



WCSI is welcoming fall! As the leaves begin to change and the air turns crisp, WCSI is excited to embrace everything that fall has to offer. From seasonal activities and community events to cozy moments and fresh opportunities, we're looking forward to all the inspiration this season brings. Here's to a season of growth, gratitude, and connection!



\*WCSI has obtained and retains a photo release for every individual featured in our newsletter.





#### In this issue:

- About Us
- Mental Illness Awareness
   Week
- Out and About
- Upcoming Events
- Employee Spotlight
- Employment Opportunities
- Resources

#### MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK



Millions of Americans are living with a mental health condition — mental illness affects everyone directly or indirectly through family, friends, neighbors or coworkers. During the first week of October (October 6-October 12, 2024), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recognizes Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) to raise awareness about mental health and provide support and treatment options for mental health conditions. It was established to educate & increase awareness about mental illness. To those managing a mental health condition:

- You are not alone
- You are loved
- Help is available
- Give strength
- You can get through this

#### WCSI MISSION STATEMENT

We are dedicated to working in partnership with all individuals impacted by Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Behavioral Health Challenges through their connection to essential services, personal empowerment, and promotion of wellness.

#### WCSI VISION STATEMENT

WCSI will be the leader in integrating people into the community through Recovery, Wellness, and Positive Approaches to live a full and renewed life.

WCSI CORE VALUES

COMMITTMENNT
QUALITY
INTEGRITY
ACCOUNTABILITY
RESPECT



### WHO WE ARE: SERVING THE COMMUNITY FOR 30 YEARS!

Established in 1994, WCSI provides a range of Behavioral Health,
Intellectual and Developmental
Disability, and Early Intervention
services to the residents of
Westmoreland County.

WCSI is dedicated to having a positive impact on the community it is so fortunate to serve. Our philosophy is straightforward: We provide services to any eligible individual or family, doing everything possible to ensure the best possible outcomes.

This means that our involvement in the community is not defined only by funded services but rather by a holistic response to individual, family, and community needs.

We meet you where you are:
In any stage of your life.
In your home or in the community.

We care about your whole person, and we are committed to connecting you with the resources to enable you to thrive in all aspects of your life. Our services are individualized according to your identified needs and preferences.

### MANAGING LIFE WITH SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS

With early and consistent treatment, people with serious mental illnesses can manage their conditions, overcome challenges, and lead meaningful, productive lives.

Mental illnesses are disorders that affect a person's thinking, mood, and/or behavior —and they can range from mild to severe. According to the National Institute on Mental Health, nearly one-in-five adults live with a mental illness.

A mental illness that interferes with a person's life and ability to function is called a serious mental illness (SMI). With the right treatment, people with SMI can live productive and enjoyable lives.

There are many kinds of serious mental illnesses. Common ones include

<u>Bipolar disorder</u>: is a brain disorder that causes intense shifts in mood, energy, and activity levels. People have manic episodes in which they feel extremely happy or euphoric, and energized. Usually, they also have depressive episodes in which they feel deeply sad and have low energy.

Major depressive disorder: (MDD) is one of the most common mental disorders. Symptoms vary from person to person, but may include sadness, hopelessness, anxiety, pessimism, irritability, worthlessness, and fatigue. These symptoms interfere with a person's ability to work, sleep, eat, and enjoy their life.

<u>Schizophrenia:</u> is a chronic and severe mental disorder that causes people to interpret reality abnormally. People may experience hallucinations, delusions, extremely disordered thinking and a reduced ability to function in their daily life.

Despite common misperceptions, having an SMI is not a choice, a weakness, or a character flaw. It is not something that just "passes" or can be "snapped out of" with willpower. The specific causes are unknown, but various factors can increase someone's risk for mental illness including, family history, brain chemistry, and significant life events such as experiencing a trauma. Let's all help break down the stigma surrounding mental illness and support our friends, family, and loved ones when it comes to overcoming mental health challenges.

For more information about SMI, please scan the QR code.









# **Out and About**





# WCSI's Community Impact: A Look Back at last three months of 2025!

WCSI has been very busy actively connecting and engaging with the community through a variety of events for all ages! From job fairs and health fairs to family-friendly celebrations, and educational events, WCSI has certainly been out and

about!

