

CAMDEN *life* CENTER

20 Main Street, Camden, NY 13316

315-820-2638

CamdenLifeCenter@gmail.com

Glamour, Glitz and Volunteerism – Black Tie & Blue Jeans Gala Raises Awareness for Camden Life Center’s Mission of Hope

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAMDEN, NY, September 4, 2024: On August 23rd, Camden community members joined together to raise funds and awareness for the Camden Life Center (CLC). Clad in sparkly gowns, jackets and ties with a dose of denim, the CLC’s first-ever Black Tie and Blue Jeans Gala was, by all measures, a resounding success. Two hundred people attended the event at the Burlap and Lace Barn on Waldron Road in Camden – all united in their commitment to support the efforts of the Camden Life Center.

The event created a greater awareness of the Center’s mission and its services while also achieving financial goals, raising \$25,000 plus a \$10,000 matching grant from the Recovery Café Network to be used primarily for a Community Cafe. Jessica Perusse, Director of Camden Life Center, was thrilled and amazed by the evening. “I’m still basking in the glow of that night. Not only did we all have a lot of fun, we smashed our financial goals through tickets sales and in-person donations at the Gala. This will prove a significant step toward renovating the Café so local individuals, primarily youth, have a safe place to gather and connect.”

Keynote speakers from the Camden community were the highlight of the evening. Each shared a personal journey of addiction and recovery. The speakers described their own challenges, highlighting the role that programs like the Camden Life Center played in their own lives. “Our speakers were incredibly courageous for sharing their story with such a large group,” said Jessica Perusse. “They helped people understand how important it is to have someone to help and somewhere safe to go.”

Although the Gala has passed, the challenging work continues. The Camden Life Center helps people navigate daily problems related to health care, parenting, aging, grief, addiction and other trauma. From January to July in 2024 alone, the CLC received 246 new requests for services and managed 3,000 behavioral health appointments. According to Perusse, the CLC’s greatest need now is adult volunteers. They need front desk staff to manage requests for services and people to work at the Mobile Food Pantry. These are part-time commitments – just a few hours per week or month would greatly help. The CLC especially needs adult mentors

CLC Gala 2024 Recap

for teens. Said Jessica Perusse, “We urgently need dynamic, dedicated adults to empower our Youth Advisory Council to increase activities for youth and drive impactful change in our community.”

The CLC will hold a Volunteer Meet & Greet on Wednesday, September 18th – with a session at 12pm and another at 5pm. Or volunteers can learn more by visiting www.camdenlifecenter.com and clicking on “Get Involved.”

For more information, call The Camden Life Center at 315-820-2638.

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