



Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance

Contact: Ellen Schantz, DBSA Communications Director
(312) 988-1162
eschantz@DBSAlliance.org

DBSA Introduces Virtual Community for Peer Provider Workforce Center connects peer specialists and organizations for education, networking, employment.

CHICAGO, Feb. 16, 2016—The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) has created the Peer Leadership Center to advance the peer provider workforce in mental health. The web-based Center is a virtual community for individuals and organizations. Membership is free. Sign up at peerleadershipcenter.org.

The DBSA Peer Leadership Center is designed to be an impartial clearinghouse to centralize information, online learning, and employment opportunities. The website also connects peers through discussion boards and private messaging to support collaboration, dialogue, and personal networking.

“Our goal is to help shape and grow the field, which will improve health care outcomes, reduce health care costs, and provide employment opportunities for people with lived experience of mental health conditions,” said Allen Doederlein, DBSA president. “The power of coming together as peers and a profession offers continued hope and support for recovery.”

The Humana Foundation awarded DBSA a grant to assist with development of the Peer Leadership Center.

“The Center has potential to not only grow and promote an evidence-based practice within mental health care, but also to connect people with common backgrounds and experiences so they may enhance their well-being together,” said Virginia Kelly Judd, executive director of the Humana Foundation.

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About the Peer Provider Workforce

The peer provider workforce includes certified peer specialists, individuals who have personal, lived experience in recovery from a mental health or substance use condition. These individuals are trained and certified to support their peers in gaining hope and moving forward in their own recovery journeys.

About the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

DBSA is the leading peer-directed national organization focused on the two most prevalent mental health conditions: depression and bipolar disorder. These conditions affect more than 21 million Americans, account for 90% of the nation's suicides every year, and cost \$23 billion in lost workdays and other workplace losses. Through more than 700 support groups and nearly 300 chapters, DBSA reaches millions of people each year with in-person and online peer support.

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Editor's Note: *The peer support profession is rapidly growing. We can put you in touch with certified peer specialists and DBSA experts to talk about the value of connecting individuals with similar mood disorder experiences. We can help coordinate B-roll and interviews to profile peer relationships in a human-interest story.*