



January and February 2025 Compeer Gazette



Mentors Needed!

Do you have any friends, family members or colleagues who you think would make a great mentor? If so, encourage them to learn more about Compeer and to submit a Volunteer Application on our [website](#)! Your personal recommendations can inspire others to get involved and make a difference in our community.

Let's work together to welcome new faces and expand our Compeer family!



**Compeer's Next Volunteer Orientation is Scheduled for January
30th, 2025**



Wishing you a New Year of Happiness and Friendship!

Happy New Year! We're excited to continue our friendship with you in 2025! We are grateful for the fun and meaningful experiences we shared at Compeer and in the community last year and look forward to another wonderful year ahead.

- We're headed to the [Buffalo Museum of Science](#) on **Saturday, January 18th at 10:00 AM** We have 20 spots reserved at no cost to you! **RSVP by January 10th**. Sign up early to claim your spot! You may bring **one guest**.
- [Movie Night](#) returns to the Compeer office, Wednesday, **January 22nd at 6:00 PM**. We'll be watching a family-friendly movie and enjoying popcorn and other snacks.
- Come join us for our [Palentine's](#) event, **Wednesday, February 12th at 5:30 PM** at the **North Buffalo Community Center!** We'll be playing bingo for fun prizes and enjoying good food and conversation. **RSVP by February 5th**.
- [Craft night](#) returns to Compeer on Wednesday, **February 19th at 6:00 PM!** Our social activities volunteer Dawn will be leading the group as we'll be painting miniature birdhouses. **RSVP by February 13th**.
- Looking for a boost of positive energy and a supportive community? Our [Pizza and Positivity Group](#) is here to help! Each month, we gather to share uplifting conversations, encourage one another, and spread good vibes. Whether you're seeking new connections, a little motivation, or just a place to recharge, our group offers a warm and welcoming space. Come join us, and don't forget to bring your appetite! **Check out January and February dates below**.
- Join us on Zoom for [Compeer Together](#) on **January 28th for music night** and **February 25th for trivia at 6:00 PM!**

Whether you're a client, volunteer, or intern, Compeer would not be the same without your friendship and support. Thank you for being part of the Compeer family. Your friendship means the world to us!



Sorry we're
CLOSED

Our office will be closed for the following observances:

January 1st: New Year's Day

January 20th: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February 17th: President's Day

In This Edition of the Compeer Gazette You Will Find:

- Updates from the Compeer office
- National Mentoring Month: Volunteer Spotlight
- January/ February Social Activities and Events
- A Look at All The Fun We Had!
- Article: Building Healthy Daily Habits for Mental Wellness
- Community Events and Partnerships
- Mental Health Education and Resources
- Getting Involved at Compeer
- Client and Volunteer Advisory Board Information
- Friendiversary Celebrations
- Birthday Shout Outs



Connect
with
Compeer.



Connecting with Compeer

There are many ways to connect with Compeer. You can learn about and sign up for activities, catch up on our latest social media posts, and stay informed on everything happening at Compeer! It all starts with our website [Compeer Buffalo \(www.compeerbuffalo.org\)](http://www.compeerbuffalo.org), where you can learn more about our organization, history, values, and other important information.

Our bimonthly newsletter, which you're reading now, keeps you updated with the latest news, activities, and events at Compeer. If you're not following us on social media, now's the time! Stay connected with us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#) for updates and more. Stay connected with us and never miss out on exciting events and updates!

Did You Know We Have a Social Activities Phone Line?

We're excited to introduce our Social Activities Phone Line, where you can learn about upcoming activities and sign up for them directly over the phone. Call 24/7 to hear a list available activities and leave a

The Newsletter is Now on Our Website!

You can now access our newsletter on our [website](#)

message with the ones you'd like to join. To access the line, call 716-883-3331 and select option 3 when prompted.

Give it a try today!



Volunteers, Upload Your Mentoring Hours!

Please upload your mentoring hours to the Mentor Portal by the **5th of the month.**

Access the Mentor Portal by clicking the Mentor Portal Button or send an email with your hours to volunteer@compeerbuffalo.org

Send us your photos and stories about you and your friend spending time together, we want to hear from you!



Click Here to Access the Mentor Portal

You can also send your mentoring hours, photos and stories to our program team!