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

#### Community Baby Shower

Early Intervention Service Coordinators Leads, Georgiann Beske and Danielle O'Neill, participated in a Community Baby Shower held at the Greensburg Hempfield Area Library on Saturday, June 28, 2025. This event was a collaborative effort between Healthy Start and the library. Healthy Start is a Pittsburgh-based organization that provides support for pregnant individuals and new families, now extending its services to Westmoreland County, including home visits after the birth of babies to offer postpantum care.

Several other agencies contributed to the event, such as:

- Achieva Early Intervention
- Summit Legal Aid
- Blackburn Center
- Wesley Spectrum ParentWISE
- ELRC
- Cribs for Kids
- A nutritionist

The shower attracted a total of 45 adults (including agency representatives) and 2 children. It was a delightful occasion for expectant mothers, featuring engaging baby shower games and prizes! Everyone left with a bounty of goodies!





#### Scottdale Pride Event

On Saturday, June 28, 2025, West Overton Village proudly hosted the 5th Annual Scottdale Pride event-a vibrant celebration of community, inclusion, and connection. Jonathan Hile and Kylie Hile, both SAP Liaisons, attended the event, which brought together members of the LGBTQ+ community to celebrate, connect, and explore a variety of local offerings. Attendees enjoyed browsing handmade crafts from local vendors, watching live blacksmithing demonstrations, engaging with civic organizations, and learning about valuable community resources available to LGBTQ+ individuals. Jonathan and Kylie had meaningful conversations with several attendees who identified as current or former WCSI clients. Many shared heartfelt stories about the positive impact WCSI services had on their lives. One particularly touching moment came from a middle-school-aged girl who thanked Kylie for the support WCSI had provided to her mother. Despite a brief rain shower, spirits remained high, and the event was filled with joy, gratitude, and community pride.

Everyone had a fantastic time!

# Out and About WCSI Event

# WCET'S Pause And Play

On a beautiful day filled with connection, laughter, and purpose, WCSI proudly hosted our first annual Pause and Play event — an initiative created to raise awareness about mental health and well-being while fostering a fun, welcoming community atmosphere. We were thrilled to welcome approximately 240 guests to enjoy a variety of activities, refreshments, and informative booths. Each WCSI department hosted interactive stations where guests could participate in games and earn raffle tickets for some exciting prizes!

We were joined by Hempfield's Volunteer Fire Department with their fire trucks, and they shared important fire safety education with our attendees. Their presence helped make the day even more memorable for kids and adults alike!

The Alliance of Therapy Dogs joined us with their pups to create a wonderful experience for those who attended by being so welcoming and kind with their hard-working therapy dogs, some even came dressed up for the event!

We were also joined by McFeely's Ice and Honeybee Bubble Tea who brought delicious refreshments, and WCSI staff worked hard in the kitchen to provided complimentary treats like hot dogs, popcorn, and nachos to keep everyone energized and smiling. This day wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of our WCSI volunteers, staff who attended with clients, and the support of our community partners and vendors. Your contributions helped create a joyful, inclusive environment that truly

celebrated togetherness and wellness.

We're already looking forward to next year's event and can't wait to grow this tradition in the years to come.

Thank you to everyone who made our first Pause and Play such a meaningful day!





















**COMMUNITY EVENTS** 





#### BIG BROTHERS AND BIG SISTERS SUMMER FEST

Georgiann Beske, EISC Lead, and Sarah Junod, TCM, participated in the Big Brothers Big Sisters event on July 27th at Twin Lakes. This event had a delightful Pokémon theme, adding a lot of fun and excitement. It featured engaging activities for all ages, including a petting zoo, reptile encounters, bounce houses, face painting, temporary tattoos, hair tinsel, and character visits from Elsa, Olaf, Garfield, and Pikachu. Several food trucks, such as Kickin' Korn Dogs, Kona Ice, and Funky Funnels, were present, and there was a pet-friendly area with treats for furry friends. Live music performed by various groups created a lively atmosphere.

The event was a community celebration, with general vendors showcasing their goods for sale. Both kids and adults had the opportunity to trade and battle their Pokémon cards. The event also featured a Cosplay Contest and Pokémon-themed merchandise for purchase. Despite the weather, turnout was strong throughout most of the day, making it a wonderfully engaging experience for our community!

