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## Donor Profile DR. JOHN & LINDA LEWIS



**Q: How did you come to be involved in giving to community organizations, specifically Vera French?**

A: This is a warm and caring community that has given our family, immigrants from Canada, a wonderful place to live. Giving back is easy. We have experienced chronic mental illness in our family and Vera French has provided support, care, housing and stability. We feel very fortunate to have this mental health center in Davenport.

**Q: Why is mental health an important area of support for you?**

A: We are aware of the prevalence of mental illness and know scores of families affected as we are. Indeed, the identification and treatment of mental illness is a national crisis today. What could be more important than trying, in a small way, to help solve the many issues?

**Q: If you could relay one message about mental health to others, what would it be?**

A: My message about mental illness to all who listen is that mental illnesses are biologically based brain diseases, poorly understood relative to all other medical specialties. The individual is not responsible for this illness, and cannot deal with symptoms through sheer force of will any more than a cancer victim can. Some day medical science will understand the brain better, but it cannot come soon enough!

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# FOUNDATION FORWARD FALL 2017



## NEW FOUNDATION MISSION

The Vera French Foundation supports the mental health of our community by inspiring compassionate awareness and generous giving.



## The Beginning of ACT Assertive Community Treatment

On August 18th, Vera French announced some very exciting news for the community! With generous funding from Genesis Philanthropy, we will be starting the state of Iowa's 6th Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team. ACT is an evidence-based treatment in the form of a crisis response team. Its goal is to engage individuals with

difficult-to-treat mental health conditions and provide them with services wherever and whenever those services are needed. An ACT team responds to the needs of our community 24/7, 365 days a year. The six-member team will be launched by the end of the year.

**"ACT means no excuses accepted. We go to you."**

-Chris McCormick-Pries, Clinical Director

# WE ALL HAVE STUFF

Vera French is the Title Sponsor of a campaign by Mickle Communications to attack teen depression and suicide in our community. Suicide among young people is not easy to discuss, but it is a topic that cannot be ignored. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for ages 13 to 19, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The campaign consists of a new version of Mickle Communications' documentary, *If You Only Knew: The Journey Through Teen Depression and Suicide*, a traveling mural,

videos and podcasts of area youth and adults discussing the "stuff" that once held them back, and a video to show to area schools with a Q&A session to follow that is designed to reach students who may suffer from depression.



Mike Mickle, Chris McCormick Pries, and Mayor Frank Klipsch unveil the We All Have Stuff mural outside of the Vera French Community Mental Health Center.

## Employee Spotlight

### Jen Cobb, LMHC - School Based Services Program Manager

**Q: How long have you been working in the mental health field?**

A: I have been working in the mental health field for 6 years. Over the last 6 years, I have worked in a variety of settings but I have found School Based Therapy to be the most rewarding and best fit for my skillset. I took the role of School Based Program Manager on July 24, 2017 and have enjoyed transitioning into a leadership role within Vera French.

**Q: If someone is unfamiliar with School Based Services, what is one thing you would want them to know?**

A: School Based Services allow for accessibility and flexibility for families who are seeking mental health services by removing barriers that may exist when using traditional outpatient services. Treatment takes place in the school, which is a familiar place to both the child and parent. The school based therapists become an integral part of the child's success in the school by providing mental health education to staff and collaborating on interventions and strategies to help the child improve skills and behaviors at school and home.

**Q: When you aren't working incredibly hard at Vera French, what do you like to do in your free time?**

A: I enjoy spending time with my husband, three children, dog, and two cats. We are an active bunch and like to participate in community events and go on small trips to create memories.



The Vera French Foundation presents  
*Unmasking Mental Health Gala*



*October 28, 2017*  
*6:00 p.m.*

**Waterfront Convention Center**  
**Bettendorf, IA**

The Vera French Foundation is excited to re-introduce a gala event after a five-year absence. The event theme will be Unmasking Mental Health and will focus on destigmatizing mental health in our community. The event will be hosted at the **Waterfront Convention Center** on **Saturday, October 28, 2017** at **6:00 p.m.**

We are pleased to host author Joan Becker as our event speaker, whose personal story centers around her family's struggle to find help for their son, Mark, who lives with paranoid schizophrenia. She is the author of *Sentenced to Life: Mental Illness, Tragedy, and Transformation*. We invite you to join us as Joan shares her family's story and offers hope, help, and compassion for those living with mental illness or for those whose families have been affected by mental illness.

A special thank you to our title sponsor, Genesis Health System, and the rest of our sponsors - Rouse Consulting, Lujack's, Crawford Company, Mel Foster Co., Honkamp Krueger, Dr. Peter and Merriam Rink, Russell, Townsend Engineering, and Tri-City Electric Co.

Buy Your Tickets Today at:  
[verafrenchmhc.org/gala.html](http://verafrenchmhc.org/gala.html)