



**GILEAD**  
COMMUNITY SERVICES, INC  
Improving Lives, Building Futures

SUMMER 2021

# BALM OF GILEAD

## ROAD TO RECOVERY

### THERAPY DOG BRINGS SMILES

**Teddy, a 10-year-old bearded collie mix, recently made a guest appearance at Valor Home. Clients from Liberty Home came to meet Teddy as well, making this the first get-together that the two supervised apartments have had since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic!**

Teddy has been certified as a therapy dog through Pet Partners since he was eighteen months old. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Teddy regularly volunteered at schools, colleges, hospitals, and with children. Teddy has also guest-starred on the television series “Little Voice” on Apple TV. With COVID-19 protocols gradually changing for the better, Teddy has started to volunteer again as a therapy dog. Beyond being able to sit, lie down, stay, and come on command, Teddy can also roll over, bow, smile, and play dead. As a therapy dog, Teddy remains calm when given hugs or when he is pet clumsily.

Relaxation, reduction in anxiety levels, comfort, and mental stimulation are just a few benefits of the kind of therapy that Teddy and other therapy animals provide. Both clients and staff at Valor and Liberty loved Teddy’s visit, and hope that he will make another guest appearance in the future!

By Michelle Schleich, Clinical Case Manager, Valor Home



Teddy entertaining the group



Teddy & Michelle

### A REASON TO CELEBRATE

Through the pandemic, Gilead has been providing Community Resource Coordination (CRC) Services to individuals and families impacted by COVID-19.

Jasmine Agosto, Community Resource Coordinator, made a special bond with one particular family, who had been financially impacted by COVID-19. Not only was she able to deliver food boxes to them through the CRC program, but she also connected the family with fresh food deliveries through the Loaves and Fishes food pantry in New Haven after the CRC services were exhausted.



Adonijah & Micaiah with his diploma

On one recent visit, Jasmine was greeted by Micaiah and his sister who were beaming with pride and excitement because he had graduated that day from a culinary technical high school. Jasmine noticed that many of the houses in the neighborhood had congratulatory balloons so she drove to a local store and purchased some for him since his parents were out of town. Even with all the additional challenges he faced during the pandemic, Micaiah worked hard, persevered and earned his diploma.

**Congratulations to Micaiah and thank you Jasmine for making his graduation day extra special!**

# GOOD NEIGHBORS

## SERVE OUR CITY DAY

Early this summer, a group of Vox Church volunteers, led by Brent Sestero, spent the day staining the deck at Valor Home. It looks amazing!

This was part of their outreach initiative *Serve Our City Day*. On June 5th, over 150 Vox Church volunteers served at 26 sites throughout Connecticut and Massachusetts.



Vox Church Volunteers

**Thank you Vox Church for your continued commitment and support of Gilead!**



Before



After

## RELIEF FUND

**Because of the exceptional generosity of an anonymous donor, Gilead was able to create an Emergency Fund to support staff with pandemic related financial needs.** This money helped with late rent and bill payments due to missing work from illness or having sick family members. Other areas of need included help with medical bills and various costs related to having kids home during the school year. Recipients of these funds expressed gratitude for the help, and said these funds were lifting heavy burdens, supporting them to feel in control and less worried. Some said it was an answer to prayers and all expressed how amazingly generous Gilead's friends are.

After the announcement of this fund, Sylvia Myer, Gilead's WISE program senior case manager, and her husband, Dr. Ed Myer, offered to donate \$1,000 to the fund in order to help two additional individuals. "We wanted to contribute and help staff to get through some financial difficulties due to Covid," said Sylvia when we expressed our gratitude for her generosity.

We are so grateful for our generous supporters and staff!

## A VINTAGE PLAYERS PRODUCTION

On the first weekend in May, a special ensemble of actors and guests gathered in the backyard of Jane McMillan's home to put on the production, "Philadelphia, Here I Come" by Brian Friel.

