adoptive parent to so many children in Stark County.

Living in recovery with mental illness, Jennifer says that she has faced many challenges - such as keeping jobs and getting good grades. Through counseling and coping skills, however, she excels in her coursework and received an associate degree in Human and Social Services from Stark State College in 2017. Since transferring to The University of Akron, she has received the honor of dean's list and president's list.

What has Jennifer been up to since receiving her scholarship? Jennifer is active in student and community organizations involving the LGBT community and others involving intersectional social justice. She has worked at Share and Kare for the past four years as a service provider to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD). She also works as a Youth Mentor part time in the summer at Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health, the agency that provided her mental health services for 14 years.

Since receiving this scholarship, she has been awarded four other scholarships, two of them for her leadership in the LGBT community. If it weren’t for scholarships like this one, Jennifer would not have money to pay for her senior year at The University of Akron.

When Jennifer learned she was awarded the scholarship, she took to Facebook to say thank you. She shared with her peers how she hoped her story would be shared so that maybe it could touch one person’s life. She said “Life is truly worth living. You just have to stay here long enough to see it for yourself.”

Helped by the $1,000 scholarship, Jennifer has been able to afford her senior year at The University of Akron. She is currently working on her bachelor’s degree in Social Work. She is also an intern at Equitas Health in Canton. Jennifer has a passion for mental health, HIV treatment/education/prevention, and LGBT resources. Her dream is to start an LGBT resource center in Stark County. “The LGBT community is an entire demographic that isn’t getting the services and resources that they need. I want to change that and advocate for them,” Jennifer said.

Jennifer’s former nurse at Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health (whom she still considers a dear friend), encouraged her to apply for the StarkMHAR Recovery Scholarship. Jennifer wanted to share her story - how she lost her father, and how with her mother’s example, learned to take the negative and use it to make a positive impact on others’ lives. Jennifer’s mother used her personal experience to turn around and become a foster/
Stark County residents can access behavioral health services regardless of their ability to pay through the Stark County Mental Health & Addiction Recovery (StarkMHAR) Care Network. StarkMHAR funded service providers accept various insurance programs, Medicare and Medicaid. Stark residents that are not covered by one of those options can receive services. Their ability to pay for those services will be determined by their income and could be fully subsidized by StarkMHAR. Learn more at StarkMHAR.org/CareNetwork

Crisis Resources

Counselors are available 24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year. If you or someone you know are in crisis, please immediately contact:

- Call 330-452-6000, the Stark County Crisis Hotline, anytime
- Text 4hope to 741 741, Crisis Text Line, anytime
- Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255), the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline anytime
- Call 9-1-1 if emergency services are needed. If requesting law enforcement, you can ask for a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)-trained officer.

More resources for families and medical professionals can be found at StarkMHAR.org/Help

Mental Health First Aid Training

You are more likely to encounter someone – a friend, family member, coworker, neighbor or member of the community – in an emotional or mental crisis than someone having a heart attack.

Mental Health First Aid teaches a 5-step action plan to offer initial help to people with the signs and symptoms of a mental illness or crisis and demonstrates how to connect them with the appropriate professional, peer, social or self-help care. Anyone can take the 8-hour Mental Health First Aid course. Take the course, save a life, strengthen your community.

Learn more about upcoming trainings at StarkMHAR.org/MentalHealthFirstAid

More Resources

- Everyone handles stress differently. Too much stress can cause physical and emotional conditions. StarkMHAR.org/Stress
- Alcohol & Marijuana All families, regardless of socioeconomic, race and other factors, can be affected by drugs and alcohol. Find resources to help parents be on the lookout at StarkMHAR.org/BOLO
- Drug Drop Boxes Get rid of unwanted, expired prescriptions at 17 countywide collection boxes, free of charge. For a listing of permanent sites, visit StarkMHAR.org/DrugCollection
- Talking with Family Effective prevention starts with an honest conversation. Talk with your loved ones about substance use today. StarkMHAR.org/TalkwithFamily
- How are you feeling? Take a short quiz and get connected with local resources at StarkMHAR.org

StarkMHAR Care Network

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Canton Community KidSummit Against Drugs 330-453-1155
Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health 330-454-7917
Coleman Professional Services 330-438-2400 (Teens 16+ yrs)
CommQuest Services 330-455-0374
Foundations, A Place for Education & Recovery 330-454-2888
ICAN Housing 330-455-9100
Make-A-Way 330-837-0650
NAMI Stark County 330-455-6264
OhioGuidestone 440-260-6466
Pathway Caring for Children 330-493-0083
Stark County TASC 330-479-1912
Stark Social Workers Network 330-455-2260
Summit Psychological Associates 330-493-2554

(Italics indicate StarkMHAR-funded youth treatment.)