

## **Natalie Quelopana Castillo Honored with NJPRA Award**

Bridgeway Behavioral Health Services is proud to announce that Natalie Quelopana Castillo has received the New Jersey Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (NJPRA) Direct Care Award, recognizing her outstanding work as a frontline professional in the mental health and recovery field.

The NJPRA Direct Care Award honors professionals who demonstrate the spirit and values of psychiatric rehabilitation and lead by example in their service to individuals working toward recovery, wellness, and greater independence.

Natalie has been with Bridgeway for more than three years. She began as a Wellness Specialist with Bridgeway's Intensive Supportive Housing program and, through her continued growth, dedication, and leadership, was promoted to Senior Wellness Specialist. In that role, she has served as a mentor to new staff members, a trusted resource to colleagues, and a strong advocate for the individuals Bridgeway serves.

"Natalie has consistently demonstrated professional growth, dedication, and a deep commitment to person-centered care," said April Cistrelli, LCSW, Supportive Housing Director and Clinical Supervisor at Bridgeway Behavioral Health Services. "She is a role model for her peers, takes initiative, and creates meaningful opportunities that bring people together in ways that promote dignity, wellness, and connection."

Among Natalie's many contributions is "Thrift Day," an initiative that transformed donated items into a welcoming, thrift-style shopping experience. Participants were invited to browse, select, and take home items they needed or simply loved, creating a sense of choice, independence, and dignity.

She also chaired a committee that planned and hosted a Wellness Fair as part of Bridgeway's Thrive initiative. The event welcomed more than 40 individuals for an afternoon focused on movement, mindfulness, and whole-person well-being. Activities included Zumba, meditation, smoothie and parfait demonstrations, healthy eating education, and a gratitude wall.

"Natalie's leadership and vision helped bring the Wellness Fair to life," April said. "Her perseverance, creativity, and professional drive have made her a tremendous asset to Bridgeway, and her contributions continue to make a lasting impact on the people we serve and the field of psychiatric rehabilitation."

Bridgeway Behavioral Health Services, headquartered in Union, provides mental health and recovery services across New Jersey, including supportive housing, outpatient services, crisis services, intensive support programs, and community-based care. The organization's mission is to promote wellness, recovery, and independence for individuals experiencing mental health challenges and co-occurring conditions.

The New Jersey Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association is a nonprofit organization that supports the practice and practitioners of psychiatric rehabilitation throughout New Jersey.



Photo Caption:

Natalie Quelopana Castillo at Thrift Day, an initiative she organized to promote dignity, choice, and connection for individuals served by Bridgeway.