



MARCIE'S AWARDS

2024

ABOUT THE MARCIE'S AWARD

Determined to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities, CareLink's founder, Marcella I. Schmoeger, opened CareLink's first program in 1959. More than 60 years later, her vision and philosophy are still the heart of the agency. The Marcie's Award honors her memory and dedication by recognizing CareLink program participants for their self-determination, wellness, and success in recovery.

2024 MARCIE'S AWARD WINNERS

Paul Burch

Sabrina Eggles

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENTS

John Hall

Derek Thomas

Benjamin King

Marcus Zweifil-Guest

Gabriel Potocsky



Congratulations
TO OUR 2024 HONOREES!

MARCIE'S AWARD WINNER

Paul Burch

Paul Burch is enrolled in CareLink's Supported Living Services (SLS) program. He is self-sufficient, independently managing all of his medical and mental health appointments, and maintains his own apartment in the community.

Paul successfully manages his finances and all areas of daily living. He has been a participant with SLS for over two years. During this time, he has never once failed to maintain his apartment, attend meetings with staff, or manage his areas of daily living. One of Paul's main goals since joining SLS has been to rejoin the workforce and he has accomplished this goal.

Paul is a kind person who truly has the desire to help others. He is not only a peer mentor, but also enrolled in college courses to advance his career in the mental health field. Paul aims to merge his lived experience with academic success. He even acts as a mentor to residents of Geo Serenity in Chester, PA, where Paul was a resident before enrolling with SLS. Since then, he has been able to turn his life around to the point where he can encourage others.

Paul truly deserves to receive the Marcie's Award. Since joining SLS, he has hit the ground running. Paul is a hard worker and he is dedicated to his recovery. He does not wait for opportunities to be handed to him—he takes them! Paul is dedicated to supporting others and continues to grow as a peer in the mental health field. — *Amber Young*

MARCIE'S AWARD WINNER

Sabrina Eggles

Sabrina Eggles has been a resident at the Market Street Transition Age (TA) Youth residential program since October 2023. She also works with Corey Abbott at CareLink's Career Services office to develop her job skills and look for a part-time job while she finishes high school.

Sabrina has an amazing ability to use her coping skills when she is struggling to get through rough times. When she first was referred to CareLink, she had an extensive history of frequent hospitalization and had a 1:1 aide 24 hours a day. Sabrina was informed that if she wanted to move to our program, she needed to be able to manage without the 1:1 aide. In response, she immediately started decreasing hours with the aide and was able to move into the TA program within three months.

When she moved in, Sabrina did very well with the level of staffing and did not repeat her pattern of frequent hospitalizations. She also practices self-advocacy by talking to her doctors about her symptoms and letting them know if she feels like she needs a change in any of her medications.

Sabrina is still in high school. During the summer, however, she needed to spend about eight weeks in residential treatment, which caused her to miss a substantial amount of school. When she returned in the fall, Sabrina worked hard to catch up and made the honor roll, something she was very proud of. Sabrina has also learned skills to manage her emotions and has not been hospitalized since March 2024, which is her longest streak in many years.

Sabrina's teachers at school have reached out to let me know they've been impressed with her progress the last few months, and that they've noticed a big difference in how she copes with stress. — *Bernadette Croft Greer*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

John Hall

John Hall, a recipient of the 2023 Marcie's Award, is a resident at CareLink's STAR II Community Residential Rehabilitation (CRR) program and currently receives outpatient services at CareLink's Norristown location.

John's dedication to working toward his recovery is evident in his ability to successfully work through his treatment program and independently become a Certified Peer Specialist (CPS), as well as his desire to be competitively employed. John is a valued role model to his peers and often encourages them to take an active role in their own personal recovery. One of John's hopes and dreams is to live independently in the community. He is very open and honest about the skills necessary to fulfill his dream and actively works to develop these skills to be successful.

John has been enrolled in CareLink's Outpatient Services program since March 2024 and at the STAR program since November 2022. From the very beginning, he has taken an active role in being vested in his treatment and working toward his own personal journey of recovery. John has a strong sense of independence and community integration. Due to his hard work and ownership in his treatment, he was able to attend peer specialist training and became a CPS. In February 2023, John earned his Pennsylvania Peer Specialist Certification through Pennsylvania's Certification Board. He is very proud of all the hard work and effort that he has made to get his certification.

