

RECOGNIZE COURAGE • CELEBRATE HEROES • STOP THE STIGMA

NOV 9

Missouri Mental Health Champions' Banquet



Thursday, May 7, 2026
Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City, MO

Thank you for joining us for the 18th Annual Missouri Mental Health Champions' Banquet. On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of the Missouri Mental Health Foundation, we're grateful for your presence and support.

Tonight, we honor individuals across Missouri who lead with courage, commitment, and compassion—those who inspire others and make a lasting impact in the areas of mental illness, substance use, and intellectual or developmental disabilities. Congratulations to all this year's nominees, our three Champions, and Lasting Legacy!

This celebration would not be possible without you. Thank you for helping us continue our mission to promote mental health and support recovery, inclusion, and empowerment.

Missouri Mental Health Foundation Board of Directors

Learn more: www.missourimhf.org/leadership-board-members



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Evening Program

May 7, 2026

4:30 p.m. Social Hour Atrium
Director's Creativity Showcase Exhibit (*artwork for sale*)
Silent Auction

6:00 p.m. Welcome and Introductions.....Banquet Hall
Katie Andrews, Executive Director, MMHF

Invocation
Rev. Trevor Dancer

Dinner Served

6:30 p.m. Close of Silent Auction and Artwork Sale

7:00 p.m. Opening Remarks
Katie Andrews, Executive Director, MMHF
Jonce Chidister, MMHF Board President

Recognition of the Award Nominees
Rod Smith, Master of Ceremonies

2026 Mental Health Champions' Award Presentations
Matt Chinn – Substance Use Disorder
Brandon Borders – Developmental/Intellectual Disabilities
Stephanie Robinson – Mental Illness

Lasting Legacy Award Presentation
Brent McGinty

Closing Remarks

DCS 2026 Winners

Explore the Director's Creativity Showcase!

The Missouri Mental Health Foundation invites individuals living with mental illness, substance use disorders, or developmental/intellectual disabilities to share their talent through art.

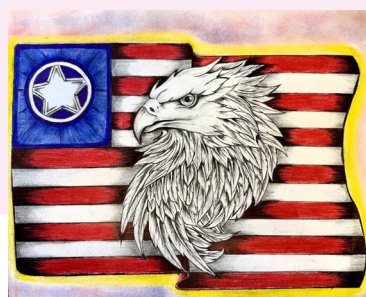
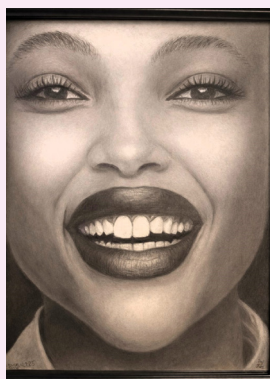


Director's
Creativity
Showcase

All forms—painting, sculpture, photography, and more—are welcome. Each submission is celebrated, with the chance to be judged, sold, and featured in our **virtual gallery** and **statewide traveling exhibit**.

This is more than an art contest. It's a platform for self-expression, healing, and changing perceptions. We encourage individuals and professionals alike to get involved and help amplify these powerful voices.

SUBMIT YOUR ART. SHARE YOUR STORY. INSPIRE OTHERS.



Learn More About
the Showcase

Missouri is where we work. Missourians are who we serve.

HBS is a bipartisan advocacy firm with deep roots in Missouri and offices across the country. Our Jefferson City team works with businesses, associations, nonprofits, and communities to help them get things done at the state Capitol and beyond. From regulatory issues to coalition building, we help clients understand the process, build the right relationships, and achieve results.



*Proud to support the Missouri Mental Health Foundation
and the 2026 Mental Health Champions.*

An aerial photograph of the Missouri State Capitol building, featuring its prominent dome and classical architecture, situated along the Mississippi River. The surrounding area includes green spaces, other buildings, and a bridge in the distance.

HBS

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The Missouri Primary Care Association extends our sincere gratitude to the Missouri Mental Health Foundation for their outstanding efforts in raising awareness of mental health issues and battling the stigma associated with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and substance use disorders.