#### JUVENILE PROBATION FAMILY FUN FEST

On Monday, July 21, 2025 Rebecca Johns, TCM Team Lead, and Brian Wigle, SC Supervisor, represented WCSI at the Juvenile Probation Family FunFest 2025 at Twin Lakes Park.

Over 20 providers and community organizations participated in the event and shared information about their services with the community. This also provided a great opportunity for WCSI to network with other agencies. In addition to providers, there was food, fun and animals. The Westmoreland Bloodhound team was present. We also got to meet Sheldon the Tortoise.



# Out and Ahout!

**Community Events** 

#### HEMPFIELD'S NIGHT OUT



Alexis Morelli, SAP Liaison, and Jennifer Armstrong-Schaefer, SC Training Supervisor, proudly represented WCSI at Hempfield's Night Out on Thursday, August 7, 2025. The event took place at Hempfield Park, where attendees enjoyed performances by the Hempfield Area High School Marching Band and Cheerleaders. The night wrapped up with a spectacular fireworks display.

### NORTHMORELAND'S NIGHT OUT

Samantha Curtis, TCM, and Jennifer Armstrong-Schaefer, SC Training Supervisor, proudly represented WCSI at Northmoreland's Night Out, which took place at Northmoreland Park on Wednesday, August 6, 2025. Each table featured an engaging activity for children. At WCSI's table, kids had the opportunity to unleash their creativity by drawing and decorating paper with stickers.

Additionally, a rescue helicopter made a landing at the park, providing an exciting experience for the children to witness.





Community Event and Job Fair



### NEW KEN RESOURCE FAIR

On Thursday, July 31, BH Manager Gina Miller,
Staff Development Specialist Becky Carns, and BH
Director Erin Angellone represented WCSI at a
Community Resource Fair hosted by Westmoreland
Community Action and Lost Dreams Awakening in
New Kensington. The event brought together a
variety of service providers to connect residents with
valuable resources and support.

Our team shared information about WCSI's programs and services, helping community members link with the departments best suited to their needs. Attendees also received WCSI-branded materials to promote awareness of our mission and offerings.

In addition to our presence, the fair featured several local organizations, including the Westmoreland Food Bank's mobile truck, which provided fresh produce to attendees. The event was a rewarding opportunity to engage with the community, foster partnerships, and support individuals in accessing the tools they need to thrive.

#### JOB FAIR AT LIVE CASINO

On August 19th, WCSI representatives Katie
Sapone, EI Training Supervisor, and HR
Recruitment and Outreach Assistant, Stephany
Slaughter, participated in a job fair at Live
Casino. This event provided an excellent
opportunity to engage with attendees about the
job openings available at WCSI and the benefits
our organization offers. The popcorn machine
served as an enticing conversation starter,
drawing in event-goers and giving them a chance
to enjoy a poppin' snack.



#### **COMMUNITY EVENT**

# OPERATION FRESH EXPRESS

On Monday, August 11, 2025, Westmoreland Casemanagement and Supports, Inc. (WCSI) proudly sponsored and hosted Operation Fresh Express, a mobile supplemental food pantry, in partnership with the Westmoreland County Food Bank.

The WCSI volunteer team included Chief Executive Officer Lynnette Emerick, Executive
Assistant/Program Specialist Dawn Hixson, Staff Development Specialist Becky Carns, Behavioral
Health Program Manager Jen Myers, Student Assistance Program Liaison Jonathan Hile, Certified Peer
Specialist April Fabery, Targeted Case Managers Owen Zablocki, Lisa Mills, and Carly Sotdorus, along
with two amazing consumers of WCSI services.

Together, we distributed a variety of nutritious and delicious foods, such as fresh fruit, potatoes, bread, cereal, and desserts, to community members in need. Through the dedication and teamwork of WCSI staff, consumers, and Westmoreland County Food Bank staff, about 150 families received essential food support.

WCSI remains committed to fighting food insecurity in our region and will continue sponsoring Operation Fresh Express biannually to serve and strengthen our community.



Community Event



SAP Liaisons Angela Schwartz and Ashley McKoy proudly represented WCSI at PFLAG's Pride in the Park event on August 18, 2025, held at Hempfield Park. They shared valuable information about WCSI's services and resources, while also discussing the various programs available for the community. The SAP Liaisons connected with other providers and gathered additional resource information. Despite the rainy weather, the event saw a fantastic turnout and was overall a resounding success!

















