



Contact: Danis Russell, CEO Phone 810-257-3707

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STUDENTS ARE GROWING THE FIELD, ADDING TO A KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY, REDUCING STIGMA

“Start with this proposition: The most valuable natural resource in the 21st century is brains. Smart people tend to be mobile. Watch where they go! Because where they go, robust economic activity will follow.”

- - Rich Karlgaard
Publisher, Forbes Magazine

Genesee County, Michigan – For the 4th summer in a row, Genesee County Community Mental Health has opened their doors to students for summer internships with a program called “Grow the Field.” The students are graduating high school seniors and college students with roots in Genesee County. This year, 18 students will go through the program.

The program has several goals. The first is to offer students from the area an opportunity to work within the mental health system to determine if it is a good fit for their future plans. The second is to invest in the future of quality mental health services by developing high-quality clinicians and providers. Another is to keep these students in the area with their skills and leadership. A final goal is to open the student’s minds to understand persons with mental illness, developmental disabilities, and substance use disorders.

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“While it is definitely a goal of our program to develop a quality, competent future workforce; if a student decides that service within the mental health field is not for them, that’s ok too,” explains Danis Russell, CEO for GCCMH. “It’s better that they make good decisions for themselves and their future, and this gives them that opportunity. At the same time, they’ve learned about mental illness, substance use disorder, and developmental disabilities and are sometimes the best community ambassadors to help break down the barriers faced by individuals that we serve.”

According to MSU’s Land Policy Institute, a couple of the key features of the “new economy” include being rich in talent and ideas, and attracting talented and educated people. Genesee County CMH hopes that “Grow the Field” does just that.

Genesee County CMH provides services and supports to Genesee County residents who are adults and children with developmental disabilities, adults with serious mental illness, children with serious emotional disturbance and for adults and children with substance use disorders. For more information call Customer Services at (810) 257-3705.

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