John is also in the process of working with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to find competitive employment. He currently works on the work crew at the STAR program and is dedicated to his job. John takes pride in being a role model for his peers while earning a paycheck. — *Lori Wallace*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

Benjamin King

Benjamin King has been a resident at the Market Street Transition Age (TA) Youth residential program since 2021, and has also worked with Career Services to both obtain a job and enroll in the local community college.

Ben is extremely independent and largely takes care of his apartment by himself. He also prepares all of his own meals, attends doctors' appointments independently, and is able to advocate for himself without staff intervention.

Ben has been accepted at Delaware County Community College and intends to complete a one-year automotive technician certification program there. He has always been interested in working on cars, and his job coach was able to help him obtain a job at a local oil change shop. Ben started working there in June 2024 and has done very well so far, working consistently about 24 hours per week. He enjoys his job and states that he plans to continue working while going to school.

Ben is nearly ready to graduate from the Market Street program, and we've begun discussing what makes sense for him in terms of next steps for housing. It's great to see him integrated into the community, working a job that's exactly what he wants to be doing, and getting ready to start school so that he can advance his career. — *Bernadette Croft Greer*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

Gabriel Potocsky

Over the past five years, Gabriel Potocsky has been very consistent and positive during his stay CareLink's Friendship Manor program. Since arriving at Friendship Manor, we have noticed that Gabe has developed a sense of trust and family among the staff and his peers.

Gabe consistently meets all scheduled requirements with his service providers, mainly the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team. Although Gabe is very quiet and enjoys spending time alone watching programs on ME TV, he will usually engage in planned parties, a game of bingo, or scheduled outings that staff encourages him to attend.

Throughout his five years at Friendship Manor, Gabe has shown strength, patience, and a sense of family with his peers. He will offer his peers a seat at his dinner table during meal time if they chose to sit with him. Gabe has never shown any aggressive or combative behavior toward his peers or staff, even during times when he was struggling with his emotions; he always appeared to show strength and calmness.

Before arriving at Friendship Manor, Gabe appeared to be totally dependent on others to do his cleaning, cooking, and shopping for him. Over the years, staff has seen major improvement and growth in the areas of cleaning and shopping. Gabe currently receives a gift card to shop on his own for his breakfast and lunch items at the local grocery store.

Gabe is one of the most honest and respectful program participants, according to his peers and the staff. Over the course of his five years as a resident at Friendship Manor, we have had many participants who struggled with various behavioral concerns on a regular basis. During times when others struggled with behavioral concerns, however, none of the past or present residents ever engaged in any confrontation with Gabe. I believe that Gabe is respected by his peers because he gives respect to his service providers and his peers without expecting anything else but respect. — *Anthony Abson*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

Derek Thomas

Derek Thomas, a resident at the agency's Manor Road program, has been part of the program since early November 2023. While at CareLink, he has exhibited great participation with his goals and counseling groups. Derek has received several awards for his peer interaction and leadership within these groups and has mentioned in conversation that he would like to extend his knowledge and assist others as well.

Derek is very respectful and a positive individual. He tries to assist his peers if they need help with anything and he genuinely cares about their wellbeing. He is very positive in conversations and makes an effort to encourage his peers to do well when they are struggling.

Derek has received two awards for his outstanding effort and participation in group therapy. Because he is so encouraging toward his fellow peers, the group counselor has advocated for Derek to be a peer group counselor. He attends all of his sessions and loves what he does there.

Derek is a very positive person who is willing to help anyone in need. He always sees the positive in a situation and is very thankful for the opportunities that he is given. Derek is very well liked and respected by peers, and staff love him. We nominate Derek because he is proof of what you dream others can accomplish when they have the support and opportunity.
— Sean Wallace & Ben May

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

Marcus Zweifil-Guest

Marcus Zweifil-Guest has been enrolled at CareLink's Reservoir Road CRR since November 2023. He resides in one of the "suite" apartments, where he has a higher level of independence. Marcus is active in his church and is currently seeking employment.

Since moving into this program, Marcus has been able to gain more independence with medication and has made a lot of effort to manage his diabetes. He is a great communicator and has a good relationship with staff and peers. Marcus helps with cooking and cleaning.

In the last year, Marcus was able to acquire Social Security, started independent medications, and went through the process of purchasing a car. He worked with staff to locate a car, obtain insurance, and get his driver's license updated. Now that he has his own transportation, Marcus is actively applying for jobs.

The outlook Marcus has on his recovery has come a long way. He has a great deal of insight and is making efforts to work toward complete independent living. Marcus has been sober for nearly four years and has a goal of helping others. — *Erin Keeley*

