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Horizon Behavioral Health Announces Peer Impact Awards *Nominate a Peer Recovery Specialist for Central Virginia's First-Ever Peer Impact Award*

Lynchburg, VA – Horizon Behavioral Health, in partnership with The News & Advance, is proud to announce the inaugural **Peer Impact Awards**. This first of its kind award will recognize Peer Recovery Specialists across organizations serving the communities of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell, and the City of Lynchburg who walk alongside individuals from surviving to thriving.

One winner will receive an honorary award, a featured article from The News & Advance, a professional photo session and a testimonial video to proudly share their story with our community and beyond!

Do you know a Peer that has provided a significant impact in someone's life? Are you a Peer that goes above and beyond in your community? [Click here to submit a nomination](#) or learn more about peers below.

What is a Peer Recovery Specialist?

According to the [Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services \(DBHDS\)](#), peer support services are a vital, evidence-based resource that helps individuals build resiliency, improve wellness, and achieve sustained recovery. These services are person-centered and non-clinical, meaning peers focus on connection, shared understanding, and empowerment rather than diagnosis or therapy. A Peer Recovery Specialist (PRS) is a trained professional who uses their own lived experience with mental health and/or substance use challenges to support others on their recovery journey. Peer Recovery Specialists provide encouragement, mentorship, advocacy, and hope by walking alongside individuals as they navigate recovery, treatment, and wellness.

They may support individuals recovering from: mental health challenges, substance use disorders, or co-occurring mental health and substance use condition, offering a unique level of empathy, trust, and understanding that can help individuals feel seen, supported, and hopeful throughout their recovery process.

Contest Timeline

Nominations are open now through June 11, 2026. The voting period will follow from June 15 through June 25. Winners will be announced in early July.

We invite community members, colleagues, and individuals served by peers to submit nominations honoring peers who inspire hope, connection, and recovery. Help us celebrate the incredible impact of peer support in our region. [Click here to nominate a Peer today!](#)



NOMINATE A PEER
by June 11

PRESENTED BY THE
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Horizon Behavioral Health has been the primary public behavioral healthcare provider in Central Virginia for more than 58 years. In the last year, Horizon provided services to approximately 12,000 adults and children, caring for individuals with mental illness, substance use disorders and intellectual disabilities across the lifespan. Horizon is accredited by CARF International. This represents the highest level of accreditation that can be given to a behavioral health organization. To learn more about Horizon please visit HorizonBH.org.