

# ACA-NY

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June 2013

## Upcoming Events

June	<b>New Board Members!</b>
October	<b>Anniversary Event</b> -Held in the Western region
November	<b>Networking/Professional Development events</b> -Downstate, Central, Upstate

**Watch your e-mail for upcoming event information!**

## Last Chance!

We have received your feedback and it was very helpful in determining how we can better serve you. We would like to hear from everyone so please complete the member survey by July 15th!

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1VUUHEHt3Zh\\_iD6Q-bxDhugKJ8FQrIbnfgXormV\\_YIAc/viewform?pli=1](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1VUUHEHt3Zh_iD6Q-bxDhugKJ8FQrIbnfgXormV_YIAc/viewform?pli=1)

## Advocacy Tips

Bring a friend/colleague. They can provide support, help you explain the issues, and demonstrate to the legislator a wider support for the issue at stake.

Help your legislator understand what counseling is. We are a fairly new profession and multiple professions provide counseling. They might not know what makes us unique.

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Counselingny.org



# ACA-NY and Counseling Awareness Month NAMI Walks



## Rochester



The month of April was dedicated to bringing awareness of the field of counseling. In honor of Counseling Awareness Month, ACA-NY created teams that participated in National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) walks in Rochester, NY and New York City. NAMI advocates for access to services, treatment, supports and research within the mental health field (NAMI, 2013). Together the teams raised \$1200 that will go to providing free mental health services to those in need. Thank you to everyone who supported our team or joined us for this event!



## New York City



## We Did It So Can You!

Get involved in ACA-NY  
Support your profession right here in your area.

We have representatives and members from all regions

# New Leadership

The results are in!

We are excited to announce the new executive board for ACA-NY in the 2013-2014 year.

President- Heather Robertson

Graduate Student Chair- Whitney Riley

President-Elect- Barbara Rauscher

Downstate Region Chair- Michelle Perepiczka

Past President- Diane Brennan

Central Region Chair- Steve Kassirer

Treasurer- Tracie Swalbach

Western Region Chair- Tami Sullivan

Treasurer Elect- Cassie Fleck

Upstate Region Chair- Thelma Costello

Secretary- Deanna Richards

Communications Co-Chairs- Cassie Fleck &

Legislative & Public Policy Chair- Tara

Jessica Hess

Benincasa

## Meet the President-Elect

Barb Rauscher



Volunteering for Vera House, an agency that assists individuals and families affected by domestic violence and sexual assault, led me out of a long career in broadcasting and into the counseling profession. I earned an MS in Mental Health Counseling from SUNY Oswego in 2008. I work in an adult residential mental health setting. Witnessing how the provision of legal, health and human services affect individuals diagnosed with major mental illnesses and victims struggling with the impact of sexual assault has increased my sensitivity to the laws protecting individual rights and guiding treatment. Serving as ACA-NY's Legislative Advocacy Chair this past year gave me the chance to learn-and share with members- how legislation is created and passed. I strongly encourage ACA-NY members interested in leadership to step forward and into a similarly rewarding opportunity! I look forward to working with ACA-NY as counseling grows stronger and more recognized as a profession.

# Legislative Updates

## NYS Mental Health Legislation

### Exciting News!!!

The following legislative initiatives were to be decided upon by June 20<sup>th</sup>.

S. 4964/A. 7138 - Sponsored by St. Sen. LaValle and Assemblyman Glick and will extend the limited permit limit to 4 years from three by giving mental health counselors an additional year to accrue their 3,000 hours.

S. 5086/A.7225 - This bill is sponsored by St. Sen. LaValle and Assemblyman DenDekker respectively and when passed mental health counselors will be required to accrue 36 contact hours of continuing education in order to renew their licenses every 3 years. NY is only one of four states that do not have a continuing education requirement for license renewal.

S.4977- Sponsored by Sen. Robach requests clarification regarding LMHC's qualifications to diagnose. Will be introduced in the 2014 legislative session.

### **Thanks to all of your efforts....**

The bill to extend limited permit renewals for an additional year and the continuing education bill have PASSED both houses in the NYS Legislature. Next we wait for the Governor's signature. It could take some time, but it is expected that the governor will sign!

Following the Governor's signature, the permit renewal extension will go into effect immediately. The continuing education requirement will be effective in 2017. Professionals will be required to complete 36 hours over a 3-year period in order to renew their licenses.

This is great news for our profession. We are gaining respect and headed in the right direction extend our scope of practice!

We urge you to continue contacting legislators as new bills arise.

# More Updates

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## Medicare

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A new bill has been introduced within the past couple of months. S.562 covers LPCs and MFTs under the same terms, conditions, and pay rates as LCSWs. If your Representative is a Republican ask them to cosponsor a House version of S.562. Also, ask your Senators to cosponsor S.562. Versions of this bill have been passed in both the Senate and House in the past, but unfortunately not at the same time.

There needs to be as many cosponsors as possible.

Some tips for educating your Representative about this issue: Comorbidity costs are 50-60% higher. If we treat Mental Health these costs will go down. The Budget Office does not give credit for savings, so we need our legislators to understand and support this. We may spend money now, but will save in the long run.

## Education

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Another piece of legislation is focusing on improving school counseling programs. Congressman David Loebsack reintroduced the Reducing Barriers to Learning Act in an effort to more adequately address barriers to academic success.

This bill provides that schools will hire Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (including school counselors), increase professional development for school counselors, and focus on coordination of local, state, and federal programs that are oriented toward school counselors.

# Student Spotlight

Emily is a second year master's student in mental health counseling at the University at Buffalo. She recently was selected as a Runner-up in ACA's essay contest for her piece on professional counselors in an advocacy role and public policy initiatives. This piece was published in the May 2013 edition of Counseling Today.



In Emily's words I am excited to begin my internship at Life Transitions Center in Buffalo this coming fall, working primarily with families and children who are coping with serious illnesses or grief. I am interested in working with children and young adults, especially those with issues surrounding trauma. I was recently elected to the board of directors of the Mental Health Association in Niagara County. This community organization does a wonderful job bringing mental health information and resources to individuals and families across the county, and I am so pleased to be a part of it. My outside interests are also my self-care activities, which include playing piano, hiking, reading, and yoga.

## Do you know a successful student?

**Do you know a student who excels both professionally and in the classroom?**

ACA-NY would like to recognize these students! Please email your nominations to Cassandra Fleck, [cflec1@u.brockport.edu](mailto:cflec1@u.brockport.edu) including the student's name, email, and a brief description why you think they deserve recognition.