

April 24, 2017: MEDIA ADVISORY

“Strengths, Hopes and Dreams”

Mental Health Community Celebration and Breakfast set for May 17

Featuring the Medical Director of Behavioral Health & Forensic Programs for Michigan’s Department of Health & Human Services, plus family voices, success stories

WHAT: 20th **Annual Mental Health Community Celebration and Breakfast**, presented by Kalamazoo Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services; **Free and open to the public.**

WHEN: **9-11 a.m. on Wed., May 17, 2017** (doors open at 8:30 a.m.). Continental breakfast available.

WHERE: Radisson Plaza, 100 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

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Kalamazoo, Mich. –Kalamazoo Community Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (KCMHSAS) welcomes the public to its 20th annual Mental Health Community Celebration and Breakfast on May 17 at the Radisson Plaza, featuring keynote speaker [Debra Pinals, M.D.](#), the new medical director of Behavioral Health and Forensic Programs for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and a clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of Michigan.

“This annual breakfast offers our community an opportunity to come together to meet and celebrate the achievements of people we serve,” says Jeff Patton, CEO of KCMHSAS. “We build on their strengths, hopes, and dreams with the help of dedicated and caring board members, staff, providers, peers, family support partners, advocates and other collaborative partners.”

Dr. Pinals’ topic is “**Engagement: Vital Components Within Community Behavioral Health.**” She’ll address current trends in community mental health, person-centered planning, trauma sensitivity and integration across systems to maximize positive avenues of recovery, with a focus on individuals with criminal justice involvement and co-occurring mental health and substance-use disorders.

Other speakers this year will include family members of youth who receive mental health services, sharing heartfelt stories about caring for loved ones living with mental illness. The event also offers an “Open Mic” session, where individuals served and their families have the opportunity to provide their perspective on the supports and services offered in the Kalamazoo area.

The event kicks off at 9 a.m. with a performance by the MRC Drummers. Started in 2004 by [MRC Industries, Inc.](#), this drumming group offers an opportunity for individuals with developmental disabilities to use rhythm instruments to express themselves and showcase their talents.

About Debra Pinals, M.D.

Dr. Pinals came to Michigan from the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health where she provided oversight and direction of the agency’s justice and behavioral health programs, including juvenile and adult court clinic, mental health court clinical services, police training and diversion, as well as mental health re-entry services and specialized veterans justice programs, while providing risk management consultation throughout the agency. She is certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology in Adult and Forensic Psychiatry and is a Diplomat of the American Board of Addiction Medicine. She received her medical degree from the Ohio State University College of Medicine and completed psychiatry and forensic training through Harvard Medical School and conducted a research fellowship at the National Institute of Mental Health.

About [KCMHSAS](#)

For more than 50 years, Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services has worked with youth, families and adults with mental health challenges, intellectual and developmental disabilities and co-occurring disorders to help them achieve their goals. KCMHSAS provides a welcoming and diverse community partnership to share effective resources that support individuals and families to be successful through all phases of life. KCMHSAS serves nearly 6,000 clients and is one of 46 Community Mental Health Services Programs throughout Michigan. More information is available at www.kazoocmh.org or by calling 269-373-6000. KCHMSAS is on Facebook at www.facebook.com/KazoocmhDD.

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