

NAVIGATING A NEW YOU**U**niverse

Very often the children and families we serve are in transition. A tentative adolescent may be moving back home with his family after receiving out-of-home treatment. A newly-resettled family in an unfamiliar country needs advice, a connection to resources, a place to begin. A star student is headed to college, the first in her family to do so.

Over many years, we've learned that for kids and families in need, making these transitions successfully requires the right mix of services, skills and resources. They need a dedicated team that comes together to fund those programs, deliver those services, share those resources. They need to know that no matter their circumstances and challenges, they can be better and stronger on the other side of that transition.

They need a YOU**U**niverse. And so do we.

Over the last year, we've undergone many transitions. New leaders have emerged on our staff and board to replace those who have retired or completed their commitments. Like so many other agencies, we've confronted a significant shortage of behavioral healthcare workers, at a time of major change in the way our services are provided and paid for. We've been challenged to adapt our services to fit those changing parameters and meet a growing demand, with limited resources.

Here are just a few ways the YOU**U**niverse has responded:

- When our Joy and Robert Wetzel Center for Children – which serves youth with acute psychiatric needs – suffered extensive weather-related damage and had to be temporarily relocated, our staff, funders, state partners and agency vendors quickly stepped in to make sure that services would continue virtually uninterrupted.

- When thousands of refugees from Hurricane Maria arrived in Worcester, our Family Resource Center staff mobilized to help them connect to food and housing resources, enroll their children in local schools, and access counseling services and support groups.
- As new Accountable Care Organizations begin to offer behavioral healthcare services to thousands of Mass Health members in a more coordinated, community-based model, we are exploring ways to provide our services in a collaborative way, partnering with other providers to define the delivery of complex and highly specialized behavioral health services to children.
- Corporate sponsors and foundations responded to our agency's financial needs in ways both big and small. From incredibly generous event sponsorships and capital campaign pledges, to internships and employment opportunities for youth, hockey and concert tickets, and experiences for youth and families who could otherwise not afford them – their support was transformative

To the staff, board members, partners and funders in our YOU**U**niverse: thank you for helping us to be better and stronger on the other side.

As we look ahead, we are focused on continued financial stability, a successful capital campaign, expansion of our psychiatry capabilities, leading on the advocacy front for increased funding to better meet the need for mental health services, and strong relationships with our partners as programming evolves.



Kristine Bostek
President & CEO



Roy Angel
Board Chair