2017 saw major changes at MHA which are expected to prepare the organization for future growth and ability to respond to increased need in the mental health arena. New leadership in the operational and financial areas, new positions taken by both long-term employees and new hires, and new strategies to maximize media exposure and community recognition of the crucial services that we provide throughout the region.

Our organization celebrated 60 years of service with a tremendously successful gala event in the fall which now looks to be an annual fund raiser for the organization. This should be just the broadest manifestation of a renewed and concerted attempt to re-engage with past stakeholders, from former Board members and staff, to members of our auxiliary organization, to both annual and planned giving donors who have not felt connected for the last several years.

Leading the charge in this campaign will be the stories of successes that our front-line employees witness and are an integral part of every day. From community partnerships with other like-minded organizations, to fulfilled educational events which help to remove the stigma of mental illness, to the 8 year old girl who took smiling selfies with her father at a daddy/daughter dance just one year after attempting to take her own life. Each success demonstrates the importance of what we do every day, and each is a reason to celebrate.

In 2018, we hope you will choose to join with us as we tell our stories. The momentum behind recognizing the need for quality and accessible mental health care treatment is building. To see why, one need only turn on the news or read the paper. Sharing of your time, talent, and treasure is what allows our work to continue, and we appreciate all that you do.

The MHA Bell Society was created in September of 2017 to recognize individuals who have included our organization as a beneficiary in their will or trust. Thanks to those with this long-term focus, we have actively sought and found ways to accept a variety of non-cash assets along with traditional financial assets through these planned gifts. In addition, our organizational letterhead now includes a line that reads:

MHA is now able to accept gifts through your will or trust!
From the CEO

Dear friends,

It has been such a gratifying experience to be so warmly welcomed to the role of CEO in June of 2017 after 23 years of serving MHA. This organization has seen tremendous leadership over the 60 years that we have been in south central Kansas, and I am truly honored to have the opportunity to help steer MHA at a time when mental health issues are receiving dramatically increased visibility and awareness in the national media.

During 2017, we concentrated on raising our profile in order to be a part of that nation-wide conversation. This included a concerted and on-going push on social media, as well as building strong relationships with local journalists to be included in newspaper, radio and television coverage about stories related to our mission. We continued to celebrate our anti-stigma campaign, and participated in – and hosted – events to broaden the message about mental health.

Without doubt, our largest and most successful such event was our 60th Anniversary Diamonds are Forever Gala! While originally planned to raise awareness of MHA in the Wichita community, the financial success of the event was a true testament to the hard work of our amazing staff. It also served as further proof of the recognition among our stakeholders of the importance of the work that we do every day. We thank you for your support, and hope to see even more of you at what will now be an annual event, planned next for November 3, 2018 at Abode venue!

While we celebrate these many successes, there is no question of the continued need for our on-going work. Suicide rates in Kansas are increasing at a rate 20% faster than the national average. And the opioid crisis continues to devastate families and communities across the heartland of our country. In the Wichita metro area alone in 2017, an estimated 150,000 people choose to forgo treatment for a mental health concern, many due to fear about how they might be stigmatized by their friends, family, or co-workers. This is a truth that MHA exists to overcome, and with your help, we can and will succeed.

Looking ahead to 2018, my first and foremost goal will be to remain true to our mission of providing education, prevention, and treatment services that affect mental health to the south central Kansas region. Like any non-profit, our ability to broaden our reach will be dictated by need and resources, but we remain confident in the passion of our staff and other stakeholders to help us in reaching our goals. We will speak openly and honestly about mental illness and mental health, secure in the knowledge that this will prompt a similar transparency in the wider community as well. And we will not miss an opportunity to thank you for joining us on this vital journey to Empower Lives and Impact Community. Thank you so much for all that you do, and we look forward to continuing the conversation in 2018!

Sincerely,

Mary Jones
2017 Board of Directors

Chairperson: Fritz Robinson
Chairperson-Elect: Brenden O’Bryhim
Treasurer: Arnold Hudspeth
Secretary: Marilyn Whipple
Members: Brent Buller, Mike Blake, Lin Harris

Judy Hess
Barbara Huff
Charles McClellan
Wesley Nyberg
Lisa Skaff
William Tretbar
JoVeta Wescott
Adult Services

The Supported Employment Department was able to add four new staff during 2017 to work on a research project funded by the Social Security Administration. The grant is intended to help those with disabilities to find employment.

Case Management’s ability to surround consumers with resources and supports reduced hospital rates in 2017. Our Accountable Care Organization (ACM) exceeded outcomes regarding employment and moving consumers into independent living, thanks largely to partnerships with area medical providers. The result has been the creation of the new position of Adult Care Manager. Finally, we are thrilled - along with Children's Services, Employment, Residential, and Outpatient areas - to have received our 3-year CARF accreditation.

Outpatient Counseling

Our counseling area has expanded our school-based therapy program, which has been a huge success in providing much-needed mental health services, while removing barriers such as transportation, and conflicting schedules of family members. As is part of our mission, it further allows us to continue meeting the client where they are, both mentally and physically. A number of new partnerships were developed this year, including USD 259, Select PCP Groups, VCBH, the Matrix Center, and the Derby police department. One new partnership, with MTM Services, has provided the ability to improve our intake process, and reduce no-show rates. All of these partnerships increase our visibility and credibility throughout the south central Kansas community, maximizing our ability to care for our clients and their families.

Aging Services

MHA’s Aging Services received funding from the Corporation for National and Community Services to begin the RSVP Program in Sumner County. The program gives seniors (age 55+) the opportunity to volunteer in their communities, providing mentoring, tutoring and assistance in classrooms, as well as transportation for non-emergency medical appointments and meal delivery.