Compeer Program Team:

Kelsey Burch- Older Adult Program,
Raymond Wasielewski- Adult Program

Brittany Cope- Youth Program

Mark Gatti- Social Activities

Ebony Townes- Volunteer Engagement

Chris Batty- School-Based Program

Alana Holm- Peer Support Program

Hayley Kasprzycki- Client Intake

Happy New Year from Compeer!



Front Row (Left to Right): Lori Boyce, Hayley Kasprzycki, Sierra Schwartz,
Lisa Johnson

Second Row (Left to Right): Cheri Alvarez, Alana Holm, Raymond
Wasielewski, Chris Batty, Mark Gatti, Brittany Cope-Mekus, Kelsey Burch,
Ebony Townes, Ashleigh Cieri, Katie Walsh, Cynthia Dorman

The Compeer Team wishes you a new year filled with joy and prosperity. We are grateful for all our clients and volunteers and look forward to another year of friendship!

Bottle and Can-tributions!



Collection Period:

September-
December **\$226.00**

Thank you for your generous donations of bottles and cans to our fundraiser for the Compeer Youth and Adult Client Advisory Board. These contributions help further create meaningful experiences for our advisory members.

[Click Me to Find your Nearest Bottle & Can Retrieval Center Location](#)

Raised



Keep The Bottles & Cans Coming!

National Mentoring Month: Spotlight on Compeer Volunteers!

January is National Mentoring Month, a time to recognize the powerful impact of mentorship in our community! Take a look at interviews with our dedicated volunteers to explore the themes of mentoring and friendship!



Lynn F.

Current Volunteer Role:

1-1 Friend

**Time at Compeer: 4
Years**

Q: What inspired you to become a mentor at Compeer?

A: The organization has a rich history of being a help and support to so many people. With community service being a “way of life” for me, I was compelled to become a part of the family to contribute to their mission and vision.

Q: Why is mentoring important in today’s society?

A: Mentoring provides individuals with supportive relationships to guide their personal and professional growth and development. It also provides them opportunities to learn new skills, achieve goals, build confidence and gain valuable insight. All of which can lead to success.

Q: What qualities do you believe make an effective mentor?

A: Being an active listener, trustworthiness, non-judgmental, patience, having a positive attitude, empathy, honesty, integrity, and respect.

Q: What do you enjoy most about being a volunteer with Compeer Buffalo?

A: What I enjoy most about being a volunteer with Compeer Buffalo, is that I am a small but important part to a BIG puzzle. Compeer values each and every piece of the Compeer puzzle from their staff, right down to their volunteers. In this puzzle, we all just “fit”. I also enjoy the way Compeer appreciates and acknowledges their volunteers. They continuously provide workshops to help us gain knowledge and understanding on being mentors and they are not afraid to show their volunteers that they are appreciated for the time that they put in.

Q: What message do you want to share with potential volunteers about the impact of mentoring?

A: If you are looking to be a help to someone while meeting great people this is an invaluable experience with an outstanding



Narji E.

Current Volunteer Role:

Volunteer Advisory
Committee Member

**Time at Compeer: 3
Years**

organization. It is important that you are genuinely passionate about supporting others, understand Compeers goals, set realistic expectations, be available and reliable. Lastly, prioritize building a trusting relationship based on mutual respect and open communication.

Q: In your experience, what are some common feelings that people face when they are lonely and how do you believe mentoring relationships can help combat these feelings?

A: As a Life Coach & Meditation teacher I've noticed many people experiencing similar states. Loneliness can bring feelings of isolation, a sense of being invisible or misunderstood. These emotions can weigh heavily on a person's mental and emotional well-being, making it difficult to reach out or find help. Mentoring relationships provide a powerful antidote to these feelings, creating a safe and supportive space where individuals feel seen, heard, and valued. A mentor's encouragement and genuine connection can help someone rebuild confidence, discover their strengths, and feel a sense of belonging.

Q: Why is mentoring important in today's society?

A: Mentoring fosters learning, broadens perspectives, and nurtures compassion. It creates a greater sense of purpose and strengthens our human connection, something that can feel lost in an increasingly digital world. While technology keeps us virtually connected, it can also heighten feelings of isolation, especially for those facing life's challenges. Mentoring helps bridge that gap, reminding people that they're not alone and that they truly matter. It provides support, encouragement, and a sense of belonging, empowering individuals to overcome obstacles

Q: What do you enjoy most about being a volunteer with Compeer Buffalo?