MPCA also congratulates Missouri Behavioral Health Council CEO, Brent McGinty, for his Lasting Legacy Award. Brent's leadership and enduring commitment to advancing behavioral health in Missouri exemplifies the very spirit of this honor—demonstrating a career defined by service, collaboration, and a deep belief in integrated, accessible care for all.





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Meet the MHC Judges

Bianca Farr

Midwest Special Needs Trust

Bianca Farr, MSW, LCSW is the Executive Director of Midwest Special Needs Trusts (MSNT), a non-profit organization with a proud and distinct history of administering special needs trusts for individuals with disabilities. Graduating from the University of Missouri - Columbia with a BA in psychology and master's in social work, Bianca devoted her career to enhancing the quality of life for people of all abilities. Her experience includes over 22 years in state government as a mental health professional working with individuals/families with disabilities as well as policy development for behavioral health programs. She works closely with the MSNT Board of Trustees to oversee the strategic direction and objectives of the organization; giving families the tools to access a better future. No one can predict the future, but proper planning can offer families some hope and security. With careful planning and foresight, families can help ensure that their loved one has the financial resources needed to live a comfortable and full life. You can follow MSNT on Facebook and/or LinkedIn @msnt4u.



Jonce Chidister

Dalton, Mowrer and Chidister, LLP

Jonce Chidister is an attorney and current Partner with Dalton, Mowrer, and Chidister, LLP. He previously served as the Dunklin County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, an attorney for the Dunklin County Juvenile Office, and worked with the Missouri Public Defender's Office, 35th Judicial District as an Assistant Public Defender. He also represents the interests of children in child abuse and neglect cases as a Guardian Ad Litem, serves as the current Board President for the Cotton Boll Sheltered Workshop/Cotton Boll Handicapped Housing Group Home and serves as the Board Vice-President for the Bootheel Youth Museum.



Dawn Matthews

National Alliance on Mental Illness Missouri

Dawn Matthews has served as the Director of Operations for National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Missouri since 2017, overseeing processes that advance mental health education programs statewide. Dawn holds a Bachelor's degree in Human Environmental Science and a Master's degree in Public Administration and is committed to promoting community well-being and mental health in Missouri.



Patty Henry

Former MMHF Executive Director

Patty Henry retired in 2020 after serving 37 years in the mental health field. Prior to her retirement, she served nine years as the Executive Director of the Missouri Mental Health Foundation, one year as the Business Manager for the Missouri Institute of Mental Health and 27 years with the Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH), retiring from the State of Missouri in 2007. During her tenure with DMH, she served as the Director of Administration, Department Budget Director, Budget Analyst, and various other positions. Family is first for Patty and her husband of 41 years, Dale. They have one surviving son, AJ, and his wife, Mallary, of Kansas City and lost their oldest son, Jeremy, in 2016, who lived with substance use disorders and mental illness. They also have six grandchildren. She enjoys her retirement years spending time with family and friends, attending grandchildren's activities, traveling, reading, and volunteer opportunities.



Brendon Steenbergen

Missouri Coalition for Recovery Support Providers (MCRSP)

Brendon Steenbergen was raised on a cattle farm in Russellville, Missouri, and has worked in nonprofits and fundraising for 20 years in varying capacities for the University of Missouri, Columbia College, the University of Washington, the Diabetes Research Institute Foundation, and now MCRSP. Brendon is an active member of the Fairview United Methodist Church in Columbia, is an avid gardener and sports fan, as well as a terrible golfer. He authored the book "Respectable Roughnecks" about the 1960 Missouri Tigers Football team that was a disputed national champion. Brendon's goal for MCRSP is to help it become the leading voice and resource for addiction recovery efforts in Missouri. Brendon lives in Columbia with his wife Dr. Mary Amanda Haskins, professor of Health Sciences at Stephens College and their twin three-year old sons, Freddy and Phillip who are responsible for his perpetual look of exhaustion.