The play was suggested to Jane by Paddy McKenna and what a good suggestion it was! In a nutshell, a young man in Ireland is leaving for America to seek his fortune there. His alter ego is constantly on him, expressing his doubts and anxieties about leaving his home, and leaving the girl with whom he's smitten with.

The play was directed by Carolyn Kirsch, assisted by Aisling Kaskel. The cast included Emma, Brian and Linda Kaskel,

Jane McMillan, Nat Holmes, Paddy McKenna, Gerry Matthews, Mike Monahan, Steve Smith, and Aidan and Dermot McMillan.

The Vintage Players Production was presented at no charge, because of their shared love for community theatre. Vintage Players cheerfully accepted donations on behalf of Gilead Community Services and raised over \$700!

**Heartfelt thanks to all for investing your time, talent & generosity to this creative endeavor!**

By Lucy McMillan, Chief Development Officer



Director Carolyn Kirsch with Jane McMillan (Cast Member) & Traci Higgins (Audience Member)



Cast Members (L to R): Mike Monahan, Linda Kaskel, Emma Kaskel, Steve Smith, Brian and Aisling Kaskel



Cast Members taking a bow on "stage" aka Jane's driveway

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## STAFF RETREAT

The past two years have been extremely challenging for everyone. On July 1st, Gilead's Administrative and Leadership Teams spent the afternoon at Camp Hemlocks in Hebron, Connecticut reconnecting, reflecting and processing our individual and shared experiences during the pandemic. It was an opportunity to reconnect and meet new staff in person (not via Zoom). We forged new connections and enjoyed new experiences led by the creative team at Oddfellows Playhouse, which included theater improv, hip-hop dance class, juggling and balancing!

What we discovered were common themes of appreciation, transformation



Admin & Leadership Teams



Oddfellows Playhouse Team!



The Art of Balancing

and hope. Through this time together, we reflected on our deep appreciation for all of the staff, clients, friends and supporters who Gilead depended on throughout this challenging time. We also contemplated the ways in which this experience has changed us all and how important it is that we not forget the journey and the lessons it has taught us.

*Finally, we experienced a sense of hope in what the future holds for the Gilead family that has been brought even closer through this experience!"*

By Dan Osborne,  
Chief Executive Director

## GRANTS

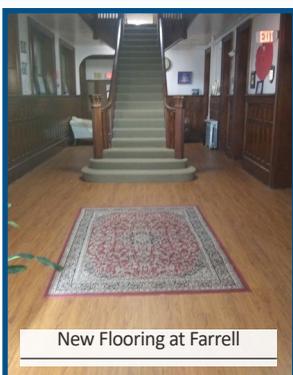
**Gilead Community Services is incredibly grateful to have received the following grants to make important capital improvements at our programs!**

Thank you to...

**The Nonprofit Grant Program** for \$235,000 for the installation of a fire suppression system at Farrell Treatment Center; \$44,000 from the **American Savings Foundation** for new flooring at Farrell Treatment Center; \$15,000 from **The Maximilian E. & Marion O. Hoffman Foundation** for a new handicap ramp to be built at Juniper Home; \$22,750 from **Middletown Community Development Block Grant** for the installation of a new generator at Liberty Home; and \$700 from the **Community Service Fund of Frontier Communications** for

outdoor chairs for our Social Club. Gilead has always been committed to high-quality and well-maintained facilities for the recovery and well-being of our clients and the generosity of grant funders helps us achieve our mission and vision. Thank you!