A: The opportunity to connect with new people, hear their unique stories, and build meaningful relationships. I love mentoring and participating in the fun activities Compeer organizes, from self-care days to catching shows at Shea's, exploring Buffalo, and enjoying picnics together. I'm also proud to serve on the Volunteer Advisory Committee. It's inspiring to see people come together, dedicating their time and creativity to finding new ways to support even more individuals. The sense of community is truly beautiful, and I've gained amazing friends who share my passion for giving back.

Q: What advice would you give to someone considering becoming a mentor?

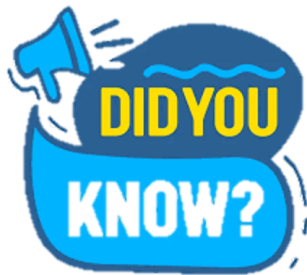
A: Becoming a mentor is about sharing your knowledge and experiences while supporting someone's growth. Start by understanding why you want to mentor and what you can offer. Listen actively to your mentee, set clear goals, and encourage them to think independently. Commit your time and energy, celebrating their progress along the way. Above all, create an open, trusting relationship where both of you can learn and grow together.

"What inspired me to become a mentor for



Kim J.

Volunteer Role: 1-1
Friend- Phone Buddy
Time at Compeer: 5
Months



Data provided by MentorNY

Compeer Buffalo is that I find joy and fulfillment in helping and providing support to others navigating the many challenges that come with life, including mental health challenges. Being a friend allows someone to express themselves freely, knowing that they are being heard and that they are important. I am happy to support Compeer Buffalo in any way that I can."

Youth with a mentor are:

- 92%** more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities.
- 75%** more likely to have held a leadership position in a club or sports team.
- 22%** more likely to have experienced a strong sense of belonging while growing up.

Adults who were mentored as youth report lasting, tangible effects:

- 74%** say that their mentor contributed significantly to their success later in life.
- 69%** of young adults say that this relationship helped them with issues related to their education.
- 58%** say their mentor has supported their mental health.



DID YOU
KNOW?



Did you know that when your match has ended, or you are waiting to be matched with a volunteer, that you are still part of the Compeer family? You're welcome to attend any activities and events, where you can meet new people and make new friends. This is all FREE for you and your household!





JANUARY AND FEBRUARY SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

1. Pizza & Positivity | Tuesday, January 7th | 6-7p

Join us at the Compeer office, 1179 Kenmore Ave Kenmore 14217 For our monthly group!



2. Buffalo Museum of Science | Saturday, January 18th | 10a-12p

Meet us at 1020 Humboldt Parkway, Buffalo 14211 for a fun educational experience!



3. Movie Night | Wednesday, January 22nd | 6:00-8:00p

Join us for a Family Friendly movie at the Compeer office!



4. Compeer Together (Zoom) | Tuesday, January 28th | 6-7p



5. Pizza & Positivity | Tuesday, February 4th | 6-7p

Join us at the Compeer office, 1179 Kenmore Ave Kenmore 14217 for our monthly group!



6. Palentine's | Wednesday, February 12th | 5:30-7p

Join us for bingo, prizes, and food at the North Buffalo Community Center, 203 Sanders Rd. Buffalo 14216



7. Craft Night | Wednesday, February 19th | 6-7p

Come to the Compeer office to paint miniature birdhouses!



8. Compeer Together (Zoom) Tuesday, February 25th | 6-7p



RSVP to cast your vote and help us pick the film we watch!

Options Include:

Despicable Me 4

Inside Out 2

The Garfield Movie

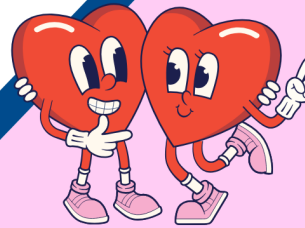
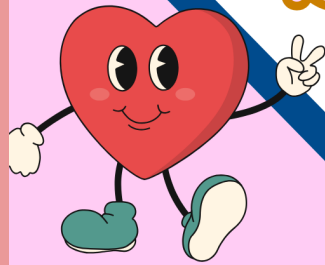
Kung Fu Panda 4

[To RSVP Click Here](#)

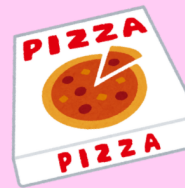
Compeer®

SAVE THE DATE

Palentine's 2025



FEBRUARY 12TH
NORTH BUFFALO COMMUNITY
CENTER
203 SANDERS RD,
BUFFALO 14216
5:30-7:00 PM
RSVP BY FEBRUARY 5TH



Join Us!

