

# The Bradley *Bulletin*

News and notes for our friends and supporters.

Winter 2023

## TURNING HEARTBREAK INTO HOPE

Like many people, David and Brenda Turchetta have felt the pain of seeing loved ones suffer due to mental and behavioral health challenges. Fortunately, though, something positive has come out of these experiences: they have motivated the couple to generously support Bradley Hospital.

“The work that Bradley does is so crucial,” Brenda says. “I hope that everyone in Rhode Island understands that the fact that this hospital exists is of paramount importance.”

Sadly, Brenda recently lost a friend to suicide. And two members of her family passed away in their 20s due to drug overdoses—deaths that might have been prevented, she says, if they had received treatment earlier in life.

“What really hit home for me was realizing that maybe they wouldn’t have ended up in a situation of relying on substances to get through the tough times if they had gotten help from a place like Bradley when they were teenagers,” Brenda says.

The Tiverton couple is dedicated to supporting various initiatives in the communities where they live and work. Brenda is executive director of the nonprofit Mount Hope Farm, in Bristol, Rhode Island, and David has a real estate law practice in Norwood, Massachusetts.

They were introduced to Bradley in 2018, when friends invited them to attend the signature fundraising event Bravo Bradley. They instantly connected with the hospital’s mission and felt motivated to get more involved. This year, they are thrilled to increase their commitment by serving as the event’s co-chairs.

“It’s a great honor for both of us,” David says. “We are excited to take on such an important role and are looking forward to a positively charged night.”

While Brenda and David, who are also Bradley Hospital Governors, have given generously to the hospital, they note that one of their most meaningful donations was relatively small.



David and Brenda Turchetta

**“We want to support the hospital in any way we can... Bradley saves lives.”**

**—Brenda Turchetta**

After taking a moving tour of the Compass Program house—a residential treatment program for adolescent girls—they were inspired to provide items, including a blender, ice cream maker and waffle iron, for a holiday party.

“We saw that we could make an immediate and direct impact,” says David, who has two adult daughters. “It was a great feeling to give patients something fun to brighten their days.”

Whether they are donating items for patient use or planning an event as large as Bravo Bradley, the Turchettas always keep the friends and family they’ve lost in their hearts as they give their time and resources.

“We want to support the hospital in any way we can—because it’s so important that people have the opportunity to connect to resources like Bradley,” Brenda says. “Bradley saves lives.”

# BRADLEY RECEIVES FEDERAL GRANT TO BRING ITS EXPERTISE INTO RHODE ISLAND SCHOOLS

In Rhode Island, one in five children (ages 6 to 17) has a mental health condition and one in ten has a significant functional impairment. Many others deal with challenges including anxiety, trauma, and substance use without a formal diagnosis—while trying to learn in the classroom.

To serve the needs of this vulnerable population, Bradley Hospital was recently awarded a five-year, \$8.6 million grant from the federal government's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to bring support directly into schools through Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education).

Under the leadership of Director of Clinical Innovation, Margaret Paccione-Dyszlewski, PhD, the hospital has partnered with the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and the Rhode Island Department of Children Youth and Families to provide mental and behavioral health training and services in three districts: Providence, Pawtucket, and Woonsocket.

Bradley's experts are developing an infrastructure for school-based mental health programs, with an emphasis on educating all personnel on the signs and symptoms of mental health, substance use, and co-occurring disorders. Trauma sensitive schools, suicide, and violence prevention are areas of focus as well.

"We are trying to shift the paradigm from the idea that there are a few people in schools who provide mental health support to everyone in schools can provide mental health support," Dr. Paccione-Dyszlewski says.

The work builds on previous efforts. Bradley Hospital has assisted RIDE in implementing Project AWARE in schools since 2018; however, this is the first time the hospital has directly received this type of federal funding, which is rarely granted to private institutions.



## USING TECHNOLOGY TO LEARN HOW GREENSPACE AFFECTS KIDS' WELL-BEING

How does time spent in greenspace impact children's sleep and mental health?

Diana Grigsby-Toussaint, PhD, an Associate Professor of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Epidemiology at the Brown University School of Public Health, seeks to answer this question in partnership with Bradley Hospital. Dr. Grigsby-Toussaint worked with the hospital's COBRE (Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence) Center for Sleep and Circadian Rhythms in Child and Adolescent Mental Health to develop a National Institutes of Health project designed to better understand the topic.

Increasingly, sleep health is being recognized as a major contributing factor to mental health and well-being. In children, lack of sleep and disruptions to circadian rhythms have been linked to diminished physical and mental health.

Using a mix of cutting-edge methods, including GPS-derived measures of greenspace utilization, light monitors, and activity monitors, Dr. Grigsby-Toussaint is able to examine sleep habits in the context of environmental factors and relate them to child well-being.

"I am really excited about working with diverse populations of children in Rhode Island and look forward to the policy implications of our work," she says.

Although sleep and mental health are crucial pillars of general well-being, prior research with children has largely focused on one or the other. Bradley's COBRE Center is an interdisciplinary effort to link these fields by supporting projects such as Dr. Grigsby-Toussaint's.

"Bradley Hospital provided the resources and mentorship to make the project come to life," she adds. "I hope this research illustrates that sleep health and time spent in greenspace should not be overlooked when discussing children's mental health."



**Bradley Hospital**

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