

# The Bradley *Bulletin*

News and notes for our friends and supporters.

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## A LEADER IN LAW SUPPORTS BRADLEY HOSPITAL

**A**s a divorce attorney, Deborah Miller Tate gets an intimate view into families' lives, including the struggles of children with behavioral and psychological disorders. She often sees how the stress of a divorce can make life more challenging for vulnerable kids.

"Our clients look to us for a lot of guidance, not just with their legal issues, but also with mental health resources for themselves and their children," says Deb, who is a partner in the Providence firm McIntyre Tate LLP.

When appropriate, Deb refers families to Bradley Hospital, and is grateful to be able to do so.

"Bradley is such a valuable resource for kids who need help," she says. "It is a special place, and the staff does an amazing job. The hospital and the programs resonate with me so much."

She adds that she admires Bradley Hospital's patient- and family-centered care, and its wonderful ability to make patients feel "like they are not alone."

Deb's dedication to philanthropy, which includes serving on the Bradley Hospital Foundation Board of Governors, attending *Bravo Bradley*, and donating to the hospital, began more than thirty years ago when her two daughters were young. She wanted to lead by example.

"Growing up, our kids were very fortunate—they had two working parents, and they were able to go to great schools," Deb says. "But I grew up very modestly. So, I started thinking, 'what can we do as a family to instill values in them?' We decided to choose causes to support as a family to give back."

They started a tradition of "adopting a family" for the holidays and donated to various nonprofit organizations in Rhode Island.



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Deb, who was born in Woonsocket, has enjoyed a distinguished 40-year career as an attorney. So far, one of the highlights has been serving as President of the Rhode Island Bar Association from 1999 to 2000. At that time, the organization had more than 5,000 lawyers as members. Prior to that, in 1991, she became the first female from Rhode Island, and one of only six attorneys, to be elected and designated a Fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers.

Over the course of her career, Deb has noticed that clients have become more open about discussing mental health. "And that," she says, "is a step in the right direction."

## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: BRADLEY VISTA

**A**s many as eight in ten teens who struggle with problems with alcohol or drugs also have a mental health condition. And yet programs that specialize in treating patients with co-occurring disorders can be surprisingly difficult for families to find.

With seed funding provided by *Bravo Bradley*, the intensive outpatient program Bradley Vista was created to address that need. Launched in late 2017, it is already considered a model treatment program by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.



Currently operating through telehealth, Bradley Vista was developed with the goal of leveraging the latest research to provide evidence-based care to adolescents and their families, says the program's director, Robert Miranda Jr., PhD, MEd.

Teenagers—who typically have an anxiety or depressive disorder, or a history of trauma, and use alcohol and/or marijuana—attend the program three days a week for three hours a day. Treatment includes evidence-based group, family, and individual therapy, as well as medication management if needed.

“One of the strongest predictors of having a lifelong struggle with addiction is starting at a younger age, so if you can intervene early, the probability of longer-term positive outcomes is much higher,” says Dr. Miranda.

Miranda and his colleagues continuously conduct research that has the potential to positively influence care and outcomes on a broad scale. One such project is focused on developing a mobile smartphone app to supplement the program's clinical services. “The goal is to come up with something that's kind of cool and interesting that would help kids reinforce what they are working on,” Dr. Miranda says.

## TREATING ANXIETY 'WHERE IT LIVES'

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic forced Jennifer Freeman, PhD, and her team of researchers at Bradley Hospital's Pediatric Anxiety Research Center (PARC) to pause their five-year study exploring the effectiveness of a patient-centered in-home exposure therapy model for anxiety disorders. But it also offered an unexpected opportunity to enhance their research by adding a six-month telehealth component to the study.

Participants between the ages of 5 and 18 with a diagnosis of an anxiety disorder such as obsessive-compulsive disorder, separation anxiety disorder, or specific phobia received up to 24 weeks of exposure-based cognitive behavioral therapy. A bachelor's degree-level coach delivered treatment through telehealth, and families also met with a PhD-level clinician monthly.



The study enhancement was initially motivated by a need to provide continuity of care to patients in a time of disruption, but it has also offered insight that could be applicable post-pandemic. The researchers found preliminary support for effectiveness of the telehealth treatment. Most patients experienced significant decreases in symptom severity, and patients and families reported high satisfaction with the delivery model. Benefits included treating anxiety at home—“where it lives”—leveraging technology such as screen sharing, family involvement, and fewer missed sessions due to the reduction of barriers such as transportation.

“The whole premise of this model, whether the in-home version or the telehealth one, is that we could provide evidence-based treatment outside of the hospital,” Dr. Freeman said. “It is an amazing way to increase access.”



**Bradley Hospital**

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