



VOLUME 25, ISSUE 2 | Winter 2026

# Centered HOPE

*The Center's Newsletter for News, Reflections, and Support*

## HOPE25! Celebrations & Generosity

To raise awareness of The Center for Loss and Bereavement's 25 years of groundbreaking work in grief and loss, throughout the summer and fall, we celebrated with a series of community events called HOPE25! These events included:



- HOPE25! Day at the Phillies
- Keller Williams Golf Outing
- HOPE25! at Branch Creek Taphouse
- Nello's Corner HOPE25! Art Show and Open Mic at Generations of Indian Valley
- HOPE25! at the Theater! Playcrafters of Skippack



## HOPE25! Committee Members

Dr. Janine Darby  
Andy Dzedzic  
Shirley Elrod  
(CLB Co-Founder)  
Doug Eschbach

Brielle Eve  
Christopher Grosso  
Dr. Pamula Hart  
Christina Larkin

Christine Liberaski  
Stephanie Marjoram  
Maggie Pugliese  
Christine Smith  
(CLB Co-Founder)

## The Center Welcomes Six New Board Members

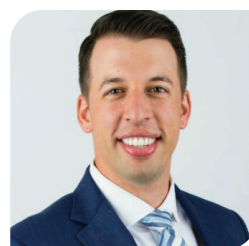
The Center for Loss and Bereavement is six people stronger by adding additional leaders to the Board of Directors. Joining the existing Board members Christopher Smith (Chair), Beth Hunt (Vice Chair), Megan Brody, Lisa Hart, Tien-Yueh Kubach, and Suzanne Miller, the new Directors are:



**Michelle Chandler**  
*Thermo Fisher Scientific*



**Melanie Graham**  
*Trinity Health*



**Ian Klinger**  
*Liberty Point Advisors*



**PJ McGinnis**  
*Lamb McErlane, PC*



**Dawn Pataki**  
*Zelis*



**Shalie Sobers**  
*AVEVA*

## From Christopher Grosso, MA, MFA, Executive Director

Dear Friends  
of the Center,

At the Center, we often use the word 'hope.' Our 25th anniversary this year was branded HOPE25, and this newsletter is titled with hope. I have a big 'Carry the Hope' banner in my office, which is a phrase I've adopted for my work. So I shouldn't have been surprised the other day in a social setting when an acquaintance asked me what "all the hope stuff" was about and what hope means to people experiencing grief. It's a fair question. I answered without giving it much thought, which is often the most honest answer. Here is roughly what I said:

*Hope is universal to all people, but unique to each person. That is what gives it such power. Hope for you is different than hope for me. You might hope for something to happen, like having a day when you don't think of the person you lost. Or, inversely, you may hope that you'll never go a day without thinking of the person you lost. Some hope for reunions in the afterlife. Some hope for peace of mind, or to find love again. Some hope for normalcy. The list is infinite.*

We always say, rightfully so, that grief from loss is a part of being human. So is hope. Every person has hope. Every hope is different. During those days when you feel hopeless, remember that hope is an intrinsic part of your humanness. It is there.

Yet sometimes we need help tapping into that hope, or acknowledging it, or finding where it has been hiding.

Maybe you hope that there is help available. There is. Let us know if you need help finding your hope.

**Carry the Hope!**

With my best,



Christopher

**Feel free to email Christopher at  
[cgrosso@bereavementcenter.org](mailto:cgrosso@bereavementcenter.org)**



## Our Mission

The Center for Loss and Bereavement is a non-profit resource of specialized knowledge and professional support that provides meaningful connection and restorative guidance for those impacted by grief.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Christopher Smith	Suzanne Miller	Ian Klinger
Megan Brody	Lisa Hart	PJ McGinnis
Beth Hunt	Michelle Chandler	Dawn Pataki
Tien-Yueh Kubach	Melanie Graham	Shalie Sobers

