

# PEER EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER & PEER SUPPORT NETWORK ANNUAL REPORT

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

## Message from Steve Ponte: Service Director of Rehabilitation Services

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*Read more by  
Jon Gottlieb*

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PERC and PSN are Recovery Learning Centers (RLCs) funded by a DMH contract administered by Boston Medical Center. Our mission is to provide hope, self-determination and honor to individuals through peer to peer relationships as a way to achieve meaningful change. Our focus is Employment, Wellness and Recovery. Come join us whether you want to use computers, job search or connect with the peer community.

The Metro Boston Recovery Learning Community (MBRLC) consists of several peer-led programs throughout the Boston area that focus on recovery and wellness. The RLCs are a goal-oriented service led by persons with a lived experience of psychiatric illness and of cognitive impairment. Our programs focus on group discussion which will encompass a variety of subjects including Self-Esteem, Assertiveness, Recovery is Real, Dual Recovery, Creative Journaling, Job Issues/Job Search, Whole Health Action Management (WHAM) and Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) groups. Our staff are always open to adjusting the program curriculum to meet the needs of participating members. The programs are designed to be highly interactive and flexible to ensure groups are tailored to the needs and desires of active members. Both programs are staffed with two peer facilitators at all times. Staff are trained on group facilitation and will support the mission of recovery, wellness, and employment when working with all program participants. There will be many times when staff are able to work with individuals on a one to one basis. This will provide an opportunity for staff to help an individual through a difficult time or to support him/her in a specific need area that may not be applicable to the whole group. In addition, staff often work one to one with individuals who need extra support to learn computers. We encourage people to make phone appointments in order to make sure staff is available.

Our programs are open to the public and there are no prerequisites to take part in our services aside from self-identifying as having mental health issues or cognitive impairments. The program is all inclusive and encourages individuals from all backgrounds and life experiences to come share their perspective on recovery. We feel strongly that diversity among our active participants will benefit our programs, enrich the groups therein and bring differing opinions to the table which will make for more stimulating interaction. Interested individuals need only to show up at one of our locations during program hours of operation and you will be welcomed in. Please call Sarah Selkovits with any questions regarding the program at (617) 788-1034.

## Jon Gottlieb Reporter

The Peer Support Community in Harvard Square not only offers good things inside but is surrounded by so many things in its environs. It truly has a lot to offer within walking distance wherever you go before, during and after your visits.



In all directions there are many pursuits to see from good restaurants to unusual shops that are only typical of the area from the most talked about mall around in THE GARAGE and the world famous COOP. A record store still exists within feet called IN YOUR EAR, all worth checking out at some point during each stay. And how can you resist a place called INSOMNIA COOKIES, the name alone gets you in the door on a regular basis it is so decently good. See one of the various Harvard oriented related shops and stores delving in such things as clothing to souvenirs. And the actual campus is only a stone's throw away. Arguably this is probably the most interesting area to people watch anywhere, whether you stay in the heart of it or venture a short distance to the equally funky Central Square. You will never be bored. There's plenty more to see and do. Go discover what's always in store every day for yourself, like the almost human characteristics of the humor magazine in the shadows of our building, the humor magazine HARVARD LAMPOON.

Learn something while you take care of yourself....the whole process will be totally Democratic and good for you.

PSN  
The Democracy Center  
Rosa Parks Room  
45 Mount Auburn St  
Cambridge, MA 02128  
617-788-1034

## Jon Gottlieb Reporter

They say that good things come in small packages and in the case of the newly formed Peer Support center located inside Harvard Square's storied Democracy Center ; goodness really does come in sufficient bunches. It bares repeating. Turnout is growing and the word is getting out that this will become the in-place in town not only to be seen but heard in the mental health community to a better frame of mind along with a way to meet interesting peers who will help strengthen and improve your psyche, make your life easier to manage and provide you with a place to go to make you more goal oriented. You'll have fun doing it while participating in the interesting curriculum along the way during the Monday, Wednesday, Friday, one to five p.m. weekly sessions. This is definitely a place where your voice is longing to be heard with much to offer and you can provide to add to the wisdom.

The facility, associated with the RLC at Boston Medical Center and PERC/Bay Cove is in the process of establishing a set schedule that will involve everything from discussions that cover a variety of topics designed to settle your soul, mind and spirit where everyone who is anyone can drop-in and invited to participate on a regular basis. Snacks are plentiful to help feed your stomach. There isn't anything that isn't available here that won't make you a malcontent nor voice any disapproval.

A core group of staff people ranging from Sarah, Alisha and Jessica make you feel comfortable immediately and each time you visit, even if its your first time here. They alone make you want to come back for more and to assist in watching the new facility in town grow and prosper.

You can all help. Open houses will be numerous for you to share your personal expertise. Your support is necessary and wanted. The robust gang who accomplish much look forward to meeting you as it grows to a worthwhile Democratic force with you and your peers serving a major purpose in the community and industry.



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