

Unsung Hero Award: Sherry Marcelino

Sherry is the second recipient of OEO's Unsung Hero Award.

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic in the news rapidly became reality for Vermont. It was clear that people experiencing homelessness were particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. Community organizations around the state were suddenly grappling with creating new supports and partnerships to help people access emergency housing, get help with basic needs, and promote safety and well-being for those staying in motels. OEO offers our latest "Unsung Heroes Award" to Sherry Marcelino, at Lamoille County Mental Health, for her outstanding leadership in setting up safe, supportive emergency housing in the Lamoille Valley.



When the pandemic hit, Sherry sprang into action. She helped create a new housing task force to respond to developing guidance and information from the State and organize a coordinated community response to meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness during COVID. She has long been committed to strong connections between mental health and housing agencies.

As the pandemic unfolded, she leaned into collaboration and housing, knowing it was crucial for the local mental health agency to be a part of the solution. She built new relationships and strengthened others. She convened a broad coalition of partners including Lamoille Home Health and Hospice, Lamoille Community House, Capstone Community Action, local police, and pharmacies to ensure those in motel housing had access to a range of needed services and supports.

She was on the ground working directly with people experiencing homelessness at the same time she was creating new resources, building new systems, and changing policies and procedures. She is a "go to" person in Lamoille County for efforts related to COVID homelessness response and emergency housing.

Here is what Sherry's colleagues say about her: "Sherry is a rock, a foundational part of our Lamoille team. She has worked incredibly hard in the past year, constantly adapting to the changing landscape and always being there for everyone, both clients and service providers."

Sherry is plugged into community and always helping someone with something – that's second nature to her. Sherry never has an off switch for being helpful.

Sherry is an unflinching champion for the people of the Lamoille Valley. She provides top caliber case management and wrap-around supports to the clients she serves and does so with a rare combination of emotional intelligence and perseverance that results in those she serves getting what they need while feeling respected and valued.

Thank you to Sherry Marcelino and the incredible network of partners in Lamoille County for your tireless work on behalf of Vermonters experiencing homelessness!