Compeer Connections

VOLUNTEER MIXER

We're thrilled to announce an upcoming Volunteer Social this **February!**



What to Expect

- Share Ideas:** Engage in meaningful conversations about your experiences and insights.
- Meeting Familiar and New Faces:** Expand your network and meet other passionate volunteers.
- Have Fun:** Enjoy a relaxed atmosphere with activities designed to entertain and foster connection.



We are thrilled to announce an upcoming Volunteer Social this February! While we're still finalizing the details, we want to give you a heads-up about this exciting opportunity to connect with fellow volunteers.

A Look at All the Fun We Had!

We are grateful for the wonderful experiences we shared over the last couple months.

We love seeing familiar faces as well as meeting new friends. If you are new to Compeer, haven't been to an activity in a while, or have never been to one, please consider joining us. 😊



Our Very First Pizza & Positivity Group!

Our Second Pizza & Positivity Meetup!



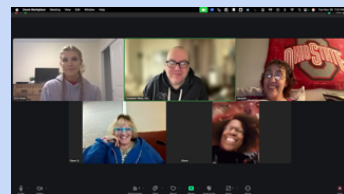
Friendsgiving 2024



We Had an Extraordinary Experience at the AKG Museum!



AKG Museum During our Guided Tour



Compeer Together!



Santa Paid a Visit at Winter Wonderland!



**Family Time at Winter
Wonderland**

**Social Activities
Volunteer Loise and
Staff Member Lori
Boyce's Grandson
Playing Reindeer
Games at Winter
Wonderland!**

Building Healthy Daily Habits for Mental Wellness



As we enter the new year, small daily habits can make a big difference in your mental health. Here's how to build a routine that supports your well-being every day.

1. Start Your Day with Intention

Begin your morning with a positive mindset:

- Gratitude: Reflect on what you're thankful for.
- Breathing: Take a few deep breaths to center yourself.
- Affirmations: Set a positive intention for the day ahead.

2. Move Your Body

Physical activity boosts mood and reduces stress.

- Walks: A quick 10-15 minute walk can clear your mind.
- Stretching: A few minutes of stretching helps release tension.
- Short Workouts: A brief 15-minute session can improve focus and energy.

3. Prioritize Sleep

Sleep is crucial for mental health.

- Consistent Schedule: Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
- Wind-Down Routine: Relax an hour before bed—avoid screens and engage in calming activities.

4. Practice Mindfulness

Stay present to reduce stress and improve focus.

- Mindful Eating: Pay attention to the taste and texture of your food.
- Breathing: Pause for deep breaths during your day.

5. Nourish Your Mind

Positive inputs shape your mental state.

- Books & Podcasts: Start your day with uplifting content.
- Limit Negative Media: Reduce exposure to distressing news or social media.

6. Set Boundaries & Practice Self-Compassion

Protect your energy and be kind to yourself.

- Learn to Say No: Prioritize your well-being.
- Celebrate Small Wins: Acknowledge your progress, no matter how small.

7. End Your Day with Reflection

Wrap up your day with a positive note.

- Gratitude Recap: Reflect on what went well.
- Relax: Try light stretching or meditation before bed.

Take Action

Pick one habit to focus on this week—whether it's gratitude, movement, or better sleep.



