

June 8, 2018



MHRT/C Certification Program Update

Save the Date!
MHRT/C Webinar - June 13

Profile of an MHRT/C Certified Professional: Elaine Haines

Although there is no one-size-fits-all job description for the MHRT/C certificate holder, we do know that there are certain common traits exemplified by professionals in the various roles utilizing the certification. Recently we had the opportunity to speak with two of our longest-serving certified MHRT/C's, having received their MHRT/C certifications in 1992, and who remain active and committed to providing community integration services in Maine.

Passion, optimism, high energy, and flexibility are just a few of the common characteristics they bring to their work, which just so happen to take place in very different settings. Coincidentally, each started their college career in a major not directly related to their human services work, until an advisor steered them to pursue studies in behavioral science and rehabilitation. Apparently it was something about their aptitude for relating to others.

In our first profile, we'll introduce you to Elaine Haines, presently with Healing Hearts, LLC, in Caribou, Maine.



Elaine was raised in Aroostook County and attended the University of Maine at Fort Kent following high school. She transferred to the University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI) for her second year, and despite being at the top of her class in the Criminal Justice program with her eye on the State Trooper Academy, her advisor thought she'd make a better social worker. Plus, he knew there was a dire need for qualified people in the workforce.

Elaine followed the guidance and completed her remaining two years at UMPI as a Behavioral Sciences major. Upon graduation, she went directly to work in a residential setting called Skyhaven Transitional Living Residence (known today as Skyhaven), operated by Aroostook Mental Health Center (AMHC). After three years, which included occasional overnight work, Elaine transferred to AMHC's out-patient department where she provided community integration services for the next 23 years. During this time, she received her MHRT/C certification, as well as her Social Work license (LSW). Elaine was dedicated to supporting people with severe and persistent mental illness and worked tirelessly to help them achieve and sustain stability in their lives.

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In March of 2012, Elaine experienced a medical emergency which prompted her to take the next two years off from work. Over time, her passion for the work and how she missed the clientele prompted her back into the workforce. She had no problem whatsoever finding a job. In fact, when she applied to the small agency she still works with today, the executive director said,

"I know I've helped people. Some of their lives have really improved."

"You're an angel that fell out of the sky. When can you start?" Currently, Elaine works part-time and appreciates having greater flexibility in her schedule. Occasionally she thinks about returning to full-time. She has always maintained her certifications, and thinks that the system is in transition. She looks forward to seeing even greater involvement by consumers and families in identifying the needs and necessary services, and helping to improve the system.

Elaine acknowledges there are many challenges in community integration work such as finding adequate transportation for clients get to their appointments, fewer beds and shortened hospital stays when people need acute care for stabilization, and a reduction of services when a client does not meet established eligibility requirements. Despite these challenges, Elaine

"If you give them a chance, people can make good use of the resources."

describes herself as a stubborn person, not willing to quit, and wants only to help clients improve the quality of their lives, as well as their longevity. She turns to her family and other experienced colleagues for support when she feels stress overload. They seem to recognize, validate and appreciate her hard work which helps her to maintain a healthy perspective and regain her sense of optimism. Elaine recommends workers get regular exercise and do things they enjoy to reduce their stress. She looks forward to trying a yoga class as she knows it has health benefits. She also advises not to take the work too personally, and practice resiliency. MHRT/Cs must have good self-care and stress management and Elaine says that with the high prevalence of trauma and increasingly complex cases, it's critical to practice trauma-informed care with healthy, appropriate boundaries.

Thank you Elaine for the many years of service and for your high level of dedication to the people you serve.

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MHRT/C Webinar Save-the-Date

Date/time: Wednesday, June 13, 2018, 9:30 - 10:30am

A link to the webinar will be forwarded to agency contacts as we get closer to the date.

Please send us your questions about the MHRT/C certification program by **June 8th**. We'd like to have them in advance to incorporate into the webinar. You will be able to submit questions during the webinar via chat, but we might not be able to answer them live.

Send your questions with the Subject: Webinar Questions to Scott Bernier at: sbernier@maine.edu

Topic areas for your questions might include:

- Continuing education requirement
- Code of Conduct
- Credit for Work Experience
- Academic Programs
- Non-Academic Training Options
- Other challenges or concerns

Please keep your questions coming!
We'll continue to update the FAQs page on our website.

What will happen if I don't update my full MHRT/C certificate? Full MHRT/C certificates that are not updated with an expiration date, will be invalid after January 1, 2020. Please send us your complete current contact information at the email address below. We'll issue new certificates over the next several months.
updatemhrtcontactinfo@cfl-muskie.org

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3

For more information on the MHRT/C updates: WWW.CFL-MUSKIE.org