The Senior Companion volunteers provided respite and companionship to 156 frail and/or home-bound seniors, allowing 97% of them to remain in their homes. The MKSO Program served 225 people, assisting them to age in-place for as long as it safe to do so.
Children's Services

Through a partnership with Mulvane, Compeer increased program viability while working with a community with a high prevalence of youth substance abuse. The wait-list for the Lunch Buddies program is historically low, group training for volunteers is being done as needed, and volunteer retention is up to 80%.

In addition to serving over 30 youth through this program, Wellington held a Volunteer Appreciation event which was the first time that all of the matches were able to get together at once.

Our school-based prevention program served over 2,000 youth in 2017, helped in part by a mini-grant from the Boys & Girls Club which allowed us to create a successful MLK Day event. We also partnered with Wichita Children’s Home to give Safe Place presentations, and expanded the program into four new schools.

For the grant year ending June 30, 2017, MHA’s Fatherhood program enrolled 102 new fathers, 82 of which completed the training. In all, 165 fathers were served through case management, employment services, mentoring, and/or family engagement activities. The program also established a strong relationship with the 18th Judicial Court Trustee’s Office, which has been instrumental in motivating fathers to secure employment and pay child support.

Residential Care

A highlight of 2017 was that our veteran's housing - known as Emporia House - served 304 veterans during 2017 that would otherwise have been homeless. Our partnership with the Robert J. Dole VA Medical Center remains strong. Our senior housing apartments, for the low-income population over the age of 62, remained full throughout 2017. And our Crisis Home, with only six beds, served 52 people this year. These individuals are referrals from COMCARE, and are coming off of hospitalization, would be otherwise be without a home as well.

The two group homes, with 15 beds each, and 41 people enrolled over the course of the year. 13 of those were also enrolled in our employment services.

With regard to serving those who remain homeless in the Wichita area, our Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHIJ) enrolled 69 individuals during 2017. Part of this program, referred to as SOAR, is designed to increase access to Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Income for those who are homeless and have a mental health or co-occurring disorder. During 2017, 15 individuals successfully got access to SOAR case management. Another 10 were served by our supported housing funds, and eight more received Tenant-based Rental Assistance through HUD for market-rate housing.
Please help us thank our 2017 Bell Bash sponsors!!

Not many non-profit organizations have been around for 60 years. It takes a vital mission, dedicated staff, and businesses who understand and support what we do each and every day. The following businesses and individuals provided sponsorships for our 60th Anniversary Diamonds Are Forever event. Can we count on YOU to be on this list next time?
The Mental Health Association of South Central Kansas Bell Society

"A man has at least made a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants trees under whose shade he knows full well he will never sit." This phrase has been co-opted, modified, adapted and paraphrased innumerable times since it was first written by noted Quaker author D. Elton Trueblood in his 1951 book *The Life We Prize*. It was even ascribed to an anonymous "ancient Greek philosopher" in 1993 by a US Congressman. But no matter who appropriates it and how they alter it, the underlying truth has remained undeniable for the last 67 years, and will remain so for as long as even one of us cares enough to put the greater need of society ahead of their own material gain.

The MHA Bell Society celebrates those rare and exceptional persons who have informed us over the years that they would like to plant such a tree. Their investment, given through wills or trusts, demonstrates their final and most earnest desire to ensure that mental health care will remain accessible for generations to come. Their names are listed below, and we invite you to join this dedicated group as we seek to build a foundation of care that honors our last 60 years in service to Kansas, and anxiously anticipates many more decades to come.

Brent and Christina Buller
Mark Davidson
Mark and Heather Egan
Sheila Fox
Michael and Kathy Frime
Judy Hess
Arnold and Freda Hudspeth
Barbara Huff
Jennifer Jay
Eric and Jill Litwiller
Charles McClellan
Rose Mary and Bernard Mohr
Wes Nyberg
Brendon and Iris O'Bryhim
Laura and Cory Rainwater
Susan Reimer

Fritz and Jennifer Robinson
David and Roberta Schmidt
Steve and Lynn Schmidt
William Tretbar
JoVeta Wescott
Marilyn and Randy Whipple
If you haven't been involved with MHA for a few years, then you've missed out...on a LOT!

A new CEO. New programs. New excitement. New media attention. But one thing hasn't changed, and it never will: our commitment to ensure that everyone in south central Kansas has easy access to high-quality and affordable mental health care.

It is our mission and our purpose.

And we invite you to join us!

**HOW??**

* **Keep in touch!** By ensuring that we have your current telephone numbers, email and mailing addresses, we can keep you informed of events, and we'll send you our newsletters so you always know what's happening in the area of mental health. Please also join our quickly-growing audience on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

* **Volunteer!** If you have the gift of time, call us at 316.685.1821 to learn how your passion for mental health can be used to assist those who are struggling right here, right now.

* **Serve!** We are always interested in talking to those who might want to serve on committees, in event-planning capacities, or on our Board of Directors.

* **Organize!** The "Friends of MHA" may be making a comeback, and we'd love to talk to former members of our auxiliary organization about what that could mean.

* **Advocate!** It is crucial for MHA to have opportunities to raise awareness of mental health concerns within your civic, religious, professional and social circles. If you belong to a group that needs a speaker, let us know and we will happily provide a subject-matter expert to you at no cost to speak at your event.

* **Invest!** Your annual gifts to MHA allow us to fulfill our mission. A simple electronic form is available on our website at MHASCK.org

* **Leave a legacy!** The MHA Bell Society was created in September 2017, and is reserved for those who have included us as beneficiaries in their will or trust or have made a commitment to do so.