Jennifer Higginbotham

Independence Center

Jennifer Higginbotham is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and currently the Chief Program Officer at Independence Center. This center is a community-based non-profit for adults living with serious and persistent mental illnesses. Jennifer received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Millikin University and a Master's in Social Work from Washington University. Jennifer was introduced to the Independence Center as a practicum student and became passionate about their Clubhouse Model approach. Jennifer is a member of the Faculty for Clubhouse Development and is on the Advisory Council for Clubhouse International. Jennifer participates in the Missouri Integrated Behavioral Health Council (MBHC) and chairs the regional Behavioral Health Network's Adult Services Advisory Board. She is on the Board of Directors of STL Village and Assisi House as well as an advisory board member for Illume Behavioral Health Center for Excellence and Maryville University's BSW program. Jennifer is a recipient of the Mortimer Goodman Mental Health Professional award from NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness) St. Louis.





LASTING LEGACY AWARD RECIPIENT

Brent McGinty

Congratulations to our President & CEO, Brent McGinty, on receiving the Missouri Mental Health Foundation's 2026 Lasting Legacy Award. This honor is truly well deserved and a wonderful recognition of his dedication.



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MBHC leads the development of programs, systems, and resources that strengthen providers statewide, improving access to quality behavioral healthcare for all Missourians.



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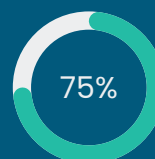
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Contact Us:
Hello@StarlingMissouri.org

Starling is the nonprofit trade association of community providers supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live and work throughout Missouri.



Starling's 120+ community providers represent more than 75% of Missouri's Developmental Disabilities services.

Meet the 2026 Mental Health Champions

Brandon Borders

Brandon Borders is an inspiring teen advocate whose leadership, compassion, and courage are already making a meaningful impact in his community. Brandon uses his lived experience with a developmental disability to promote acceptance, inclusion, and understanding for others with disabilities and mental health needs.

Brandon has demonstrated remarkable courage as a community advocate. He spoke directly with state senators at a community meeting to advocate for the preservation of local services funded through property taxes, while highlighting the importance of continued support for individuals with developmental disabilities. His advocacy efforts have earned him two SB40 Spotlight Award nominations, recognizing his individual leadership and his commitment to service.

Diagnosed with autism, Brandon has faced many challenges related to emotional regulation, communication, and navigating environments that are not always designed to meet his needs. Through self-reflection, perseverance, and growing self-acceptance, he has developed strong emotional awareness and effective self-advocacy skills. He is widely recognized as a compassionate leader among his peers, openly sharing his journey toward understanding his emotions and advocating for his needs while encouraging others to seek support. His willingness to speak honestly has inspired his peers at Kirksville High School to take a more active role in their own self-advocacy and educational planning.

Brandon remains actively engaged in programs that promote independence and inclusion, including Boy Scouts of America and Special Olympics Missouri, where he builds leadership skills while uplifting others. With aspirations to work in human services or as a paraprofessional, Brandon is already laying the foundation for a bright future dedicated to supporting others.

Through his advocacy, empathy, and determination, Brandon Borders exemplifies the spirit of a Missouri Mental Health Champion. His voice, leadership, and commitment to inclusion are helping build a more understanding and supportive community for all.



Matt Chinn

Matt Chinn is a dedicated advocate for recovery, wellness, and mental health awareness whose experience has become a catalyst for meaningful change across central Missouri. An individual in long-term recovery from substance use disorder, Matt has transformed personal loss, accountability, and perseverance into action that uplifts individuals, families, and his entire community.

Matt's journey to recovery followed significant hardship, including the loss of his career, strained relationships, and run-ins with the law. A graduate of the Cole County Treatment Courts, he embraced recovery and rebuilt his life with honesty, humility, and determination. Since his recovery date of June 18, 2019, Matt has remained committed to openly sharing his story to challenge the stigma surrounding addiction and encourage others to seek help.

A central part of Matt's recovery has been physical fitness, which he views as deeply connected to mental wellness. What began as a personal coping strategy became a powerful act of advocacy when Matt pledged to run 20 miles a day for an entire month to raise funds for a friend living with serious mental illness. That effort evolved into the Capital City Race, Jefferson City, Missouri's first half marathon dedicated to mental health awareness. Now entering its fourth year, the annual race brings together hundreds of participants and community partners, raising funds to support local Treatment Courts, provide meals for individuals in recovery, and spread suicide awareness.