Community Events and Partnerships

TICKETS TO FRIENDSHIP



To Obtain Tickets Contact
Volunteer@compeerbuffalo.com

*Tickets are available on a first
Come First Served Basis *



Tickets Available:

Classic Lanes: 1 Free Game and Shoe Rental

Grand Island Fun Center: 1 Game of Mini Golf

Penn Dixie Fossil Park: General Admission

ComedySportz: General Admission to 1 Show



Rise of WNY Community Coffeehouse

Located at 1643 Hertel Ave. in Buffalo, [Rise of WNY Community Coffeehouse](#) is a community hub "that brings together in a common forum people with diverse backgrounds and interests." It's a warm, inviting place that uses a "pay what you can" model. Enjoy coffee and other drinks for a suggested price of \$1.00, or enjoy food such as bagels and muffins for the suggested price of \$2.00. If you don't have enough funds to cover the suggested purchase, you may pay what you can afford, with no judgment. Rise of WNY offers educational resources and community events, such as concerts and guest speakers. This is great place for Compeer matches to spend quality time together at affordable prices and in a friendly atmosphere! Compeer staff have frequented Rise of WNY, and we can speak to what a great space this really is!



Matches will have access to 2 tickets to ANY Walking or Bike tour on the Explore Buffalo Website.

View Explore Buffalos' [Walking Tours](#)

View Explore Buffalos' [Biking Tours](#)

Explore Buffalo Tour [FAQ'S](#)

[Click Here for Instructions on How to Get your Passes](#)

Mental Health Resources and Training Opportunities

Upcoming Training Dates (Virtual)

**January 14th, 2025 |
9:00am-1:30pm**

**March 11th, 2025 |
9:00am-1:30pm**

All registered participants will be required to complete the 2-hour online self-paced pre-work prior to attending the scheduled date from 9:00am-1:30pm.

To RSVP to attend a MHFA Training please send an email to Katie



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING



Walsh at
Katie@compeerbuffalo.org or Ebony Townes at
Volunteer@compeerbuffalo.org

As a valued part of our Compeer community, we want to provide you with the opportunity to learn the skills to recognize & respond to signs & symptoms of mental health challenges.

TRAINING INCLUDES

- 5-step action plan
 - Risk factors and warning signs of mental health challenges
 - Signs of Depression, Anxiety, Trauma, Psychosis, and Substance Misuse
 - Importance of early intervention
 - How to connect with professionals and offer support strategies
 - Increase confidence & likelihood to help someone in distress
- **Virtual trainings require you to complete a 2-hour online self-paced pre-work prior to attending a session.**
 - **You will have up to one week to complete the pre-work.**
 - **Virtual Trainings will be held on Zoom.**
 - **In-Person trainings will take place at Compeer Buffalo.**

If you have any questions please reach out below:

Katie Walsh, Director of Mental Health Education

katie@compeerbuffalo.org



Mental Health
FIRST AID
from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
MENTAL WELLBEING

