



Cornerstone



Cari Guthrie, LCSW-C

Chief Executive Officer & President

Education:

- MSW in Social Work. UMD 1995
- LCSW-C since 1997
- Approved supervisor for social workers and professional counselors

Current Role:

As the President and CEO at Cornerstone Montgomery, I am responsible for the overall operations and administration of the organization. My work primarily focuses on partnerships, growth, education, and advocacy to move our mission forward in the community and make sure we maintain our collaborations and quality of care.

Passion for Cornerstone Montgomery:

What I love most about working at Cornerstone Montgomery is creating positive and supportive partnerships and policies to help make the jobs easier for staff and services better for clients. Those partnerships with public officials, government stakeholders, and organizational colleagues are a key aspect of my job. This role allows me to identify ways to have a positive impact on the people we serve and the community.

Professional Affiliations:

- Member of Nonprofit Montgomery Board of Directors
- Member of Bethesda Chevy Chase Rotary
- Member of CBH and National Council for Mental Wellbeing

Narrative Bio:

Cari A. Guthrie is a seasoned leader in the field of mental health and nonprofit management, currently serving as the President and CEO of Cornerstone Montgomery. With a Master of Social Work (MSW) from the University of Maryland, Cari has dedicated over 30 years of her career to the organization, beginning as a residential counselor and advancing to her current position as CEO. In her role, Cari oversees the overall operations and administration of Cornerstone Montgomery, focusing on partnerships, growth, education, and advocacy to further the organization's mission of providing essential mental health services.

Cari's journey with Cornerstone Montgomery is a testament to her passion and dedication. After three years as a residential counselor, she pursued her graduate degree and was happily working in Baltimore when an opportunity at Cornerstone Montgomery opened up. She returned to the organization as a supervisor and has since held various leadership positions, eventually becoming CEO, a role she has held for over 11 years. Throughout her tenure, Cari has played a pivotal role in advancing the organization's mission, implementing evidence-based practices like Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders, Motivational Interviewing, Stages of Change, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). She has also been instrumental in developing a robust staff training and orientation program, navigating two significant mergers, and securing over \$6 million in community bond funding to renovate commercial and residential properties.

One of Cari's most significant achievements was leading the organization through its transition to a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC), securing more than \$10 million in SAMHSA grants. Under her leadership, Cornerstone Montgomery has grown in both size and scope, including the purchase and renovation of its main administrative office in Rockville.

Leading through the challenges of COVID-19 has been a defining experience for Cari. It reinforced her belief in transparent communication and the importance of curiosity and listening. The pandemic challenged her to adapt, hold people accountable, and set clear expectations, all while navigating an unprecedented crisis.

Cari's leadership style is deeply influenced by her personal values of transparency, flexibility, and empowerment. She believes in empowering her team to take ownership of their roles, solve problems, and grow as leaders themselves. Her approach is rooted in her own experience of being empowered by her supervisor early in her career, and she strives to pass that same encouragement on to others. Outside of her professional life, Cari enjoys reading, cooking, watching movies and sports, and walking her dachshund, Percy. She is a passionate traveler and loves listening to live jazz music. These hobbies allow her to recharge and bring fresh creativity and perspective to her leadership role.

Cari is driven by the belief that fostering strong partnerships and advocating for mental health services can have a transformative impact on both individuals and the community. Her commitment to transparency and open decision-making continues to push the boundaries of the field, ensuring that Cornerstone Montgomery remains a leader in mental health care.