In addition to his advocacy work, Matt is a personal trainer and Downtown Fitness gym owner, where he creates an environment that prioritizes both physical and emotional well-being. He speaks openly with clients and community members about recovery, mental health, and self-care, using vulnerability to build trust and connection. He also serves in leadership roles within Alcoholics Anonymous and co-hosts The Not So Perfect Podcast, where conversations around recovery and mental health continue beyond traditional spaces.

Matt leads by example. He is often the "first one there" and "the last to leave." Through action, advocacy, and unwavering commitment to helping others, Matt Chinn exemplifies what it means to be a Missouri Mental Health Champion.



Stephanie Robinson

Stephanie Robinson is a powerful voice for hope, recovery, and resilience across Missouri. She serves as Executive Director of National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Southwest Missouri, where her leadership is grounded in empathy, authenticity, and firsthand understanding of mental illness. Stephanie has transformed profound personal challenges into meaningful advocacy. She has twice served as a keynote speaker at the NAMI Missouri Annual Conference and continues to use her voice to inspire recovery, resilience, and understanding.



Diagnosed with anxiety, panic disorder, and agoraphobia, Stephanie spent 16 years homebound, much of that time confined to her bedroom. Through determination and courage, she sought tools for recovery to rebuild her life and emerged as a leader in mental health advocacy. Today, she is known for her openness in sharing her journey. She speaks frequently in the community and media, tirelessly offering hope to others and reducing mental health stigma through education and connection.

Under her leadership, NAMI Southwest Missouri has expanded access to mental health services, strengthened suicide prevention efforts, and fostered collaboration with law enforcement, courts, and community partners. Stephanie oversees the Hope Center in Springfield, Missouri, a peer-run drop-in center that supports recovery and independence for individuals living with mental health conditions. She also played a key role in the development of Eden Village, a community of tiny homes for chronically homeless individuals with disabilities, and spearheaded the Neon Night 5K to raise awareness and funds for suicide prevention.

Driven by personal loss and lived experience, Stephanie remains deeply committed to creating a world where mental health conditions are understood, supported, and free from stigma. Stephanie's collaboration with city councils, law enforcement, courts, and community organizations demonstrates her ability to unite diverse groups. Her leadership, advocacy, and compassion exemplify what it means to be a Missouri Mental Health Champion.

2026 Lasting Legacy Award

Brent McGinty

CEO Missouri Behavioral Health Council

Brent McGinty is a leader in the behavioral health field from Jefferson City, Missouri. He studied history and political science at Missouri Southern State University before earning a Master's in Public Administration at the University of Missouri.

Brent originally started a career in local government, taking various positions in Columbia, Mexico, Joplin, and Maysville. Searching for more family geographic stability with a new baby led him to stints in the Missouri Senate and Department of Mental Health.

While working for the State, Brent was inspired by the mission-driven, collaborative approach at the Missouri Behavioral Health Council. Brent joined the Council team in 2012 as the CEO/President.

Brent is driven by the theory that by treating the mind and body as one and making quality behavioral healthcare available to all who need it, Missourians will genuinely thrive.





"What Mental Health needs is more sunlight, more candor and more unashamed conversation."

-Glenn Close

**Congratulations to Brandon Borders,
Matt Chinn, and Stephanie Robinson
the 2026 Mental Health Champions.**

**The courage that has helped you
navigate through life's challenges is a
great example to all of us of strength
and perseverance.**