## COMMUNITY EVENTS



# CELEBRATION AT HEMPFIELD PARK

On Friday August 15, 2025,
Miranda Guthrie, TCM-Hybrid,
and Jennifer ArmstrongSchaefer, SC Training
Supervisor, represented WCSI
at the Americans with
Disabilities Act Celebration
held at Hempfield Park. The
event was well attended by
the community and everyone
enjoyed the bands who
played.

### MT. PLEASANT NIGHT OUT

On Monday August 11, 2025, Jacob Suekawa, Acute TCM, and Jennifer Armstrong-Schaefer, SC Training Supervisor, attended the Mt. Pleasant Night Out event. The kids who attended where given a bookbag and each agency gave the kids an item to fill their bookbag. WCSI gave the kids a pencil pouch.









#### SAP CLOTHING DRIVE

On Wednesday August 27 the SAP Liaisons sponsored a clothing drive for our community. After collecting and sorting clothes all summer, they planned three pick up locations at local schools (Valley High School in New Kensington, Hempfield High School in Greensburg and Rostraver Elementary in Belle Vernon) the SAP team helped families in their schools start the school year with the clothes they needed.







# Community Event and Job Fair



#### **Pet Memorial Service**

On August 23, 2025, SAP Liaisons Ashley McCoy, Kylie Hile, and Jonathan Hile attended the Pet Memorial Service sponsored by Top Dog Therapy Team. McCoy and the Hiles offered a resource table and were on-hand to provide Emergency Behavioral Health interventions. The memorial service, while dedicated to the victims of the Vereb Funeral Home's fraud scandal, anyone was welcome to attend. Top Dog had therapy dogs in attendance, there was a keynote speech from Tiffany Mantzourdis the whistleblower who discovered the fraudulent practices, musical performances, a dove release, and more. The event was attended by many four-legged friends and their humans

# Informational Booth at Pitt of Greensburg

On Wednesday, September 3, 2025, EISC Lead, Georgiann Beske, and Human Resources and Outreach Assistant, Stephany Slaughter represented WCSI at Pitt of Greensburg's Informational Booth

During the event, they had the opportunity to share WCSI's Mission Statement with attendees and provide detailed information about current job openings, benefits, and the many advantages of working with such a dedicated agency.

Additionally, they engaged with community members and individuals attending UPG to educate them about the wide range of services WCSI offers.

The event was both successful and informative, offering valuable insights to all who attended





Walking this path together served as a meaningful reminder of unity, healing, and strength in the face of loss.

The event also featured a touching dove release, symbolizing peace and hope for the future. Following the walk, participants gathered for lunch and enjoyed a basket raffle, creating opportunities for connection and community support.

Overall, the day was filled with reflection, remembrance, and solidarity. It highlighted the importance of raising awareness, supporting one another, and continuing the vital conversation around suicide prevention. WCSI was honored to stand alongside so many individuals and families, reaffirming our shared commitment to hope, healing, and prevention.





Community Job Fairs



# LIVE CASINO JOB FAIR

On Tuesday, September 16, 2025, Human Resources and Outreach Assistant, Stephany Slaughter and EISC Lead, Georgiann Beske represented WCSI at a community job fair

held at Live! Casino. During the event, they had the opportunity to share WCSI's Mission Statement with attendees and provide detailed information about current job openings, benefits,

and the many advantages of working with such a dedicated agency. Additionally, they engaged with community members and individuals attending the job fair to educate them about the wide range of services WCSI offers.

The popcorn machine was a hit and a great conversation starter!

The event was both successful and informative, offering valuable insights to all who attended.

# CAREERLINK RESOURCE/JOB FAIR

WCSI was present at the CareerLink Resource/Job Fair held at WCCC in New Kensington on September 11, 2025. The WCSI team included Amy Benson, SCO Case Review Lead; Alyssa Sawl, TCM Supervisor; and Coty Campbell, SCO Quality Specialist.

Many individuals attended in search of job opportunities from various employers. WCSI provided information on current open positions, distributed promotional items, and even offered some candy.