QPR: Question, Persuade, Refer Training

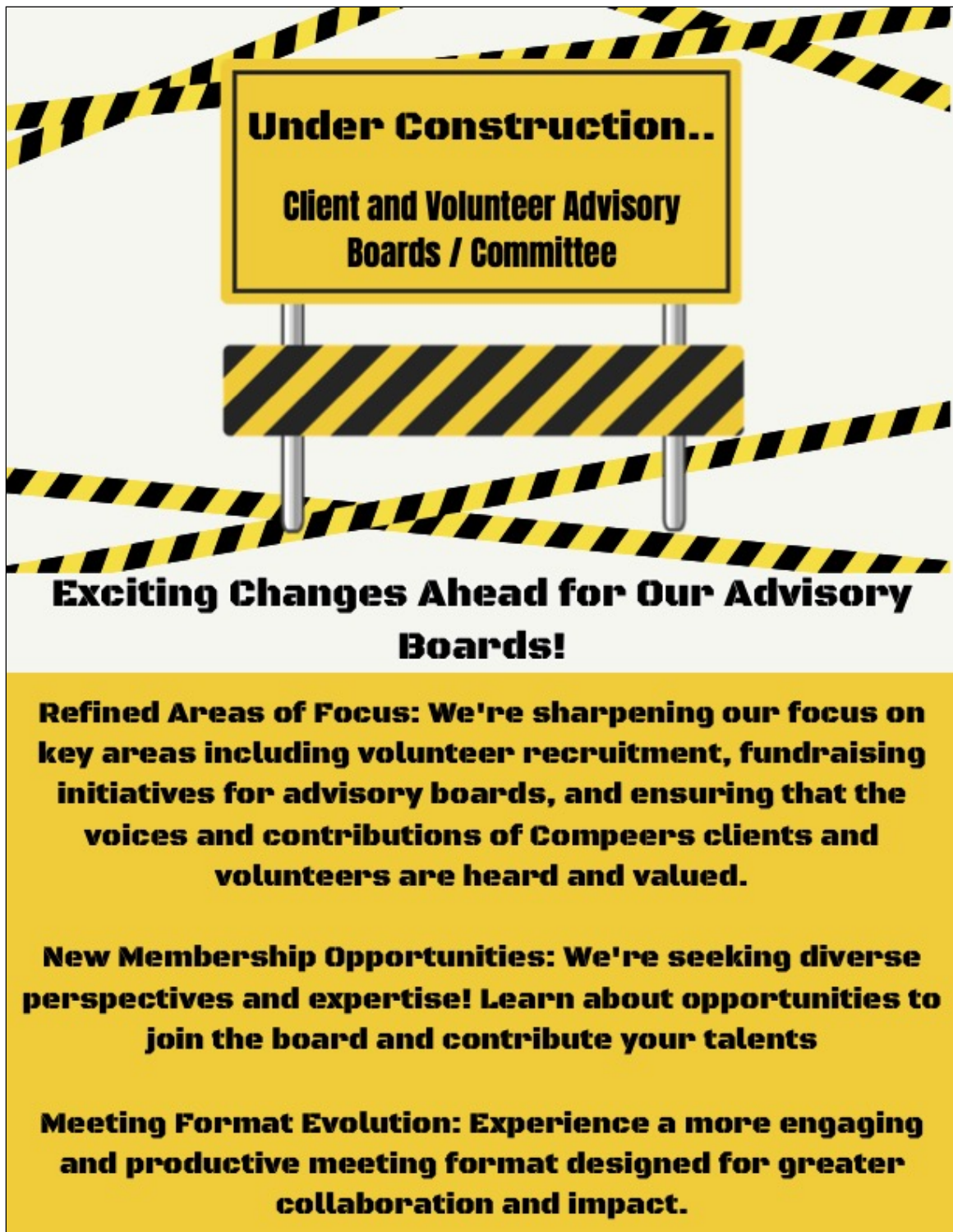


During the QPR training, you will learn effective strategies for asking questions to assess for suicidal ideation or intent, how to engage in active listening, and ways to persuade individuals to seek help. The training also emphasizes the importance of referring individuals to appropriate mental health professionals or crisis intervention services.

For more information on how to attend this training contact: Volunteer@compeerbuffalo.org

Getting Involved at Compeer

Take a look at some of the volunteer and client opportunities we have available for you!



Under Construction..

**Client and Volunteer Advisory
Boards / Committee**

**Exciting Changes Ahead for Our Advisory
Boards!**

Refined Areas of Focus: We're sharpening our focus on key areas including volunteer recruitment, fundraising initiatives for advisory boards, and ensuring that the voices and contributions of Compeers clients and volunteers are heard and valued.

New Membership Opportunities: We're seeking diverse perspectives and expertise! Learn about opportunities to join the board and contribute your talents

Meeting Format Evolution: Experience a more engaging and productive meeting format designed for greater collaboration and impact.

We are thrilled to inform you that the Client Advisory Boards and Volunteer Advisory Committee will be merging for a trial period of one year! This initiative aims to enhance collaboration. Our first meeting will take place in late January—stay tuned for the exact date!

We invite new members to join us in this exciting journey. Your insights and participation are vital as we shape the future together!

If you are interested in joining please reach out to [Raymond W](#), [Kelsey B](#), [Brittany C](#) or [Ebony T](#).



Happy Friendsiversary !

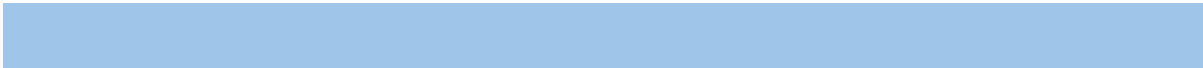


January

Evan D. & Scotty B. 1 year
Kendra D. & Kayla S. 3 Years
Karla R. & Nancy S. 3 Years
Michelle M. & Lizzy H 4 Years
Lisa W. & Jane M. 4 Years
Zakiyyah W. & Andrea S. 4 Years
Johnathan J. & Mason M. 5 Years
Amy K. & Lauren V. 5 Years
Makhiyah J. & Amanda B. 7 Years
MaryBeth L. & Rachel D. 7 Years
Baylee W. & Joe W. 8 Years

