



VANDERHEYDEN

Giving new life to youth, adults and families

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VANDERHEYDEN AND CHINESE COMMUNITY CENTER PARTNER TO TRAIN PEER ADVOCATES

Wynantskill, NY – Vanderheyden is partnering with Chinese Community Center of Albany to recruit and train Youth and Family Peer Advocates. The training is part of a state-funded grant through the Office of Mental Health and is designed to increase the number of trained Peer Advocates across New York.

Vanderheyden was awarded \$275,000 as one of ten organizations receiving this grant. Chinese Community Center is one of five grassroots organizations partnering with Vanderheyden across six counties to develop the Peer Advocate workforce.

"Vanderheyden is proud to have been chosen to expand Peer Advocate training in New York State. Peer Advocates play a critical role in bringing behavioral and mental health services to underserved communities," says Karen Carpenter, President & CEO of Vanderheyden.

Chinese Community Center has been a key link for providing these services to the Chinese and Asian American Pacific Islander communities within and around the Capital Region. Chinese Community Center promotes the training through creative outreach, including through bubble tea get-togethers and Chinese calligraphy events.

"This initiative creates meaningful opportunities for CCC and the broader AAPI community in the Capital Region to expand culturally responsive peer advocacy and connection, ensuring youth and families feel supported, empowered, and not alone in navigating mental health challenges. We truly appreciate Vanderheyden's partnership and support," says Yunxiao Zhang, President of Chinese Community Center.

Peer Advocates receive stipends for completing each of three levels of training, totaling up to \$2,250.



Vanderheyden is a charitable 501(c)(3) corporation. Charitable gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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After training is complete, Peer Advocates are eligible for employment opportunities throughout New York State at community centers, mental and behavioral health facilities, homeless shelters, hospitals, and other non-profit organizations.

In addition to Chinese Community Center, Vanderheyden's grassroots partners on this project include Wait House in Warren and Washington County, Mechanicville Community Center in Saratoga County, Troy Drug-Free Community Coalition in Rensselaer County, and Noteworthy Resources of Albany, Schenectady and Rensselaer Counties.

For more information, please contact Mary Beth Fagle, Vanderheyden's Youth and Family Peer Program Coordinator at mfagle@vanderheyden.org or Yunxiao Zhang, President of Chinese Community Center at <https://www.cccalbany.org/>.

Vanderheyden began as the Troy Orphan Asylum in 1833 and has been providing services for more than 190 years. Today our facilities offer a safe haven for youth, adults and families who have experienced family disruption, trauma, abuse, emotional difficulty, developmental disability and learning problems. The Richard A. Desrochers Educational Center at Vanderheyden is a Regents accredited 7-12 grade program. It provides education to individuals who are at risk of not succeeding at school, and those in need of a special education. Vanderheyden is a designated Children and Family Treatment and Support Services Provider (CFTSS). The agency is committed to a family-focused, trauma-informed and community-based system of care. Every day at Vanderheyden, we work to change lives to save lives. For more information visit www.vanderheyden.org and follow us on social media.



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