Open House Event

# HAHNTOWN ELEMENTARY'S OPEN HOUSE

ON SEPTEMBER 18, 2025, SAP LIAISONS, TAYLOR RUSSO AND VICTORIA LIVOLSI, PROUDLY REPRESENTED WCSI AND SAP DURING HAHNTOWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S OPEN HOUSE EVENT. THEY ENGAGED WITH FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS, PROVIDING VALUABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SAP PROCESS AND THE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES WCSI OFFERS TO STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

THROUGHOUT THE EVENING, TAYLOR AND VICTORIA ANSWERED QUESTIONS, DISTRIBUTED INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS, AND DISCUSSED HOW SAP WORKS IN COLLABORATION WITH SCHOOL STAFF TO IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT STUDENTS WHO MAY BE EXPERIENCING ACADEMIC, BEHAVIORAL, OR EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES. THEIR PRESENCE HELPED RAISE AWARENESS OF THE VITAL ROLE SAP PLAYS IN CONNECTING FAMILIES TO COMMUNITY-BASED RESOURCES AND ENSURING THAT STUDENTS RECEIVE THE SUPPORT THEY NEED TO SUCCEED BOTH IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM.

THE EVENT SERVED AS A MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND REINFORCE WCSI'S COMMITMENT TO EARLY INTERVENTION AND STUDENT WELL-BEING.







WCSI is excited to host several upcoming fall events and participate in a variety of community gatherings this season. We look forward to connecting with our community, sharing resources, and creating meaningful experiences for all who attend. Stay tuned for more details —we can't wait to see you there!





### For WCSI Adult Clients



### For WCSI Child Clients











# Mobile Morket

OCTOBER 13th 11AM-1PM Registration Required

### **Peoples Library**

880 Barnes St. New Kensington, PA 15068





Scan the QR code or email Jake@westmorelandfoodbank.org to register



# DERRY COMMUNITY PARK

HALLOWEEN - OCTOBER 31 (FRIDAY)
BEGINS AT 5 PM
610 W SIXTH AVE DERRY PA 15627

WWW.FRIENDSOFDERRY.COM



# Employee Spotlight October

# Employee: Christine Zink-Bensko Job Title: Criminal Justice Specialist

Q. How long have you been at WCSI?

#### 8 years

Q What is your favorite part of your job? **Meeting with my**Clients and helping them stabilize in the

community.

Q. What is your favorite thing or favorite memory about WCSI?

## Meeting and developing relationships with my Fellow TCM's and Clients

Q. As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

Police Officer

Q. What was your first job ever?

Concession stand at Youngwood Park and Pool

Q. What lead to you working in this field?

After working in Drug and Alcohol for over 20 years, noticed that some clients had Mental Health issues that had led to most of their drug use, and I wanted to be someone who can help this community.

Q. What's the best advice you can give to someone who is just starting out in your field? **Building relationships with your clients is the first step, get to know them and really hear what they want and need and not what you feel they need.** 

Q. What do you enjoy doing outside of work? **Watching my** daughter Play slow Pitch Softball, attending Pitt Athletic Events, spending time with my rescue dog, Tinkerton and volunteering at Heal Animal Rescue in Youngwood.

Q. If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?

#### Speaking another language

Q. What is your "happy place"? Spending vacation with my

Family in North Myrtle Beach (cherry Grove) and cuddling with my sweet Girl (Puppy)

Tinkerton









# Employee: Nicole Abbey Job Title: BH Clerical

Q. How long have you been at WCSI?

It will be 11 years on August 1st

- Q. What is your favorite part of your job? **My WCSI family**
- Q. What is your favorite thing or favorite memory about WCSI?

Love the employee picnics and gatherings where you get to see all of the WCSI employees together.

Q. As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

Teacher-Love teaching and helping others

Q. What was your first job ever?

Wendy's as a teenager

Q. What lead to you working in this field? **Love** helping others and making a difference in the world.

Q. What's the best advice you can give to someone who is just starting out in your field?

Let your smile change the world, but don't let the world change your smile.

Q. What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

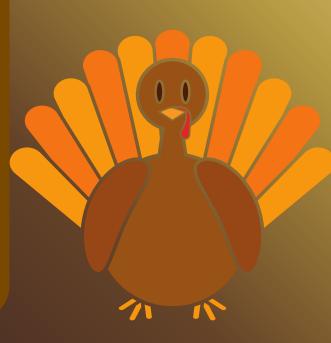
Playing Pokémon with my children-Matt, Scott,
and Adam, shopping, and spending time with my
4 cats- Finnegan, Clause, Carl and Ellie.