For more information about our Board of Directors and Membership, please visit: [bereavementcenter.org/board-of-directors](http://bereavementcenter.org/board-of-directors)

### CO-FOUNDERS & DIRECTORS EMIRETA

Shirley Elrod      Christine Smith

### DIRECTORY

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# Children's Programs

## NELLO'S CORNER

It may come as a surprise to many that our **Nello's Corner Program** has been offering peer bereavement support groups to children, teens, and their caregivers for 21 years without passing any of the costs to the participating families. Removing this barrier ensures that every family who comes seeking a community of understanding and solace is not turned away. Much is needed so that this signature, well-respected children's program of the Center can be of the highest quality.

### Did you know...

- Nello's Corner is **partially** funded through a family foundation in memory of Nello Naticchione IV. Additional funding is necessary for the program to be offered at **no cost** to families.
- Our team of group facilitators are **professional staff** of the Center, specialized in the field of bereavement. This ensures that expertise and high-quality discussions and activities are brought to every group.



Volunteer Training Spring 2025



A crafty Community Club of Collegeville member made Worry Worms for use in our groups.

- A focused, experiential 12-hour training course for potential volunteers is held once a year and offered **free of charge** by our Center. We invest because the sixteen volunteers utilized each year for this program provide **648 hours** of essential, hands-on support to our staff and for the youth.
- Groups for caregivers are offered **free of charge** and held concurrently with the youth groups, presenting a rare opportunity for adults to exchange resources and share challenges in supporting their grieving children. The groups are often described by participants as “lifesaving” and “invaluable”.
- Our Nello's Corner building is leased, not owned by the Center – a necessary but costly expense. **Fourteen groups** for ages 4 through high school, and their caregivers use multiple rooms from September through May.
- **Dependency on in-kind Donations** of furniture and supplies, as well as upkeep of our space, is primarily provided by individuals, community clubs/organizations, and partners.
- The cost for one child and caregiver to attend Nello's Corner for 18 groups (8 months) is **\$1560.97**.

**For more information about Nello's Corner, please visit our website or call 610-222-4110.**

## Expressing Grief Through Art

In recognition of **Children's Grief Awareness Month** and in conjunction with the Center's **HOPE25 celebration**, a **Nello's Corner Art Show** was held at Generations of Indian Valley during the month of November. The display included photography, sketches, wood carvings, canvases, masks, and more. Submissions were created by children of Nello's Corner, Camp Millie, their caregivers, clients, adult group members, and volunteers. The images of grief, life, and hope helped to raise awareness of the many colors, textures, and reflections of those experiencing profound loss and spoke to all who attended.



# Time, Talent, and Treasure

The word “**philanthropy**” comes from the Greek “*philos*” (loving) and “*anthropos*” (human being), literally meaning “love of humanity.”

Today, philanthropy is often cited as giving of time, talent, or treasure. We have much philanthropy to celebrate at the Center, and **here are just a few highlights...**



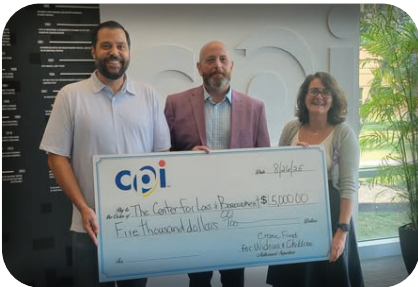
The Center was honored in October to receive a generous donation of **\$14,588 from Keller Williams Real Estate Blue Bell & Lafayette Hill**. This gift represents proceeds from their Charity Golf Outing in September, which each year benefits two non-profits. This year we were grateful to be a beneficiary. Thank you, Keller Williams, for being so supportive of non-profits in the communities you serve.



We are grateful for the team at **Harmon's Heart** who came by the Center to make a generous gift to Nello's Corner, our children and caregiver program. It was wonderful to see them again, and for the support of donor-funded Nello's Corner. ❤️



We are grateful for **Community Club of Collegeville** for their generous donation of wish list items for Nello's Corner, right in time to kickoff our new year of free children/teen programs.



