

# One City. One Campus. *One Community.*

## Lakeview Center for Mental Health and Wellness: The Waters of Community

*By Courtney Wood, History and English Double Major*

Triangular stone pillars, transparent glass doors, a thriving garden, and a wide curve of smooth, black asphalt greet those who arrive at a newly established building on East Second Street: Lakeview Center for Mental Health and Wellness. As the name suggests, the Center has a stunning view of crystalline Lake Ontario, one that invites visitors to reflect and recenter. Intern Tai Smith loves this aspect of Oswego as well as working at the Center weekly. Having received her internship through SUNY Oswego, Smith emphasized the strong connection between the Center and interns from the university. Interns not only help the Center thrive, but they spread the word about the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) program to their peers. The overall experience allows students to have a deeper understanding of mental health, increased awareness of employment opportunities after graduation, expanded social networks, and a greater understanding of their future career paths and directions.

The Center operates as a part of Oswego Health, a nonprofit healthcare system based in Oswego County. The ACT team, a division of the Center, is adaptable to their patients' needs and offers various support services and in-center treatment. Smith stated that this team helps people eighteen years of age and older with severe and persistent mental illness living in Oswego and neighboring towns. The ACT team actively goes out into the community to help meet people's needs. One of Smith's key takeaways from her internship experience was the strong bond she developed with the members of the ACT team. Smith stated, "They've [the ACT team] been nothing but open to me, very helpful, and willing to just take me around and just show me everything that I need to know and get me exposed to new experiences. They've been very good about... letting me watch them do what they need to do to help people. Specifically, their staff. They're just great. I really like them as people on top of their program."

Smith's supervisor, Shauntelle Morgan, seconds the strong sense of community the Center provides its interns. Having worked as an intern with the ACT team herself, Morgan recognized the value of the opportunity in helping her get to the position she is in now. Morgan stated, "I love having interns. And... I think it was my own internship experience that has led me to where I'm at today and to open the doors for my career development in the different moves that I've made."

According to Morgan, the Center serves people of all ages. It provides school-based counseling and therapy services in local elementary schools. It also provides medication management and case management on a variety of levels. Additionally, the Center has outpatient services and an inpatient unit for acute crises, accommodating diverse needs. All of these services prove how versatile and far-reaching Lakeview Center for Mental Health and Wellness is.

The Center is incredibly valuable to the college and local community as the need for mental health resources grows in response to global crises and social justice issues. Having been remodeled three years ago around the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Center provides additional resources and unique features for its patients. The Center provides SUNY Oswego students interested in working in the healthcare field with employment opportunities, and a chance to develop their interests, focus their career goals, and enhance their sense of community. The Center is willing and ready to help those in Oswego in a variety of ways, making it a vital part of the town.



## Lakeview Center for Mental Health and SUNY Oswego

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