

# OUR GPSI EXPERIENCES

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### GMHCN Board Meetings

#### Face to Face:

Macon, GA  
July 14, 2016

St. Simons Island, GA  
August 29, 2016

Helen, GA  
October 20 - 21, 2016

### GMHCN Summer Conference

Epworth by the Sea  
St. Simons Island, GA  
August 20 - September 1,  
2016

### CPS Trainings

Augusta, GA  
June 13 - 23, 2016  
Albany, GA  
September 12 - 22, 2016  
Savannah, GA  
October 17 - 27, 2016  
Atlanta, GA  
December 5 - 15, 2016

### Alternatives 2016

San Diego, CA  
September 19 - 23, 2016

### Georgia Peer Support Institute

Epworth by the Sea  
St. Simons Island, GA  
November 9 - 11, 2016

### Georgia Consumer Council Memorial Service

Central State Hospital  
Milledgeville, GA  
October 2, 2016

I never knew that becoming the Georgia Peer Support Institute (GPSI) Coordinator was going to be so rewarding and such an amazing journey. I meet so many wonderful people at each and every training. When I am setting up GPSI, I begin to get to know participants through telephone calls and emails. I am always excited when GPSI begins and I am able to put faces with names after feeling like I already know someone. The most incredible part of GPSI for me is when I see the look on so many faces when people **realize recovery is possible** and that **recovery is possible for them!** I remember when that realization came to me and I have been growing in recovery since then. The excitement of seeing so many people finding recovery helps me grow in my own recovery. The most rewarding part is when I get told by GPSI graduates how excited they are to share what they have learned with their communities. If everyone reaches out to others and shares their recovery experience, the message of hope is passed along to each person they touch. I look forward to continuing to meet more peers and sharing the impact of recovery with them.

– Michelle Wade, CPS, GPSI Coordinator

When returning recently from the Georgia Peer Support Institute training in Helen, I studied for one word to describe my recent experience... and I simply couldn't find it. However, I did find two words: POWERFUL and INTENSE. I applied for GPSI training because I wanted to help bring wellness, recovery, and a better quality of life back to my peers at Highland Rivers in Dalton. I learned several valuable new recovery ideas that I was able to bring back and share with my peers. I left GPSI with new additions to my wellness toolbox. I'm hopeful others did too. With the ongoing community training being done by our GMHCN, personal recovery continues to be possible. I definitely recommend these classes to others. By the end of this training, I realized that not only had I made forward progress in my own personal recovery journey, but I had witnessed other peers make progress as well. Thank you for giving me such a wonderful opportunity to improve myself. I appreciate you! – Craig Burnes, May 2016



Thank you SO much for the learning experience you provided! I enjoyed every minute of every speaker you had there. I pray God provides an opportunity for me to carry the knowledge I learned, and hopefully, more that I will learn, on to others who so desperately want it the way I do! - Brenda White, November 2015

I am so thankful for the opportunity to attend GPSI. The speakers were so motivating and I felt like a dry sponge absorbing life-saving information/resources to share with my peers that we may walk with one another through recovery. – Phyllesa J. Power, May 2016



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It's been several months since I've attended GPSI but I still feel impacted by the many things I learned. I actually use what I learned. I'm glad I went, I'm glad I got involved and didn't just sit there like a potato chip! It's my personality to get involved, but I am a little shy around groups. Everybody was my peer and I felt connected. I learned I'm a bit more negative than I thought I was and they gave me the simple skills to combat that. I enjoyed listening to all the speakers. They were enthusiastic and down to Earth. I loved all the different personalities! The motel was nice, the staff were very helpful, and everybody treated everybody nicely. I felt more normal there than I have in many places, me and my Schizoaffective disorder with Bipolar. – *Kathy McDonald, November 2015*

I just wanted to take a few moments and express my appreciation for the opportunity to be part of the GPSI experience. This experience was very awesome for me. I learned some valuable recovery tools that I can take back to my peers. Also, it taught me how to battle negative self-talk, problem solving, and about the wellness recovery action plan. With this knowledge I am able to share with people, but also my daily journey. I have decided I want to become a CPS, that way I have an opportunity to help and teach others how to get help with their recovery. - *Cathy Wier, May 2016*

I attended the November 11-13, 2015, Georgia Peer Support Institute meeting in St. Simons Island, GA and was amazed at the progress it afforded my recovery. Everyone there was warm and friendly. The campus on which it was held was beautiful, with its gazebo and gardens. All of the exercises were informative and the literature was very helpful. I have tried to aid my peers since I've returned to Valdosta, GA with everything that was available to me since the training. - *Angela Pompey, November 2015*