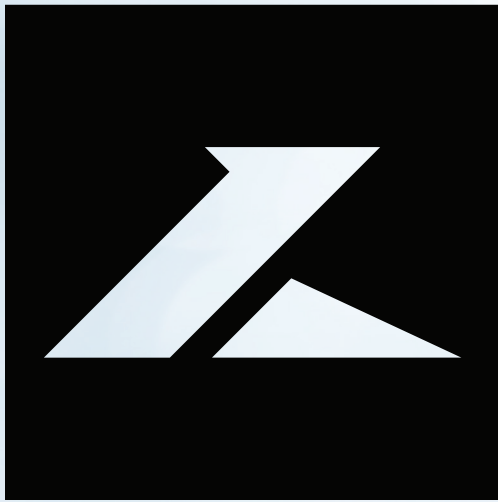


Mark Twain



Behavioral Health

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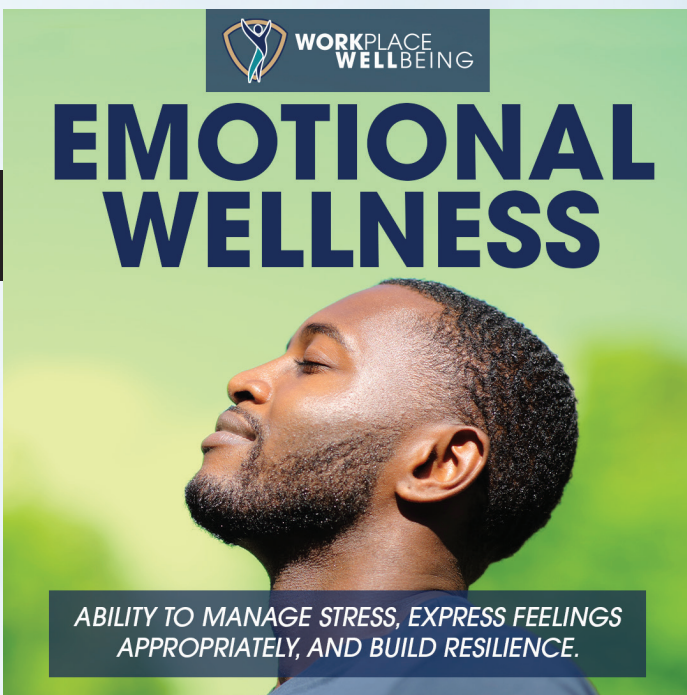
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Meet the 2026 Mental Health Champion *nominees*

Nominees in Developmental Disability



Yolanda Barnes
Sikeston, MO
Southeast Missouri
Residential Services



Lawrence Caldwell
Corder, MO
Northwest Community Services



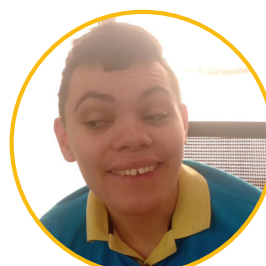
Nathan Cummings
Nixa, MO
CC Links



William "Jacob" Dye
Bolivar, MO
Center for Human Services



Jamie Edmondson
Kirksville, MO
Chation Valley Assoc. / Center
for Human Services



Brandon Feagans
Belton, MO
Center for Human Services



Deborah Godding
Bolivar, MO
Center for Human Services



Sue Huey
Bolivar, MO
Center for Human Services



Haleigh Johnson
Rogersville, MO
CC Links



Keishaun Jones
Jefferson City, MO
Center for Human Services



David Lind
California, MO
Vantage Supported Living



David McMillian
Chilhowee, MO
Center for Human Services



Steven Neubert
Columbia, MO
Woodhaven



Daniel Pyle
Sedalia, MO
Center for Human Services



Kelly Ray
Carrollton, MO



Regan Spargo
Springfield, MO
Abilities First, The Next Step



Jason Younger
Troy, MO
Community Opportunities

Nominees in Mental Illness



Janae Banks
Kansas City, MO
Sparkle of Hope
Cleaning Foundation



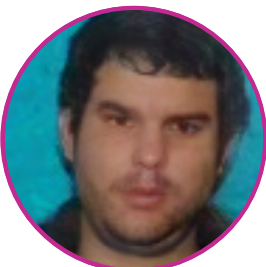
Malicka Crandall
Joplin, MO



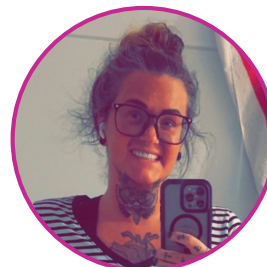
Kayn Fry
Mexico, MO
Arthur Center - Hope Center



Spring Jones
Republic, MO
Abilities First



Zachary Moffett
Kirksville, MO
Center for Human Services
and Chariton Valley Assoc.



Tabatha Paxton
Independence, MO
University Health



Lindsey Reed
St. Charles, MO
FACT



Robert Richey
Jefferson City, MO
Cole County
Public Administrator



Danielle Rose
Florissant, MO
Independence Center



Javier Sarmiento
Farmington, MO
SMMHC.



