

RIBBON-CUTTING AT EDGEWATER PRIMARY CARE:

Community partners, politicians and local citizens gathered on November 29 for a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tours at Edgewater Primary Care, located at 3535 Broadway in Gary. A second Edgewater Primary Care site is located at 1212 Broad Street in Griffith.

“The focus is to treat the whole patient and make it more convenient for patients to get the care they need,” said Dr. Danita Johnson Hughes. Edgewater’s goal is to consider all mental health and physical health conditions at the same time.

Both facilities will offer primary care services such as health promotion, disease prevention, health maintenance, counseling, patient education, diagnosis and treatment of acute chronic illnesses. In addition to the customary primary care professionals, both facilities will be staffed with behavioral health professionals.



GIVE TO EDGEWATER:

Support Our Programs for Men, Women and Children

Edgewater Systems is a nonprofit community mental health center serving Northwest Indiana’s most vulnerable people and families.

Edgewater remains committed to providing comprehensive healthcare and family support services including family and youth counseling; addiction and dependency treatment; crisis stabilization and management; adult residential services; and primary care services.

This past year, Edgewater helped hundreds of adults, youths, and families improve their quality of life. Your financial support allows us to continue offering vital services and promoting balanced health in our communities.

Please make your contribution payable to Ambassadors for Edgewater. You can mail your contribution to the address below. We will send you in return an acknowledgment letter you can use for tax purposes.



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Gary, IN 46402

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WINTER 2016

BALANCED Health



STOP THE STIGMA OF MENTAL ILLNESS

The Ambassadors for Edgewater invite you to attend the
9TH ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS LUNCHEON

SAVE THE DATE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2017
Avalon Manor in Merrillville

From our family to yours,
May your holidays be filled with
light and hope.

Happy Holidays

from Edgewater’s Staff and Board of Directors



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**DR. DANITA JOHNSON HUGHES,
PRESIDENT AND CEO**

“If you are always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be.”

– Maya Angelou

As we bring 2016 to a close, I would like to take this moment to reflect on how far we have come as an Edgewater family.

This year, we saw the organization expand its delivery of services to include two primary care offices, located in Gary and Griffith.

This was a major accomplishment for us and I want to thank the Edgewater Board of Directors and our dedicated staff for successfully guiding us through this process.

We’ve also been able to see the fruits of our labor from two other major initiatives: the 2014 opening of Edgewater South Shore Commons – a 60-unit Permanent Supportive Housing Complex - and the 2015 opening of our one-of-a-kind Edgewater Rapid Access Center.

To date, South Shore Commons has provided permanent supportive housing to over 60 adults and 26 children. Edgewater Rapid Access Center has provided crisis services to over 580 adults who otherwise would have ended up in the emergency room or jail.

I am proud to be a part of these successes. Much more work needs to be done to make a positive and lasting impact on our community’s health and wellbeing.

I ask myself why we continue to be innovative and creative even when resources are low and problems seem insurmountable.

I am comforted by Edgewater’s mission to “contribute in a positive way to the community’s quality of life and to the achievement of the client’s life goals”. And I am inspired by the late great poet Maya Angelou’s quote at the beginning of this letter.

So here’s my two cents to all those we serve. Your life goal is your “normal”, however you define normal. In 2017, we’ll be here to help you be amazing and achieve your goals.

CONSUMER SUCCESS STORY:

I came to South Shore Commons four years ago from A Safe Haven on the west side of Chicago. It was difficult for me to find housing because I didn’t have an income at that time. I went to Safe Haven for shelter but it took me about a month to get a bed because I didn’t have insurance and suffered from seizures. A Safe Haven case manager then helped me find housing here in Indiana.

Once I got to Indiana, I was able to get the help I needed. I was able to get a primary care physician, a psychiatrist and a therapist.

Edgewater assisted me with getting medical benefits and, most of all, housing. After I got housing, I was really able to work on my physical and mental health care needs.

Through Edgewater, I learned how to develop coping skills and attended support groups within the building. With the help of Edgewater and South Shore Commons, we were able to get NA groups, which cater to people with substance abuse issues.



The groups made me realize that I wanted to help other people through community outreach and volunteering. I joined the Tenant Council in January, 2016. I help organize potlucks, holiday dinners, back-to-school parties and holiday giveaways for the children.

Through God’s grace, I was able to qualify for Section 8 housing in the building and I moved into my new unit in July. Now I am looking into other housing with more space to raise my grandson.

- Steven H.

STAY CURRENT & CONNECTED:

Keep informed about the latest news and thoughts concerning the healthcare that matters most to you.

- Follow us on Facebook (**Edgewater Systems**)
- Visit our website: **www.edgewatersystems.org**
- Sign up for our e-mail updates: Write to **jstjohn@edgewatersystems.org** to join.



HOW TO BEAT THE HOLIDAY BLUES:

Holiday blues affect more people than you realize. The holidays tend to call up old memories, both good and bad. You naturally think of family members and friends who may no longer be part of your life. Sometimes the holidays trigger sadness or even despair, which we try to overcome or avoid altogether, often through unhealthy habits. But there are things you can do to beat the holiday blues in a healthier way. Remember, it’s the little things that make all the difference and help beat the holiday blues.

• **Reach out** - Don’t go it alone. Meet up with a friend, go to a support group or call someone to talk. Not only will you help yourself, you may be helping someone else as well.