February

Diana W. & Alyssa P. 1 Year
Lucian K. & Keith G. 2 Years
Olivia-Jayla R. & MacKenzie S. 2 Years
David R. & Andrew G. 3 Years
Dennis C. & James S. 3 Years
Jacqueline G. & Ciara H. 4 Years
Shanna G. & Ann P. 4 Years
Olivia K. & Iryna M. 4 Years
Ashley R. & Adrienne B. 4 Years
Pamela R. & Nekeata L. 4 Years
Nathalie R. & Arezoo M. 5 Years
Michael W. & Jim M. 5 Years
Daiona W. & Allison A. 5 Years
Susan F. & Leslie K. 6 Years
Carlene S. & Melissa N. 10 Years
Wyatt B. & Samantha L. 11 Years
Sandra K. & Beth W. 14 Years





January Birthdays

Olivia B, Aixin C, Bruce D, Nancy D, Hope D, Carrie H, Allison J, Paul J, Thomas M, Jesse O, Shannon P, Nathaniel P, Maisha R, Maithili R, Jake S, Cassandra S, Deanna V. Miranda A. Krystle A. Connor B. Malcolm B. Noah B. Xander C. Braden D. Annabella D. Majesty E. Maxine E. Zackary F. Margaret F. Marisa F. Gesua G. Angeline H. Barbara H. Christine J. Glenn J. Jake J. Ryan K. Robert K. Haylee K. Alisha K. Kristal K. Michael K. Renee L. Theresa L. Shawn M. Thomas M. Makayla O. Gwendolyn P. Kellen R. Cheryl R. David R. Phyllis S. Ryan S. Lori S. Ray T. Khloe T. Sharon T. Tali T. Maria T. Dakota U. Harry V. Matthew W. Hareem Z

February Birthdays

Sunday A. Riley A. Wyatt B. Gregory B. Niko B. Aaron B. Willow B. Joseph B. Saige B. Jazzque C. Keith C. Jacqueline G. Karen G. Douglas G. Raychelle G. Piper G. Denise H. Autumn J. Robert J. Sandra K. Wayne K. Kathleen L. Cameron M. Adelina M. Jayden M. Robert M. J'Anna M. Samantha P. Rebecca P. Karla R. Jaxon S. James S. Renee S. Abigail S. Sarah S. Willie S. Milissa W. Michelle W. Danielle C. Suzanne C. Courtney G. Marissa G. Julie G. Caroline H. Stacy K. Loise P. Nicole P. Hunter P. Judith P. Ashley T. Sophia T. Lauren V. Aaron W.



988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

Need Support?

988 offers 24/7 judgment-free support for mental health, substance use, and more. **Text, call, or chat 988.**

988 offers 24/7 access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing mental health-related distress. That could be:

- Thoughts of suicide
- Mental health or substance use crises
- Emotional distress

<https://988lifeline.org>



[Click Here for Community Resources](#)

Staff Directory

To contact us, call (716)883-3331 & dial one of the following extensions:

Ashleigh Cieri: Director of Programs | Ashleigh@compeerbuffalo.org | Ext: 311

Alana Holm: Peer Support Program Coordinator | Alana@compeerbuffalo.org | Ext: 309

Brittany Cope: Lead Program Coordinator | Brittany@compeerbuffalo.org | Ext: 315

Ebony Townes: Volunteer Engagement Coordinator | Volunteer@compeerbuffalo.org | Ext 310

Hayley Kasprzycki: Client Engagement Coordinator | Hayley@compeerbuffalo.org | Ext 322

Kelsey Burch: Older Adult Engagement Coordinator | Kelsey@compeerbuffalo.org | Ext 324

Mark Gatti: Client Support Coordinator | Mark@compeerbuffalo.org | Ext 325

Raymond Wasielewski: Adult Engagement Coordinator | Raymond@compeerbuffalo.org | Ext 314

Christopher Batty: School Based Program Coordinator | Christopher@compeerbuffalo.org | Ext 319

Follow us for more updates!



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You can [unsubscribe](#) or [manage preference](#).