Thank you **Crane Charitable Funds** for your generous \$5,000 donation to help all find hope! Special shout out to Justin from Crane for his support of the Center!



Our corporate partner, **Allan Myers Inc.**, fosters an inspiring culture of philanthropy and giving across their entire organization. A part of this culture is their Helping Hands Up Committee (HHU).



An employee (who wishes to remain anonymous) was awarded the company's **Legacy Award** in recognition of his steadfast devotion to multiple local nonprofits through the HHU Committee. He generously donated his monetary award for the Center to host CLB Special Summer Family Gathering at the Elmwood Park Zoo on August 10.

Families of our Nello's Corner and Camp Millie programs enjoyed all day zoo admission, reserved pavilion, catered Philly-style lunch (including water (wooder!), soft pretzels, fruit, tomato pie, Italian hoagies, cheesesteaks, chips and Tastykake's), a visit from the Zoo's new bearded dragon, arts and crafts, carousel rides, and a brief moment of remembrance.



## THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

**10 new volunteers** since July 1

**10 newly trained** children's program volunteers since July 1

**1,430 hours** in Fiscal Year 2024-2025

**300 hours** for fundraising events,  
**570** for Camp Millie, and  
**560** for Nello's Corner



## LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS (LPC)!

The Center's own **Hannah Feehery** and **Brian McCaffrey** can add some new credentials to their already impressive resumes as both earned licensure as professional counselors from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. To earn an LPC, a master's degree in counseling is required, along with 3,000 hours of supervised clinical experience, and passing The National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE) given by the National Board for Certified Counselors. ***Congratulations Hannah and Brian!!***

## Featured Clinician Q&A

### Brian McCaffrey, LPC, CT, MAC, MBA

Therapist, Group Facilitator, Educator



**Q:** *Can you share a bit about your professional background and how you ended up at the Center?*

**A:** To paraphrase Robert Frost, I took the road less traveled. Following my graduation from Villanova University with a business degree, I completed a nearly 30 year IT career that included over 20 years working for Wawa. I had a variety of roles with all sorts of diverse responsibilities, from strategic planning to enterprise data management, and I completed my MBA studies as well. Encouraged by my own grief counselor and informed by my own grief experiences, I decided I wanted to work as a grief therapist. I left my IT career to complete a Master's in Counseling program at Arcadia University. While a student in the program I completed a 2 year internship with the Center and, upon my graduation, they hired me.

**Q:** *Knowing you had very specific professional goals, post IT career, what was one thing that kept you motivated to achieve them?*

**A:** I benefited in my own life from grief counseling and from family and friends who supported me through several different losses. As a recipient of that support, I was motivated to invest in myself to get the necessary education and training to provide support to others, to give back.

**Q:** *What inspires you to work with the grieving population?*

**A:** It's a humbling privilege to share space with people who are grieving a loss. I am inspired to witness people whose grief ignites a desire in themselves to grow, to change, to find renewed purpose. They go into the world with a different sense of themselves, more aware of the pain of others in the world, and with increased compassion and empathy.

**Q:** *How would you describe your therapeutic style for anyone interested in working with you?*

**A:** I strive to meet my clients where they are on their grief journey, to give them space to share, to companion with them, and to provide resources that inform about grief, loss, and mourning.

