



MID SHORE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

RESOURCES, GUIDANCE, WHOLENESS, & HOPE

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27th Annual Caliber Awards ceremony celebrates mid-shore behavioral health leaders

Easton, MD – The 27th Annual Caliber Awards was hosted by Mid Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. (MSBH) on May 16th, 2025, at the Temple B'nai Israel in Easton, MD, with catering provided by Royal Oaks Catering. This annual event honors the exceptional work and dedication of community leaders working to strengthen and enhance the behavioral health system across the mid-shore region.

This year's Caliber Awards Ceremony brought together 112 attendees, including behavioral health professionals, community partners, nonprofit leaders, elected officials, and local government representatives from across the mid-shore region. MSBH Chief Executive Officer Katie Dilley opened the event with a warm welcome and expressed her gratitude to all in attendance. In addition to receiving their awards, each honoree was presented with an official citation recognizing their contributions, prepared by the Eastern Shore Delegation.

First to be honored was Lexi Marie Whiteley, who received the Child and Adolescent Advocacy Award for her dedication to supporting young people in behavioral health services. Tamara Stofa was then recognized with the Forensic Mental Health Award for her outstanding contributions to the intersection of behavioral health and the justice system.

Valerie Davis received the Roundtable on Homelessness Award in recognition of her work addressing housing instability and advocating for vulnerable individuals across the mid-shore. Robin Lopez, MHA, was presented with the Adult and Older Adult Behavioral Health Advocacy Award for championing behavioral health services that support adults as they navigate complex systems of care.

The Crisis Intervention Team Award was presented to Chief George Bacorn of the Denton Police Department for his leadership and commitment to diverting individuals from the criminal justice system and connecting them with appropriate behavioral health care.

Several Special Recognition Awards were presented, beginning with Tabitha Groce, who received the Special Recognition: Wellness & Recovery Award for her unwavering service and community impact. Cathy Anderson, CFPS, was honored with the Special Recognition: Advocacy

Award, and Jay Watson, co-host of the Eastern Shore Talk Podcast, received the Special Recognition: Wellness & Recovery Award. Deanna Lewis and Allison Baldwin, CSC-AD, were both recognized with Special Recognition: Advocacy Awards. Amy Thomas, LCPC, and Kaci Madison, MA, CAADC, were honored with Special Recognition: Unsung Hero Awards for their quiet yet powerful contributions. Laura Scrivener, LCSW-C, received the Special Recognition: Veterans Award for her support of those who have served in the military, and Rebecca Hutchison, LCSW-C, was presented with the Special Recognition: Defeating Stigma Award for her commitment to reducing shame and misinformation surrounding mental health within the LGBTQ+ community. Each of these individuals was celebrated for going above and beyond in their roles to support others and strengthen the behavioral health system.

Dr. Michelle Boulden-Hammond, PhD, CMHC, ADT, and Jennifer A. McCreedy, CAC-AD, CPRS, RPS, were both honored with the Interagency and Community Collaboration Award for their exceptional work fostering partnerships across agencies to better serve those in need. Omeaka Jackson, LCPC, received the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Champion Award for advancing inclusive practices and promoting equity in behavioral health.

Kathleen Traversari, LCSW-C, was presented with the Mary Beth Brennaman Award for her unwavering positivity, commitment, and support of both colleagues and clients. Susan Ahlstrom, MS, received the Effective Programming Award for her creative and impactful leadership in For All Seasons's Human Trafficking Awareness Program.

Kristie Elaine Thompson was honored with the Excellence in Substance Use Recovery Award for her remarkable work in supporting individuals on their journey to recovery. Tabitha Groce was also presented with the Recovery Champion Award, celebrating her dedication to lifting up others and sharing hope.

Lisa May, LCSW-C, received the first-ever Bernie Vervin Beacon of Light Award, a new honor created in memory of Bernie Vervin, a cherished member of the MSBH team who passed away in 2024. This award recognizes those who embody Bernie's legacy of compassion, humility, and courage, and who lead with heart while supporting others through meaningful connection and service. During the ceremony, Bernie's son, Joshua, and his wife, Amanda, joined virtually to speak about the new award and share words of gratitude. They thanked the mid-shore community for honoring Bernie's memory in such a meaningful way and for continuing his work by lifting others up and serving with kindness and integrity. Their presence and heartfelt reflections added deep meaning to the tribute, reinforcing the lasting impact Bernie made on all who had the privilege of working with him.

A posthumous Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Bernie Vervin, for his steadfast and lifelong dedication and support to people experiencing homelessness. Bernie left an indelible mark on the many lives he touched through his work as well as his colleagues. Two additional Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented. Katie Schoonover, CPRS, was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award for her nearly three decades of dedicated service to Crossroads Community, Inc., where her leadership in technology, administration, and operations helped build a strong foundation for sustainable growth. Dr. Rob Schmidt, Ed.D, LCPC, NCC, received a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his groundbreaking work in school-based mental health as the Mental Health Coordinator for Talbot County Public Schools and his development of the nationally utilized Risk Identification Suicide Kit (RISK).

Katie Dilley shared the following about the ceremony:

“The 27th Annual Caliber Awards was a truly wonderful day of celebration, partnership, and fellowship. The team at Mid Shore Behavioral Health honored our beloved Bernie Vervin with a posthumous Lifetime Achievement Award and by presenting the newly created Beacon of Light Award in his memory. Gathering during Mental Health Awareness Month was a meaningful way to celebrate wellness, acknowledge the ongoing and growing challenges in mental health, and offer strength and recognition to the many partners and community members doing incredible work.”

Mid Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. (MSBH) is the region’s Core Service Agency charged with continually improving the provision of behavioral health services for residents of Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties through effective coordination of care in collaboration with consumers, their natural support systems, providers, and the community at large.

For more information about MSBH and its work in the mid-shore, visit www.midshorebehavioralhealth.org or call 410-770-4801.



Attendees of the 27th Annual Caliber Awards enjoy lunch courtesy of Royal Oaks Catering.



MSBH CEO Katie Dilley Presents a Lifetime Achievement Award to Katie Schoonover, CPRS.



IMS BH HUB Manager Taylor Garret presents DR Rob Schmidt, Ed. D, LCPC, NCC, with a Lifetime Achievement Award.



MSBH Continuum of Care Housing & Outreach Specialist Jimmy Morris presents the Roundtable on Homelessness Award to Valerie



2The MSBH Team poses for a photo at the conclusion of the 27th Annual Caliber Awards.