



Centerstone Life; Story Champion Award Winners Announced

by Dalus Ben Avi
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Centerstone, a national leader in behavioral health care, named its inaugural Life;Story Champion Award winners.

The Life;Story Champion Award honors Illinoisans who have positively impacted mental health in their community. The inaugural winners are:

- Cherie Wright, Southern Illinois Healthcare School Health Coordinator
- Deborah Humphrey, Madison County Mental Health Board Executive Director



The winners will be honored on Saturday, September 9 during Centerstone's inaugural Life;Story 5K walk/run for suicide awareness and prevention, which begins at 7 a.m. at Harry L. Crisp Sports Complex, 1606 South Carbon Street, Marion. Everyone is welcome.

"The Life;Story 5K promotes community awareness and unites us all in our desire to support people impacted by suicide and thoughts of suicide," said Anne Tyree, Centerstone Regional Chief Executive Officer. "Both the Life;Story 5K and Champion Award recognize that there is more to every life; there is more to every story."

Cheri Wright

Wright currently works with schools in Jackson, Williamson, Franklin, Perry, and Randolph counties as a school health coordinator for Southern Illinois Healthcare. She is experienced in helping schools implement Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child programming, facilitating wellness meetings, and assisting with assessments.

Since 2005, she has promoted health and wellbeing in students, school staff, and communities through programs such as CATCH, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Hidden in Plain Sight, and SOS Signs of Suicide middle school and high school prevention programs. She has been a Youth Mental Health First Aid trainer since December 2016.

As a member of the Illinois CATCH onto Health Consortium, she is able to collaborate with other agencies to increase the effectiveness of school health programming and offer professional development opportunities to school staff in all 16 of the Illinois Delta counties.

Deborah Humphrey

Humphrey, MBA, BSN, RN is the executive director of the Madison County Mental Health Board. Her experience includes more than 40 years of behavioral health, clinical, administrative, and fiscal experience. Prior to her current position, she was employed as the associate director of the St. Clair County Mental Health Board for 20 years.

She has served as the president, vice president, member of the executive committee, and chair of the Children's Behavioral Health Committee for the statewide Association of Community Mental Health Authorities of Illinois (ACMHAI). Deborah was the facilitator of the St. Clair County Youth Coalition organized to address youth service issues from 2001 -2019.

She is commissioned by the Governor to serve on the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership and appointed by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Secretary to the CESSA Regional Advisory Committee. She was appointed by the States Attorney as a St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council member and has chaired the Madison County Juvenile Justice Council since 2020.

Deborah has been a board member for Illinois Collaboration on Youth, the Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville Social Work Board, and the Karla Smith Foundation Advisory Council. She has chaired multiple local workgroups and has been a member of numerous local, state, and national committees and workgroups.

She is an experienced grant writer and co-authored numerous, successful grants. She is also a contributing columnist for the Intelligencer authoring editorials on behavioral health issues.

The event will also include recognition of the Life;Story Champion Award finalists:

- James Ingram, retired from the Illinois Office of Mental Health at Alton Mental Health Center
- John Markley, former Centerstone Regional CEO
- Pryce E Jones, Centerstone direct service provider
- Karen Copeland, an advocate for Centerstone vocational and residential program clients
- Kristin Glenn, Student Services for OPTIONS Transition to Independence Director

“We are proud to recognize the accomplishments of Cheri and Deborah on behalf of those in the community with mental health illnesses, and we look forward to celebrating with them along with the community on September 9,” Tyree said. “Please join us for Life;Story to recognize the award winners’ commitment to those we serve, and for supporting our mission of delivering care that changes people’s lives.”

For more information, visit centerstonelifestory.org.

About Centerstone

Centerstone is a nonprofit health system providing mental health and substance use disorder treatments. Services are available nationally through the operation of outpatient clinics, residential programs, the use of telehealth and an inpatient hospital. Centerstone also features specialized programs for the military community, therapeutic foster care, children's services and employee assistance programs. Centerstone's Research Institute provides guidance through research and technology, leveraging the best practices for use

in all our communities. Centerstone's Foundation secures philanthropic resources to support the work and mission of delivering care that changes people's lives.