STAFF SPOTLIGHT
Debbie Hege, Director of Counseling

People are amazing to me; even growing up I watched people and how they interacted with each other. I enjoyed hearing about what interested people. Every person is unique.

This is the approach I have in therapy—listening to the unique person who has walked through my door, seeking to better understand what to do to resolve a challenge in his/her life. It takes courage to walk through the door the first time, to begin to sort out what the real issue is, to talk about difficult sometimes painful realities and decide how to move ahead. This requires change, and change often isn’t easy. It is work. Change also has exciting components, and I encourage clients to look at this aspect of the process. When clients enter therapy, they are often uncomfortable with how things feel in their lives, so reminding them of their goal is important as they move through therapy.

My work allows me to partner with incredible individuals. In the process of partnering with a person, I am joining with this individual in discovering strengths they didn’t realize they had; I am permitted to join with this individual as he/she gains a better understanding of themselves and what they need to feel more peace and happiness. I have great admiration and respect for my clients. I feel this partnering to be a privilege and an honor.

WELCOME TO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Rich Amend, of Highland Park, is active in many social causes, including Curt’s Café Highland Park Task Force and Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism Commission on Social Action.

Brien Leahy, of Grayslake and with First Bank of Highland Park, is committed to helping the Latino community thrive and protecting seniors from financial abuse.

Barbara Sereda, of Highland Park and founder of Adoption Advocates of America, is passionate about youth education and wellbeing.

Diane Wallace, of Lake Bluff, is active with First Presbyterian Church of Deerfield’s Mission Council and dedicated to strengthening the local Latino community.
A special thank you to Sam Rosenthal Fine Arts for hosting our YESS (Youth Educational Support & Success) and LYI (Latino Youth Initiative) students in February. The visit provided a behind-the-scenes studio tour and a drawing workshop. Sam set up a still-life and began painting it. He showed the students how he used color, light, and shadow to make the painting come alive. Under Sam’s guidance, students sketched the still life while learning how to “see as an artist sees,” to gain perspective and convey depth. The visit to Sam’s studio is just one example of experiential site visits that broaden students’ horizons to the possibilities that life can bring.

Kudos to all who help make the After-School Homework Club's Reading Program so successful! A dedicated team of volunteers come to Nuestro Center for one-on-one reading tutoring sessions with elementary school students. Tutors read to students, and students read to their tutors. Follow-up conversations test comprehension. This reading program will be a focus at this summer’s camp and the HWC program next school year.
Understanding the Developmental Tasks of Adolescence
By Meredith Gettleman, LSW, Family Service Youth and Family Therapist

Adolescence is fraught with numerous challenges and transitions. The pace and amount of growth that occurs during adolescence is second only to that during infancy. As teenagers experience biological, cognitive, and social-emotional changes, understanding these crucial advancements can sometimes make this rocky road a bit more bearable for everyone.

Although everyone develops at their own pace, all teenagers have developmental milestones they are attempting to reach (whether they realize it or not). With the onset of puberty, an individual experiences changes in the way they think about themselves and the world around them, an increased interest and desire for romantic relationships, more emphasis on peer relationships and fitting in, a desire to become more independent from parents and caregivers, and the beginning of a search for a personal identity. During this search, an adolescent is examining their gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, culture, religion/spirituality, beliefs, and values, and trying to figure out what are the most salient parts of their identity – a monumental and stressful task to accomplish. No wonder they sleep so much!

Adolescence is a period of great turmoil and growth that can be overwhelming for all those involved. Stressors such as family conflict, bullying, socioeconomic difficulties, and/or mental health issues only amplify the struggles and obstacles teenagers must overcome. As a parent or caregiver of an adolescent, it is important to keep in mind the difficulties your child may be facing as you provide support. Coupled with this, have empathy, encourage open communication, and set clear, consistent, and realistic expectations—these techniques can go a long way in strengthening your relationship. Furthermore, remember to take care of yourself too – adolescence is a stressful time for parents and caregivers as well. Self-care is crucial during a transitional time such as this one. Bumps along the way are inevitable, so try your best and know that it is okay to make mistakes. Parents and caregivers are human too! Only when we take care of ourselves properly can we truly be the best parents we want to be.
The Positive Effect of In-Home Therapy

