

NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact: Lilly Ackley, ackleyl@magellanhealth.com, (860) 507-1923

My Ascension documentary screening on May 3rd in Bethlehem is a suicide prevention event to give education and hope for local parents and youth

Bethlehem, PA - [April 28, 2022] – [Magellan Health, Inc.](https://www.magellanhealth.com) today announced that Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc. (Magellan), in collaboration with Lehigh County, Northampton County, Bethlehem Area School District, NAMI of the Lehigh Valley, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention of Eastern Pennsylvania, and the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Lehigh County, will host a Lehigh Valley Premiere of the My Ascension documentary (myascension.us) to give education and hope for local parents and youth during the first week of Mental Health Awareness Month. ***The event is scheduled for May 3, 2022, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Liberty High School Auditorium (1115 Linden Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018), and the event is free and open to the general public.*** Magellan currently administers behavioral health benefits throughout Pennsylvania with HealthChoices contracts in Bucks, Cambria, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, and Northampton counties.

The documentary film is about a suicide attempt that left 16-year-old varsity cheerleader, Emma Benoit, paralyzed, and propelled her on ***a mission to use her painful experience to help others find hope and stay alive.*** My Ascension is a feature length documentary that chronicles Emma’s inspiring journey and quest to walk again, and also highlights the stories of two remarkable young people who tragically did not survive their attempts. The film gives first-hand accounts from family members, friends, school officials, and suicide prevention experts ***about the devastating effects of suicide and what can be done to prevent it.***

Special note for parents: Due to the film’s subject matter, the event organizers recommend that children under age 10 do not attend unless their parents have seen the film previously and are ok with having their child view the film.

The My Ascension documentary event screening will include:

- Meet/Greet with Emma Benoit and Greg Dicharry from 5:30-6:00 p.m.
- 90-minute feature length documentary from 6:00-7:30 p.m.
- 60-minute panel discussion from 7:30-8:30 p.m. to include Emma Benoit, filmmaker Greg Dicharry, local mental health advocates, and students
- Resource tables hosted by community stakeholders and behavioral health/substance use providers will be available from 5:30-8:30 p.m.

“We are so grateful to Emma and Greg for traveling from Louisiana to share their message of hope with our community, and we believe this event will be a unique and impactful opportunity for parents and youth to better understand how suicide can be prevented,” said Tom Walker, senior account executive for Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania. “This event on May 3rd is an important educational opportunity at the start of Mental Health Awareness Month, and ***on behalf of the event committee, we want to extend a community-wide invitation to everyone in the Lehigh Valley to attend this event.*** It’s an unfortunate reality that the issue of suicide can affect people of all ethnicities, ages, genders, geographic regions, and socioeconomic levels.”

One of the key goals for this event is to share important educational resources with parents, youth, and the regional community. Exhibitors will be available inside Liberty High School starting at 5:30 p.m. on May 3rd to share helpful information, and a resource flyer with additional resources will also be available at the event. The current exhibitors scheduled to attend are: AEVIDUM Student Clubs; American Foundation for Suicide Prevention of Eastern Pennsylvania; Bethlehem Area School District/Liberty High School Wellness Center; Bradbury Sullivan; Center for Humanistic Change; KidsPeace; Lehigh County Human Services; Lehigh Valley Health Network; NAMI of the Lehigh Valley; Northampton County Human Services and Suicide Prevention Task Force; Parkland High School Mental Health Awareness Club; Resilient Lehigh Valley; SHANTHI Project; Valley Youth House.

For more information on Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, go to www.MagellanofPA.com.

About Magellan Health: [Magellan Health, Inc.](http://MagellanHealth.com), is a leader in managing the fastest growing, most complex areas of health, including special populations, complete pharmacy benefits and other specialty areas of healthcare. Magellan supports innovative ways of accessing better health through technology, while remaining focused on the critical personal relationships that are necessary to achieve a healthy, vibrant life. Magellan's customers include state and county governmental agencies, health plans and other managed care organizations, employers, labor unions, various military and third-party administrators. For more information, visit MagellanHealth.com.

Disclaimer: There are no PA HealthChoices members shown or mentioned within the documentary, My Ascension.

###