• **Count your blessings** – Being grateful for what you have or are able to do is another good way to feel better during the holidays. If you can get around or breathe easy or see the blue sky, you’ve got things to be grateful for.

• **Be of service** – Help someone who may need a friendly smile or a few minutes of your time to listen to them. Volunteering to help others is a great way to beat back the blues. Give what you can to those in need; you can make someone’s load a bit easier.

• **Think happier thoughts** – Focusing on what you’re lacking can throw you into the holiday blues pit. Instead, focus on happier memories and what’s happening right this minute. Depending on how you look at it, the present moment is usually not such a bad a place to be.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

EDGEWATER’S ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS LUNCHEON
May 17, 2017
Avalon Manor, Merrillville, IN

HEALTH AWARENESS DATES

February, 2017
26-3/4 National Eating Disorders Awareness Week

March, 2017
American National Nutrition Month
Self-Harm Awareness Month
15 Kick Butts Day
(Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids)
28 American Diabetes Association Alert Day

April, 2017
Alcohol Awareness Month
Autism Awareness Month
Child Abuse Prevention Month
Stress Awareness Month
3-7 National Youth Violence Prevention Week
7 World Health Day
7 National Alcohol Screening Day

May, 2017
Mental Health Awareness Month
14-20 National Women’s Health Week

June, 2016
12-18 National Men’s Health Week
27 National PTSD Awareness Day

July, 2016
National Minority Mental Health Month

MEET OUR OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS
(FY 2017 July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017)

OFFICERS
CHAIRPERSON:
Shirley P. Thomas, Retired Educator

VICE CHAIR:
Dr. Sharon Johnson-Shirley,
Superintendent, Lake Ridge Schools

TREASURER:
Brad Vosberg, VP, Retail Banking Group
Manager, People’s Bank

SECRETARY:
Attorney Jerome Ezell,
IUN Adjunct Professor, IUN

NEW BOARD MEMBERS
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Partners LLC, Anderson Development, LLC

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Randy Boarden, Regional Sales
Representative, Konica Minolta

Larry Brewer, Owner, South Shore Dance
Alliance

Bernard Carter, Lake County Prosecutor,
Lake County Prosecutors Office

Tracy Williams, Owner, Hinton & Williams
Funeral Home

COMMONWEAL AWARDS PRESENTED AT SPEAKEASY GALA

Over 200 guests attended the Ambassadors’ annual Edgewater Speakeasy Gala on October 14, 2016 to raise much needed funds. The money raised at this event helps us continue to provide services to people in our community experiencing behavioral health challenges, including those who have no way to pay.



***The Commonweal Award for Personal and Professional Leadership** was presented to Dr. Sharron Liggins, Ed.D., M.S.A., R.N. who has been a true advocate in the effort to end homelessness in Northwest Indiana. She is the Regional Chair of the Regional Planning Council Continuum of Care. The award recognizes longstanding contributions that illustrate the priority that the common good should hold over personal or parochial gain.*
From left to right: Dr. Danita Johnson Hughes, Dr. Sharron Liggins and Dr. Sharon Johnson-Shirley.



***The Commonweal Award for Institutional Leadership** was presented to Ivy Tech Community College Gerald I. Lamkin Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center. The award recognizes institutional leadership in promoting the common good in communities faced with difficult and longstanding challenges.*
From left to right: Dr. Kathleen Coley, Cindy Hall, John Davies, Lynette Fulton Driver, Dr. Marlon Mitchell, O’Merriel Butchee, Chancellor Thomas Coley and Dr. Danita Johnson Hughes.



Art Norman, NBC 5 and Laura White.

CONSUMER EXPERIENCE:

“I struggled with maintaining abstinence for many years prior to coming to Turning Point. I have been able to maintain abstinence for over three years with the support of medically assisted treatment and therapy. I worked hard during treatment and I’m now working towards becoming a Peer Support Specialist so I can help others.” - L.C.

“I was recently a patient at your Rapid Access Center. I would like to thank all of the staff for helping me with my opiate addiction. While there, I was able to stop using heroin and they started me on suboxone. I have been clean for six weeks now and am personally grateful for what they did for me.” - Nick T.

5 TIPS FOR A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR:

Looking for a New Year’s Resolution that will really pay off? Taking better care of yourself physically and mentally can make 2017 a healthier and happier year. Here are five things you can do right now to help you get on a better path.

1 Get a check-up to find out how you’re doing right now. Be sure to tell your health care provider about any problems you may be experiencing or any concerns you may have.

2 Take any medications you’ve been prescribed. Follow your doctor’s instructions and take your meds regularly. Let your health care provider know if you’re experiencing problems with your medications or are having trouble getting your prescriptions filled.

3 Ask for help if you’re drinking too much, abusing drugs or smoking. Drinking, smoking or using drugs may bring some relief in the short term, but there are devastating long-term consequences.



4 Eat the healthiest foods you can every single day. Give your body the fuel it needs to be healthy, such as vegetables, fruits, nuts, beans and whole grains. Avoid fried food, which can raise your cholesterol. Watch your salt intake to prevent high blood pressure and heart disease. And go easy on sugar, which can cause diabetes.

5 Make sure you’re getting the exercise you need. Even a short walk every day can result in better overall health and a more positive outlook on life.