Family Service of Lake County offers in-home counseling for seniors and caregivers. These services help clients overcome mobility, health, and transportation barriers, at no out-of-pocket cost. Working with a single therapist for continuity of care, clients address issues including depression anxiety, family relationships, and caregiving stress. Clients also are empowered to manage their physical health needs, to improve their mental health. To elevate success, clients may be connected to supportive resources, such as funding through our Caregiver Resource Center for respite, gap-filling, and legal service.

Additional supportive services include caregiver counseling groups held on the second and fourth Thursdays at the Condell Centre Club, Gurnee, and informative presentations, such as the Wise and Well Community Education Series described on page 6.

Educational Support Boosts Confidence

The Latino Youth Initiative (LYI) works with Highland Park High School students who need academic support, mentoring, and enrichment opportunities during out-of-school time to support their successful completion of high school and identification of post-graduation opportunities. Here is the success story of one of our LYI students.

Marco, was a creative, shy senior who lacked confidence. He started as a “C” student, unsure of how to prioritize work and school. He sat in the back of the room and rarely spoke up. Nevertheless, he took advantage of the opportunity to talk with staff and express his concerns. He shared that he felt out of place because of his interests. Staff challenged him to communicate with his teachers, discussed how to better manage his work and school priorities, and encouraged him to just be himself. This sparked notable change.

Marco became more confident. He challenged himself to participate and initiated class discussions. He also opened up about his passion for art, showing his designs to staff and asking for critiques. His grades improved to A’s and B’s. He began to better balance work and school priorities. Just before graduation, he shared what LYI meant to him, that it was a place to be yourself and be accepted for who you are. His statement reflects both the essence of LYI and Marco’s journey to the confidence he found through his LYI experience. He is on his way to success!
Join other caregivers in a relaxed, carefree, and comfortable setting. Let exercise reduce your stress, increase your energy and make you feel so much better.

Presented to the community at no charge.

Underwritten through the generous support of The Spungen Family Foundation

To register and for more information, please contact:
Linda Magad, Family Service of Lake County
847-432-4981X110, lmagad@famservice.org

Tuesdays, April 16-May 21
The Centre Club, 1405 North Hunt Club Road, Gurnee

Wise and Well
Community Education Series
Presented by Family Service of Lake County & Highland Park Senior Center

Wednesdays, 12:30-2:30 p.m.
May 15, June 19, July 17
Highland Park Country Club, 1207 Park Avenue West
Highland Park

Topics Include: Hearing Loss, Understanding Senior Housing Options & Mindfulness

Presented to the community at no charge.

To register and for more information, please contact:
Linda Magad, Family Service of Lake County
847-432-4981X110, lmagad@famservice.org
Jennifer Aiello, Highland Park Senior Center, 847-926-1868
jaiello@cityhpil.com

Taking Care of the Caregiver
Exercise Program
Presented by Family Service of Lake County and The Centre Club, Gurnee

Wednesdays, 12:30-2:30 p.m.
May 15, June 19, July 17
Highland Park Country Club, 1207 Park Avenue West
Highland Park

Topics Include: Hearing Loss, Understanding Senior Housing Options & Mindfulness

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jaiello@cityhpil.com
Please
Family Service of Lake County’s
a show of support
Saturday, May 4th • Exmoor Country Club • Highland Park
Honoring The Healthcare Foundation of Highland Park
Celebrating 89 years of strengthening families and inspiring hope

Additional sponsorship opportunities available. Please contact ghodges@famservice.org for more information.
SPRING 2019 NEWS

- Staff Spotlight
- Welcome New Board Members
- An Artist Shares His Craft
- Nuestro Center’s Reading Program
- Adolescent Development
- Senior & Caregiver Education
- 10th Annual “A Show of Support”

For information and details, please call 847-432-4981 or visit www.famservice.org

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