Q. If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?

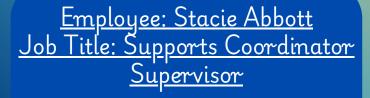
I would love to be able to draw and paint to express myself. Currently at a stick figure level lol 10. What is your "happy place"?

The New Ken office would say shopping at Ross Iol, But anywhere outdoors. Love the wilderness and sitting around a campfire relaxing.





# Employee Spotlight December



Q. How long have you been at WCSI? **6 Years** 

Q. What is your favorite part of your job? **Helping my consumers to live their best life.** 

Q. What is your favorite thing or favorite memory about WCSI?

Recognition and positive activities for employees.

Q. As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

#### **A doctor**

Q. What was your first job ever?

#### **Burger King**

Q. What lead to you working in this field?

My background is child development so
I wanted to help other grow and develop
and be their best self.

Q. What's the best advice you can give to someone who is just starting out in your field?

Be patient, listen to others, and be positive.

Q. What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

#### Reading

Q. If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?

Play an instrument.

Q. What is your "happy place"? **The beach** 









# HIRING

Join Our Team



#### **WCSI OFFERS:**

- A dynamic environment to effectively utilize your skills.
- Ongoing training and development for maximum potential.
- Opportunities for valuable experience and career growth.
- Competitive salaries and generous benefits.
- Family-oriented employment with flexible work-life balance.



Targeted Case Manager
Supports Coordinator
Accountant
IT Manager

**APPLY NOW** 



Send Your Resume to: WCSICareers@wcsi.org



Phone Number **724-837-1808** 



# Featured Resources



#### Mt. Pleasant Church of God

We offer free clothing on Wednesdays from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM for those in need, including men's, women's, and children's items. Donations are always welcome. Note: During Food Pantry week, we are open on Tuesday instead.

Visit us at 934 West Main Street, Mt. Pleasant, PA.

Visit https://www.mpcog.org/outreach-ministries/ for more information.





Looking for Food Resources Click on the links below:

**SNAP** 

PA Navigate

<u>Feeding</u> <u>Pennsylvania</u>

**Ending Hunger** 

<u>Pennsylvania</u> WIC

# Do you love someone who is struggling with the use of alcohol or drugs?

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!
GET SUPPORT NOW.



Supporting a loved one through addiction can be emotionally taxing. In our CRAFT program, we provide a supportive space where you can learn to set boundaries, practice self-care, and connect with others who understand.

#### **LOCATIONS**

GREENSBURG Tuesdays at 6:00 pm 316 Donohoe Rd. Greensburg, PA 15601

**NEW KENSINGTON** 

Thursdays at 5:00 pm Wesley Family Services 1045 4th Ave. New Kensington, PA 15084

\*Virtual Options Available

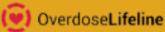
Join us on this journey towards healing and hope. Together, we're stronger.

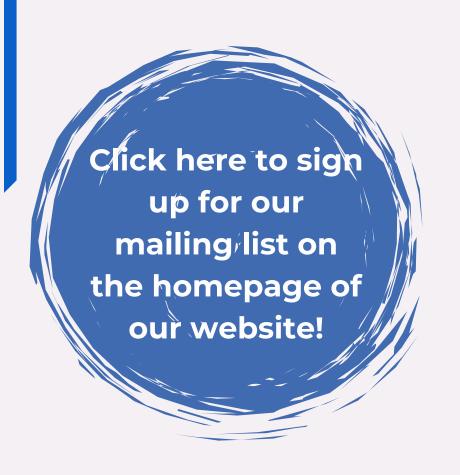
#### VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO REGISTER OR CONTACT

- Jamie Leventry
- **Q** 724-433-1347
- jleventry@westmorelandca.org
  - www.westmorelandca.org









#### **Office Hours:**

8:30 AM-4:30 PM Monday through Friday

#### **Main Office:**

134 Industrial Park Road Suite 1700

Greensburg, PA 15601 Phone: 724-837-1808

Fax: 724-858-9012

#### **Satellite Locations:**

301 7th Street New Kensington, PA 15068

> Phone: 724-334-1774 Fax: 724-334-3211

For more information, visit our website at www.wcsi.org

Don't forget to like and follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more information on valuable resources, community events, and the good work we do!