**Q:** *Your colleagues often note that your ability to find resources, articles, and information on any given topic is unmatched! If you could share one inspiring quote to represent grief, what would it be?*

**A:** Thanks! I am endlessly curious and enjoy learning about many different topics. There are so many wonderful quotes, essays, and poems about grief. Here's one I find helpful:

***"We all want to do something to mitigate the pain of loss or to turn grief into something positive, to find a silver lining in the clouds. But I believe there is real value in just standing there, being still, being sad."*** —John Green

# Specialized Adult Support Groups – What to Expect

- Facilitation by Center staff who are professionals in the field of grief and group facilitation
- Peer to peer format with guidance from the facilitator to keep conversations on track
- Groups specialized by relationship loss or cause, and often further divided by time of life of participants such as in our Loss of Spouse groups – different than general bereavement groups
- Predictable group size and members
- Convenient access to Center services such as counseling or additional group participation

Groups are scheduled as six-week sessions with a \$90 fee except where noted. There is a phone intake and registration process for all groups. Please reach out to us through our website's **Request Information** tab or call 610-222-4110 to find your seat in one of our Adult Support Groups.

## Middle Life Loss of Spouse/Partner

Mondays: January 5,12,19, 26,  
February 2, 9: 6:00-7:00 p.m.

## Loss Due to Suicide

Thursdays: January 8, 15, 22, 29,  
February 5, 12: 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

## Mature Loss of Spouse/Partner

Fridays: January 9, 16, 23, 30  
February 6, 13 12 - 1:30 p.m.

## Monthly Loss of Child

For adults who have experienced the death of a child as a teen or adult

2nd Monday, September – July, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.  
3rd Mondays, September – July, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

## Biweekly Young Adult Grief Support Groups (YAGS)

For ages 19-29 who have experienced significant death loss(es)

Every other Wednesday, September through May  
7:00 – 8:15 p.m.

Virtual and in-person options (No Fee)

## Check Out Our Website for Anticipated Death-Related Loss Groups to be Scheduled for the Late Winter/Spring!

Adult Loss of Sibling

Adult Loss of Parent

Loss of Spouse/Partner

Loss due to Substance Use – for family members or friends

Grief Wellness at the Farm – offsite; mixed relationship losses



*Grief Wellness at the Farm provides exploration of grief using different modalities, such as gardening during a recent spring session.*



*Support Group Room – Our welcoming space for group members to share and connect*

# Camp Millie 2026 is Coming! Registration Opens January 1st



## Rebuilding After Loss

June 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th • 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Central Community Center, Lansdale, PA

Ages 6 –14 years

Campers provide their own transportation and bag lunches. Registration fee per camper is \$100, which includes all activities, t-shirts, snacks, and lunch on the last day. Family discounts and financial assistance are available. Priority given to new and second year campers. Visit our website or call 610-222-4110 to learn more and register.

The Center for Loss and Bereavement aims to provide specialized grief education and consultation to support the needs of our local community. By partnering with mental health professionals, businesses, agencies and education systems, we can offer a variety of tailored services to increase our community's awareness, sensitivity, and responsiveness to the grief process.

## NOW OFFERING GRIEF WEBINARS!

- Webinars available for purchase (individual and group rates)
- CEU's available for eligible professionals
- Topic-focused grief education, at your leisure

## Intro to Grief Webinar Series- Available Now!

Grief 101

Types of Grief

Resiliency, Rebirth, and Resourcefulness

## Children's Grief Webinar

For more information and registration,  
visit [bereavementcenter.org/professional-education](http://bereavementcenter.org/professional-education)

## Did you know...

that we have a variety of Tipsheets available on our website? Download and print these topic-specific resources at your convenience by visiting [bereavementcenter.org/clb-grief-resources](http://bereavementcenter.org/clb-grief-resources)





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the-center-for-loss-and-bereavement](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-center-for-loss-and-bereavement)



### **Did You Know...**

that our Center relies on the generosity of individual contributions? Your support powers our mission. Visit our

website for ways to contribute and become a source of hope.

[www.bereavementcenter.org/donate](http://www.bereavementcenter.org/donate)

Please consider making a gift to help the Center provide support for those experiencing grief today, and for those who will experience it tomorrow. It is because of the generosity of people like you that we can answer calls, emails, and online requests for help with a YES!



[www.bereavementcenter.org/donate](http://www.bereavementcenter.org/donate)

