



mhca's e-Newsletter

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Celebrating Milestones Fuels Future Success

Are you ready to party?!? We're excited to celebrate our 35th anniversary with you throughout 2020 – not only because this is a significant milestone, but also because celebrating milestones together is proven to motivate and inspire us to attain even greater success in the future.

While it's common to come together around personal achievements like graduations or significant birthdays and anniversaries, we might easily forgo the opportunity to celebrate professional milestones with our peers because, let's face it, we're all busy. It's tempting to keep our heads down and focus on our never-ending to-do lists; however, when we fail to periodically step back to reflect on our progress and acknowledge our achievements, we're unconsciously diminishing the importance of our accomplishments, which reduces our intrinsic motivation and impacts future outcomes. Cooperating with others to work toward shared goals satisfies our need for belonging, and recognizing our shared achievements reinforces our bond and fuels our passion for ongoing association and collaboration.

Associations are generally created when groups of people with shared professions or passions agree to actively engage around what they have in common for mutual enrichment. In the 1980s, there were a

number of changes occurring within the behavioral healthcare industry –direct federal funding shifted to block grants to the states, focus shifted from community mental health for everyone to serving the chronically ill, and managed care began. Idealistic and talented individuals who'd been drawn to community mental health and recognized as visionary leaders now had to take a hard look at the economic side of their businesses and learn how to manage their resources as the industry evolved and funding became scarce. Concerned about the implications of these developments, a group of mental healthcare executives from across the country met several times during 1984 to discuss potential solutions. In September, 19 of these CEOs met in Orlando, Florida for the purpose of forming the Mental Health Corporations of America (**mhca**), and the first quarterly conference was held in Salt Lake City in March of 1985.

mhca was a godsend – a place where leaders shared ideas, pooling their talents and resources to find innovative solutions and creative ways to go after new funding and markets. When members were being dropped by their insurance carriers and having a difficult time getting adequate coverage, **mhca** stepped up and formed the Mental Health Risk Retention Group (MHRRG) – which still serves members' needs today. When increasing accountability demands for licensure and certification emerged, **mhca** developed the Customer Satisfaction Management System – which was just recently retired as the industry shifted from measuring satisfaction to engagement. As members began grappling with the challenges of mergers and acquisitions to achieve economies of scale, **mhca** developed a manual to help guide their efforts – and the updated version remains a valuable tool for members today.

While a lot of things have changed in the industry and at **mhca** over the past 35 years, some things have remained constant:

- The industry is in a state of perpetual and accelerating change;
- Competition in the marketplace is fierce; and
- **mhca** is still dedicated to advancing innovation and entrepreneurship in behavioral healthcare by enhancing leadership and strategic connections – and we're still the only national association with this focus.

When community mental health started, we were all heart and had to learn to operate like a business. Today, as our more tenured leaders look to pass the torch, it's important to ensure successors have not only the business acumen essential to succeed, but also the heart for this work and a passion for this mission. Despite changes in culture and funding, human needs are constant and you have to have empathy for your fellow humans to do this work well.

Our 35th anniversary is the culmination of many small moments personal to each of us and I look forward to reminiscing with you all throughout the year. We're thrilled to remain your association of choice – and we're looking forward to many more great years together. See you in 2020!



Have Something to Say?

We'd love to hear from you! **mhca** is looking for original articles, podcasts, videos and interviews with behavioral healthcare thought leaders.

Submitting a guest post is a great way to share your perspective and start conversations with your peers. If you're interested in seeing your work in this newsletter or online at mhca.com, email your ideas to Lonnie Parizek at lparizek@mhca.com.

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