By Jennifer Bishop,  
Grants & Resources Development  
Specialist



New Flooring at Farrell

## ADDITIONAL GRANTS AT A GLANCE...

**\$3,000** from **Swindell's Foundation**

**\$5,000** from **Atkins Memorial Foundation**

**\$5,000** from **Community Foundation of Middlesex County**

**\$15,000** renewed funds from **CVS Foundation for Veterans Program**

**\$3,000** from **Community Chest of New Britain**

**\$5,000** from **Grace Long Foundation**

**\$29,000** from **Middlesex United Way**

**\$3,500** from **Town of Essex**

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## SUMMER FUN

The Gilead I & Gilead II programs have been enjoying their summer! The groups had fun on a field trip outing to the movies. The clients and staff were grateful to the Hassmann family who generously treated!

There were also two special birthday celebrations with delicious food and cake! It felt great to return to some normalcy.



## TEAL TUESDAY

April 2021 marked twenty years of SAAM (Sexual Assault Awareness Month) – an annual campaign to raise public awareness about sexual violence, educate communities on how to prevent it, and provide ways to support victims throughout the month and beyond. Sexual assault, abuse and harassment happen in every community and affect people of all genders and ages.



Gilead's Victim Services (VOCA) group showed our support for survivors of sexual harassment and abuse by wearing teal — the color of sexual violence prevention. The color teal represents devotion and healing and is indicative of spiritual guidance and teaching. April 6th, the first Tuesday of April, is the SAAM Day of Action – an opportunity to start off the month by showing support for survivors of sexual harassment and abuse. By wearing teal, you're signaling that you support survivors and are a safe person to talk to if they need to reach out.

**Gilead's VOCA department offers free treatment services for adults 18 and over through a grant from the Office of Victim Services. If you or anyone you know needs help please call 860-343-5303 for more information on how we can help.**

## DR. FOREMAN'S RETIREMENT

**Best Wishes to our Medical Director, Dr. Stuart Forman, on his recent retirement!** Stu, as he prefers to be called, has dedicated twenty years as Gilead's Medical Director and Chief Psychiatrist in the Middletown and Chester Outpatient Clinics. Over the years, he has provided vital psychiatric services to Gilead clients, both those in recovery from serious psychiatric issues and those with less severe needs. Dr. Forman, in his philosophy of treatment and in how he carried himself, has been a core leader in developing the Recovery philosophy by which Gilead operates. He worked tirelessly to ensure that Gilead's clients were always treated with dignity and respect and that they received high quality treatment that put each client's needs and personal preferences first.

*"I met Stu more than 30 years ago when I was hired as an ACT Case Manager. He taught me how important my role was in the recovery of those receiving our care and made sure I understood the difference I could make in the lives of those we served. He demonstrated how treating individuals with respect, dignity and kindness resulted in trusting relationships that ensured success.*

***Dr. Forman was a gift to Gilead. Thank you Stu for being such an instrumental part of making Gilead what it is today,*** Lucy McMillan, Chief Development Officer.

*"I had the opportunity to work with Stu as I was starting my career. I didn't know much about psychiatry, so I looked to others for guidance. Stu asked that Case Managers sit in on appointments with clients, so that the three of us could have a dialogue. I thought this was the norm, although I found out later that it wasn't common. This was my beginning of understanding the 'client centered' approach. **I learned so much from his values and manner with clients; techniques that I bring to my work now even after 25 years,**" Patricia Burke, Community Program Director, Social Rehabilitation Center.*



*"Dr. Forman has been a key part of Gilead's clinical and programmatic leadership for the 20 years that I have been at Gilead. Throughout that time, I have learned so much from him and he has helped to shape the way I look at the services we provide. **Stu's treatment philosophy and compassionate approach to care is at the center of Gilead's Recovery Core Principles to this day,**" Dan Osborne, Chief Executive Officer.*

# ROAD TO RECOVERY

## MOVING FOR MENTAL HEALTH

We started planning the Move for Every 1 event just as we hit the one year mark since COVID19 radically changed our routines. We were reminded of the importance of this event in fostering and supporting community; bringing us together in creative ways when the pandemic forced us apart; and most importantly, to raise awareness around mental health and wellness and raise funds to support its pursuit and achievement.

