropnický.

**If you would like to become a trained Story Circle Facilitator or request a circle for your group, please contact SVM @570-374-1718.**

## Mediator Spotlight

### Haley Stanko

Haley Stanko became a volunteer mediator in 2024 after reading a Daily Item article showing the decrease of kids placed in foster care in Snyder County due to Children and Youth Service's Family Engagement Initiative. "There were like 30 dependent children in 2019 and that number fell to two in the last year," Stanko said. "I saw the part SVM was playing and how the family meetings were helping people."

Helping people in conflict work on changing the situation they are in, in their own way, is something Stanko deemed to be the most rewarding aspect of volunteering with SVM. "Mediation gives people space to talk about conflict in a way that they don't talk about every day," Stanko continued. "With mediation, you can feel how just your presence in the room has an impact," Stanko said.



In addition to volunteering at SVM, Haley enjoys working at PlayPower, Inc., coaching field hockey at Lewisburg H.S., and hanging out with her dog, Leif.

# 2024 Fall Fundraiser

## LETTING THE GOOD TIMES ROLL

Thank you to all who attended the 2024 Annual Fall Fundraiser at Whispering Oaks Vineyard! The event highlighted our new Families in Recovery Program with remarks from Shawnee Robel, our program director. She shared her personal experience living through addiction and recovery with a loved one, highlighting just how important supporting the whole family is to successful recovery. The Folk Justice Band returned this year and together, **we raised nearly \$10,000** to support the vast work of SVM! Without your support, we wouldn't be where we are today. **Stay tuned for next year's event!**



## Contact us

### Susquehanna Valley Mediation

713 Bridge Street, Suite 29  
Selinsgrove, PA 17870  
570-374-1718

#### SVM office hours:

Monday - Thursday  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

#### Mediation appointments available:

Monday through Saturday 10:00 a.m.  
and 1:00 p.m.

Monday through Thursday  
@ 6:30 pm

#### To contact us or request an appointment:

Call 570-374-1718 or  
email Meg Martin at:  
casecoordinator@svmediation.org

#### Executive Director:

Susan Jordan  
570-837-9563  
sjordan@svmediation.org

#### 2024 Board of Directors

Patti Urosevich, *President*  
purosevich@svmediation.org

Linda Turner, *Vice President*  
lturner@svmediation.org

Mary Sholley, *Secretary*  
marysholley@gmail.com

Elayne Sobel, *Treasurer*  
esobel@svmediation.org

Bill Haynos  
whaynos2@gmail.com

Tracey Wolfe  
twwolfe128@gmail.com

Bob Shabanowitz  
rshabanowitz@svmediation.org

Neil Ellison  
nmell@aol.com



## Save the Date

### CHECK OUT OUR UPCOMING EVENTS

**Caregiver SUPPORT GROUP**

EVERY THIRD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH  
1pm - 2:30pm  
Union County Resource Center  
480 Hafer Road, Lewisburg

The Caregiver Support Group is a place to share experiences, insight, and words of encouragement for those affected by the caregiving needs of another.

**When: 1 pm - 2:30pm**  
**3rd Tuesday every month**  
**Where: Union County Resource Center**  
480 Hafer Road, Lewisburg

**FAMILIES IN RECOVERY**

MONDAYS  
6:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
18 MARKET ST. LEWISBURG

Families in Recovery is a recurring support group for Families affected by addiction. A trauma-informed therapist will be available to supervise children 0-12 while the meeting is held.

**When: 6:30 - 8 pm**  
**Monday evenings**  
**Where: First Presbyterian Church**  
18 Market St. Lewisburg

**BE A LOVING MIRROR**

An 8-week class for family members affected by addiction to learn to respond, rather than react, find your voice, set boundaries, find peace, and better support your loved one.

**When: 5:45 - 8:30 pm via Zoom**  
**Tuesdays, starting Jan. 14**  
**BALM is free and open to all**  
Call 570-524-3895 to learn more

**Story Circle**

FACILITATOR TRAINING

Learn to facilitate Story Circles and create opportunities for those in your community to connect with each other through the art of storytelling.

**When: 1 pm - 5 pm**  
**Dec. 15**  
Call 570-374-1718 to learn more

FREE EVENT!  
**NYE SOBER DANCE**

Cowboy Party  
TUESDAY DEC. 31 THE ALBRIGHT CENTER  
450 GASTROST ST. SUNBURY  
8 PM - 1 AM

Join SVM's Families in Recovery for a rootin'-tootin' grand time at the Albright Center as we welcome 2025! This event is free for those in recovery and their families.

**When: 8 pm - 1 am**  
**Tuesday, Dec. 31**  
**Where: The Albright Center**  
460 Chestnut St., Sunbury

FAMILIES IN RECOVERY IS SPONSORING  
**SOBER SKATE NIGHT**

NOV. 30  
4:30-6:30PM  
SUNSET SKATING

Join SVM's Families in Recovery for a rocking and rolling night at the Sunset Skating Rink! This event is free for those in recovery and their families!

**When: 4:30 - 6:20 pm**  
**Nov. 30**  
**Where: Sunset Skating Rink**  
2755 North Susquehanna Trail,  
Shamokin Dam

## Follow us on Social Media

SVMEDIATION2010  
 SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY MEDIATION

**WWW.SVMEDIATION.COM**

## DONATE ONLINE!

Visit [svmediation.org](http://svmediation.org) and click "Donate Now"

Susquehanna Valley Mediation is classified by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501 (c) (3) organization, and your donation is fully tax-deductible as allowed by law.