Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Winnebago County Community Mental Health Board Film Screening and Discussion on Mental Illness and the Justice System

ROCKFORD, IL – The Winnebago County Community Mental Health Board (WCCMHB) is hosting a film screening and discussion encouraging community members to consider how the criminal justice system can better support people with serious mental illness in their recovery. 'The Definition of Insanity' is a powerful PBS documentary that tells the story of the Miami-Dade Criminal Mental Health Project and its method guiding people with mental illness away from incarceration and into treatment.

"The WCCMHB, county justice system, and other area leadership are interested in adopting a similar approach for jail diversion," said Mary Ann Abate, WCCMHB President. "This is just the beginning of an ongoing discussion about how our community can better respond to this need.

WHAT: The Definition of Insanity film screening and panel discussion

WHEN: Tuesday, November 17 from 6-8 pm

WHERE: Rockford Public Library Nordlof Center, 118 N. Main St., Rockford

COST: Free. Visit https://bit.ly/definition-insanity-event to reserve your spot.

Light refreshments will be served. All ages are welcome, but children must be accompanied by a guardian. The documentary has a TV-PG rating and contains real-world themes related to mental illness, addiction, and the criminal justice system.

Following the film, there will be an interactive panel discussion led by Judge Steve Leifman of Miami-Dade County and local community leaders. Judge Leifman is the visionary behind this initiative and a key figure featured in the documentary.

ABOUT WCCMHB – The Winnebago County Community Mental Health Board (WCCMHB) is a board of appointed community leaders and public officials dedicated to investing and supporting mental health and substance use services for adults and children in Winnebago County. WCCMHB receives funding through a half-cent sales tax which was approved by Winnebago County residents in March 2020. This sales tax generates approximately $18 million annually for mental health and substance use services across the county. WCCMHB positively impacts the Winnebago County community by increasing access to local services by providing support and funding to organizations, non-profits, and government agencies that offer mental health and substance use services. This allows Winnebago County residents to live and recover in the community.

ABOUT R1 – Region 1 Planning Council is a special-purpose, regional government agency providing cross-jurisdictional, government-to-government collaborative planning for Northern Illinois. The regional planning model provides an efficient means to promoting a well-informed, comprehensive dialogue that holistically addresses regional issues by fulfilling the needs of government entities for long-range planning, securing funding, and analyzing and providing data in support of regional projects and initiatives.

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