The weeklong event was a complete success! Team Gilead was 700 strong. We received over 400 photos and videos of our Team members moving in their own unique ways – from hiking and biking to Yoga and dancing (and posting on TikTok!). We surpassed our goal of \$50,000 and raised over \$63,000 thanks to the support of our amazing sponsors! Event registration dollars went toward purchasing movement equipment, such as basketball hoops and ping pong tables for our Gilead programs and 80+ pairs of sneakers for clients participating in the event.

This year, we also set our eyes on one of the most powerful and effective paths towards achieving mental health and wellness - our Community. We not only encouraged team members to move, we also asked them to support their local businesses. Team members spent \$3035 during the week and Gilead committed to matching up to \$2500 for a total of \$5535 spent by Team Gilead in our communities.

Our Road Race committee, made up of staff, clients, board members and the community, was one of the best ever! After only meeting via Zoom for three months, we were treated to a June afternoon on Lake Pocotopaug in East Hampton. Committee member Vinnie Loffredo & his wife Dora generously offered their cottage to host a THANK YOU lunch for the committee. It was a wonderful day of good food and good company.

**Who did we move for? Our friends, family, coworkers, ourselves, and our favorite local businesses! Well done Team Gilead!**



Supporting local businesses



Committee members enjoying an afternoon at the lake



SCAP program moving & making music

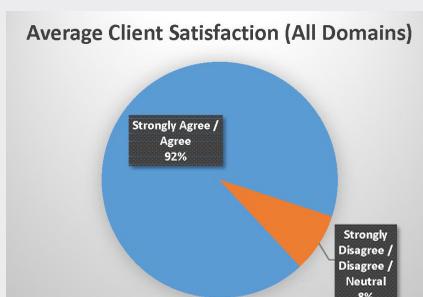
## HIGH CLIENT SATISFACTION

**Gilead Client's Overall Average Satisfaction this year was 92% agency-wide – the highest level of satisfaction ever at Gilead since this has been tracked!**

The areas with the highest satisfaction were: Access (95%); Participation (95%); Quality (93%); Satisfaction (91%); and Family Involvement (95%).

**Gilead makes it easy for me to have a voice in how Gilead operates** increased by 9% to 89% this year. This is the highest satisfaction level for this question in the last 10 years.

**I feel that the quality of my life is better this year than it was last year** increased by 2% to 87% this year. This beats the previous historical high of 86%.



**I am satisfied with the amount of support and contact I receive from my family, friends, self-help groups, church groups, or other natural supports** increased by 5% to 92% this year. This is a record high for this question in the last 8 years.

Thank you to all our staff for helping collect this crucial feedback for our survey and to Gilead clients for taking the time to share feedback. We are grateful to all of the great work staff do every day that helped our clients with this overall improvement in satisfaction!

By Rob Snyder,  
Director of Quality Assurance



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**15th Annual  
Quizine for a Cause!**  
Nov. 7th

“

We are so blessed to be a small part of your awesome team! Thanks for being such a huge part of the local community, without folks like you there would be many families who would not have a place to turn for qualified care for their loved ones.

I personally know FIRST HAND a client and his family very very well and they cannot say enough great things about Gilead and the amazing staff that you have. Your staff thinks nothing about going WAY beyond the call to do things to make this family’s life and the life of their loved one so much easier.

Words cannot describe how grateful they are for Gilead.

- Jay Morello, Central Systems Inc.

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## WISH LIST

Outdoor seating (patio chairs or folding beach chairs)  
Vegetable plants  
Wooden rattles  
Single sided hand drums  
Dunkin Donuts \$10 gift cards  
Table fans  
Cooking & baking pans  
Television

*\*Please contact Denise Gable at  
860-343-5303, ext. 3447 or dgable@gileadcs.org  
if you wish to donate or contribute an item from*

Gilead Community Services is funded in part by



Most of Gilead Community Service programs are CARF-accredited