Rita Tesson
Farmington, MO
SMMHC



Dana Thornhill
Bolivar, MO
Easterseals Midwest

Nominees in Substance Use Disorder



Molly Adams
Dover, MO
HCC Network



John Bartholomew
Anderson, MO
Renewal Counseling Solutions



Jason Barton
Bonne Terre, MO



Eleanor Byrd
Festus, MO
Chestnut Health Systems



Michael Callahan
Jefferson City, MO
19th Judicial Circuit,
State of Missouri



Kayn Fry
Mexico, MO
Arthur Center



Scott Fulkerson
Piedmont, MO
FCC Behavioral Health
SUD Clinic



Lora Hardin
Nixa, MO



Carol Martin
Sedalia, MO



Bobby Morrison
Richland, MO
Central Ozarks
Medical Center



Andreas Prince
Florissant, MO
Preferred Family Healthcare



Shawn Russell
Sedalia, MO
Recovery Lighthouse



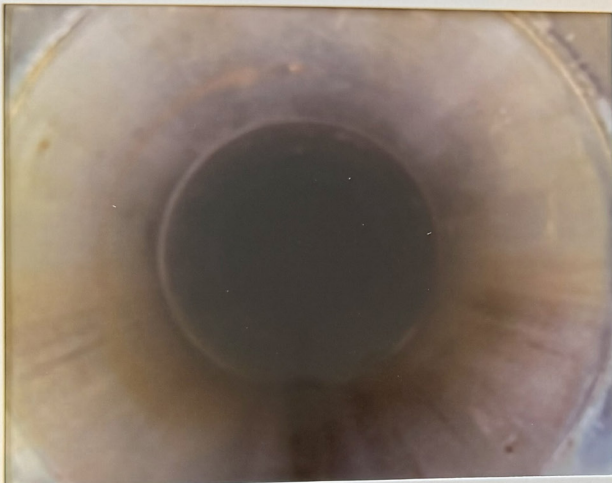
Dale Smith
Popular Bluff, MO
Family Counseling Center



Rachel Turner
Mexico, MO
Mental Health Connect



Jacob Ward
Popular Bluff, MO
FCC Behavioral Health



Addiction vs. Recovery - Walking Into the Light
2026 Director's Creativity Showcase award winner



Congratulations to the 2026 Mental Health Champions!

Molina Healthcare is proud to support the Missouri Mental Health Foundation. Thank you for your dedication and hard work to positively impact the lives of individuals living with mental illness, developmental disabilities and substance use disorders.





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Center for Human Services is a non-profit organization serving over **10,000** people of all ages in nearly **50** counties across Missouri. Our primary services help individuals develop their skills to overcome physical, mental, and financial challenges.



Service Coordination

Case management services for individuals from birth through the adult lifespan. We connect clients to the support they need to thrive.



Family & Child Development

Services starting from prenatal to age 5 through Early Head Start, Head Start, Missouri First Steps, and privately paid preschool.



Residential Services

Housing options for people with disabilities. Our programs value individual choices, encourage independence, and promote inclusion.



Employment Services

Assists those with disabilities find fulfilling employment through job coaching, resume building, interview skills, and benefits planning.



Community Support Services

Daily, meaningful life experiences and community engagement opportunities for adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities.



