



Seattle Counseling Service is a community resource that advocates, educates and serves to advance the social well being and mental health of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender communities.

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New Board Members!

We are thrilled to welcome the fabulous **Mac Scotty McGregor** and **Debbie Carlsen** to our Board of Directors! We're looking forward to some stellar collaboration and are honored to have both of them on board.

Group Round-Up

Monday:

Gender Process Group*
Tobacco Cessation**

Tuesday:

NEON Health Night**
NEON Peer Meeting+
Queer POC Process Group+

Message from the Director

Happy New Year!

I love this time of year and the opportunity it gives us to reflect on the past while planning for the future. This year as I considered my goals for the year ahead, I realized that it's helpful to reframe the idea of "resolutions" by asking myself instead what I am committing to. This way, I'm avoiding the looming pressure of a resolution hanging over my head, and instead committing to making positive changes. This simple change seems to facilitate a sense of letting go with appreciation for past and future accomplishments.

The past year has seen many challenges for SCS and we have all made some sacrifices, but we are moving forward feeling confident in our commitment to improvement not only as individuals within the community but as an agency as well. The possibilities for positive growth are endless! I feel fortunate to have the support of such an amazing community through what is sure to be an exciting year.

Ann McGettigan
Executive Director

Comings & Goings

Wednesday:

Women OUT - crystal meth harm reduction**
Ingersoll Gender Center weekly meeting**

*Must be an SCS Client

**Drop-In

+Open to the public/Registration required

Finding QPOC Community LGBTQ People of Color Process Group

This group's aim is to provide a safe place for queer people of color to speak openly about their life challenges, connect with others, and build community. Participants will leave the group with a clear sense of their own cultural and social identities, and ideas for how to promote health and happiness in their lives.

Meeting: Tuesdays
6-7:30pm
Cost: FREE!

To register or for more info, contact Christina or Joshua at 206.323.1768.

Looking forward to 2012!

We asked some of our staff members to share their goals for 2012 with us. Here is what they had to say:

Cross Fit Classes!



Staff and friends gathered to celebrate John Meehan's retirement

Long time SCS therapist [John Meehan](#) is retiring! John has been with SCS since April of 2001. His low-key hilarity, consistent optimism and wide range of life and professional experience have gone a long way in helping clients and coworkers. We're all truly grateful for John's inspired service to our community - Thanks, John!

It is also time for our winter intern comings and goings. Many thanks go out to [Jennifer Wagner](#) and [Leslie Fleming](#) who have just finished their year with us. Good luck, you two!

Finally, we'd like to give a warm welcome to incoming interns [Kate Sherman](#) (Antioch University) and [Lauren Eaton](#) (Seattle University).

New Legislative Session

New Opportunities for Positive Change

As we head into a new legislative session, we're increasingly aware of the need to be familiar with our legislators and local politics. We hope that you'll take this opportunity to get to know your legislators and contact them throughout the year. During these tough economic times, funding for mental health and addiction services is needed more than ever and yet these are the programs that face cuts.

Tips for contacting legislators:

- **Don't assume you need to be an expert in legislative advocacy:** Make contact with your legislator as a concerned citizen.
- **Identify yourself as a constituent:** Include your name and address.

Turn bad days into good data!

Switching to a local credit union!

I'm going to pay off my debt!

Attend my first Al Anon or ACOA meeting within one month!

Have more fun!

I'm going to start a blog!

Read more!

Radiate health and magnify the love around me!

I'm going to date someone amazing!

I am going to play more!

Eat more kale!

Take more walks!

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- **Say "thank you" before you say "please":** Open your letter by thanking legislators for their past support. If they are new to the job, thank them for their commitment to public service. Let them know that you appreciate their efforts on your behalf. Even if you disagree with their positions, they are more likely to listen to you if you recognize them for their work to represent you.
- **Tell your story:** Your own story is your most persuasive message. Share your experience and struggles clearly and concisely. Ask for the action you want your legislator to take. Be positive and courteous.
- **Use your own words:** The most effective letter is a personal one, not a form letter. If you are using a form letter as a guide, modify it to express your message in your own words.

Luckily, the internet makes it super easy to contact your local representatives! The state of Washington has a handy website that allows you to access your representatives and their contact information.

Additionally, in order to help community members to get out and vote, SCS will soon be a voter registration site! Stay tuned for more details!

Announcing New Support Groups!

Addiction-Related Drop-In Groups Meeting Daily

We here at SCS are pretty excited to announce that we are about to start a daily - that's five days a week - drop-in group for community members to support healthy choices and recovery!

This group will meet from 4pm-5pm Monday through Friday, with a different focus each day. This group will provide a safe space for individuals who are contemplating quitting and want to learn more, who are hoping to build community, or who might be experiencing crisis.

We will be offering pre-treatment and abstinence based groups that will be led by peers and staff, as well as a group for queer and queer-cool community members under 30. Our goal is to make these groups as relevant as possible, and so the topics will shift to meet the needs of the people in attendance.

Stay tuned for further details, which we will announce via our website and facebook page.

Please visit our website at www.seattlecounseling.org.
Donate to our cause at www.seattlecounseling.org/SupportUs.htm.