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Intensive Residential
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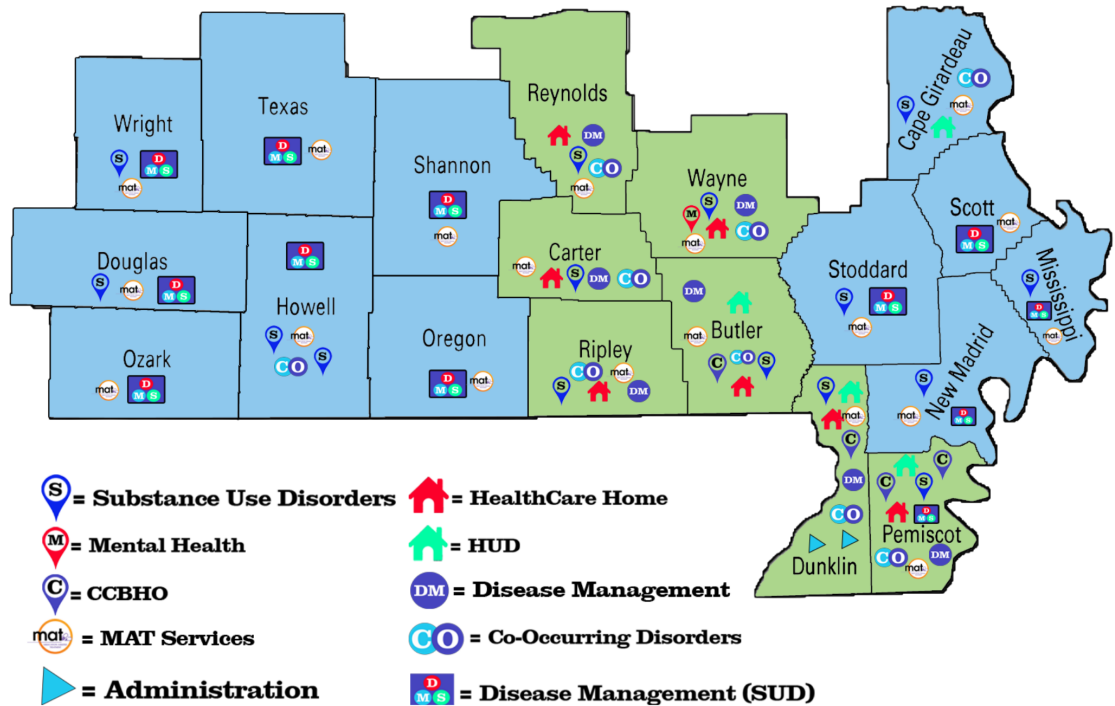
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As our area's largest and most comprehensive behavioral healthcare provider, Ozark Center provides comprehensive behavioral health services to children, adults and families in Southwest Missouri and the Four State area.



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DMH Public Affairs Specialists Team
Donna Weber
Ella Daniel
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Indigo The Salon
ITSD - DMH
Jacque Christmas
Jefferson Bank
Jen's Get Fit Group
Joan Hatch
Joe's Market
Jonce Chidister
Joplin Greenhouse
Joyce Steinman
Julie Boeckman

Kansas City Royals	Ricky Voyles
KC Current	Rita Luebbering
Kendra Scott	Riversong Spa
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Margaritaville Lake Resort	Sheila Kliethermes
Mary Tomblinson Gordon	Sight and Sound Theater
Matt and Jordyn Hebisen	Sophia Kroll
Mid America Bank	Springfield Cardinals
Mid Mo Water Solutions	St. Louis Cardinals
Mid-Mo Catfishing Guide Service	St. Louis Union Station
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Missy Wood	Stark Caverns
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Nothing Bundt Cakes	Tallow Bee Natural Products
O'Reilly's	Tan Club
Otke Construction	Target
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PaPPos Pizzeria - Osage Beach	Texas Roadhouse - Joplin
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Petland	Tolson
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A special thank you...

On behalf of the staff and planning committee, thank you for attending the 18th Annual Mental Health Champions' Banquet. We're grateful for your presence and support in celebrating the inspiring individuals recognized tonight. A heartfelt thank you to our incredible sponsors, your generosity makes this event possible. To the planning committee and event volunteers, your dedication and hard work brought this evening to life, and we truly appreciate everything you've done.

2026 Mental Health Champions' Banquet Planning Committee:

Shyla Brauch

Emily Loech

Vickie Epple

Karen Powers

Debra Walker

Janeane Krongos

Rachel Plaggenberg

Stacey Peters

Kim Stock

Kelsie Spears

Briana Rivera-McHugh

We'd also like to give special thanks to the Missouri Department of Mental Health for your continued partnership and support.

Thank you for being here!

Missouri Mental Health Foundation Staff



Katie Andrews
Executive Director

Sheila Kliethermes
Project Specialist

Jordyn Hebisen
Community Engagement

Hannah Malzner
Administrative Assistant

Thank you for attending the 18th annual Mental Health Champions Banquet!

If you know of an individual eligible for this award, we encourage you to submit a nomination for the 2027 Mental Health Champions' Award – nominations will be accepted beginning October 1, 2026. Follow us on social media or subscribe to our newsletter for announcements!



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