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This Newsletter represents a collaboration of IAIC, MHAI, Project PEERS, and WTW Project.

What is Recovery Advocacy?
Recovery Advocacy is a process of exerting influence to advance public policies and programs that help initiate and sustain recovery from addiction. By speaking out, members of the recovery community can make a profound difference in public understanding of addiction and recovery, breaking down the wall of shame and stigma that creates discrimination against people in recovery.

Your Voice Counts

2015 Recovery Ride & Picnic Rally
A Huge Success With Over 260 Participants

2015 Lifetime Recovery Advocate Award was presented to Marti MacGibbon

We would like to personally thank each and every one of you that attended this years Recovery Ride and Rally Picnic. In addition, a Very Special Thank You goes to this years cooks, the men of HVAF, the men that keep serving.

A Great Big Thank You to Curtis Hanks, IMPD Motorcyclist for a Safe Escort to the Picnic Rally

A Shout Out to Southside Harley Davidson for Supporting & Sponsoring IAIC’s Recovery Ride

2015 Recovery Advocate of the Year Award was presented to Rachelle Gardner
Our country’s approach to the addiction crisis is simply not working.

Parents don’t know how to talk with their kids about alcohol and other drugs.

Alcohol and other drugs are becoming more available and more lethal, and our children are being exposed at younger ages every year.

As I packed my bag in preparation to leave for Washington DC and attend the first ever Unite to Face Addiction Rally on the National Mall under the shadow of the Washington Monument, hurricane Joaquin was tearing through the Bahamas, threatening the entire East Coast…but I was undeterred. Undeterred because I knew that I would be joining tens of thousands of people in long term recovery from the disease of addiction who had faced and found recovery from their own personal hurricanes that had been far more devastating to their Individual lives and families…than any natural disaster. October 4, 2015 was a history making day in a new effort to face addiction as these thousands and more than 700 organization partners joined together for the first ever rally and concert on the National Mall. Certainly there were incredible performances by Joe Walsh, Steven Tyler, Sheryl Crow, Jason Isbell, The Fray and John Rzeznik of the Goo Goo Dolls but they didn’t just perform. They each shared their stories of addiction and their recovery from it!!! They shared the stage with other prominent people in recovery from addiction like Congresswoman Mary Bono, Congressman Patrick Kennedy, TV host Pat O’Brien, Baseball Star Darryl Strawberry and Astronaut Steve Oswald who talked about how addiction has ravaged their lives and the lives of their loved one…but also how recovery had restored joy and brought new meaning to their worlds.

And while the entertainment line-up got the bulk of attention from the national media this extraordinary event wasn’t really about the movie stars and performers….it was the thousands of people who attended and stayed for the better part of twelve hours to share their joy of recovery with each other. It was also having the opportunity for collective reflection on the fact that addiction impacts one out of three families in American and that 90% of people in need of treatment or recovery never receive it. And that at the end of the day no one should ever have to overcome addiction alone, but it was also a call to action that we as people in long term recovery can no longer sit on the sidelines and let other worry about changing the system and the way we treat addiction in American. The realization that Facing Addiction is OUR movement and that together we can save lives….starting today.

For me personally it was a pivotal moment in my long term recovery from the disease of addiction that will live in my heart forever.

Director of Indiana Addiction Issues Coalition,

Kim Manlove
Everybody knows somebody touched by addiction. We can no longer say it is only "those people over there."

Addiction impacts one in every three households in America. These are not bad people...these are good people to whom bad things happen.

Someone dies from alcohol or other drugs every 4 minutes in America. That is like a jumbo jet crashing every day, with no survivors.
My name is Ray Lay and I am an Indiana Certified Recovery Specialist/Community Health Worker and I am also a Certified Veterans Peer Support Specialist. I live with and I am recovering with a dual diagnosis of Schizoaffective disorder and polysubstance abuse issues. By the grace of God and a little effort on my behalf, it has been over 10 years since I was last hospitalized for my mental health issues and I am clean and sober for over 8 years. I am also cigarette free for almost 7 years. I have learned very early in my Recovery that I must give away what I have to keep my own and gather more if I am to progress along my path of Recovery. I have also learned that my path is unlike any other's path for we are as individual as the fingerprints at the end of our fingers.

I was diagnosed with Paranoid Schizophrenia at 15 and court committed to a mental institution where I stayed for over 3 years and then the court released me and I actually joined and became a US Marine. I was an outstanding Marine until I was charged with something I did not do and the stress of punishment led to a psychotic break and my discharge from the Corps. Undiagnosed.

Less than a year later I entered behind the walls of the Indiana State Prison where I stayed for 7 years and I didn’t receive any treatment even though a doctor has written that he knew I had issues but that he was not going to diagnose me. I lived in hell awake and suffering but its okay.

Years passed and I had already become addicted to illegal drugs and alcohol and undiagnosed and untreated and just a terror to all I came in contact with. I went back to jail but not prison, I was shot on numerous occasions and also stabbed repeatedly. It is only by the grace of God that I have survived. I had lost the support of family and I was homeless for over 10 years.

But God wasn’t done with me and as I tried to seek shelter, stipulations came with it; no shelter without treatment. I begrudged went for it and one of the doctors got me to talking. She diagnosed me psychotic disorder NOS; rule out schizophrenia, rule out schizoaffective disorder and had me to do a lot of things. I am grateful.

Even though I am not done with all of the legal adjudications, I am trying my best to give back. I am a member of the VA Mental Health Intensive Case Management team, a NAMI In Our Own Voice presenter and I also help train newly hired correctional Officers and Police Recruits. I am also a member of the executive committee of the Indiana Balance of State Continuum of Care; the homeless board for 90 of the 92 counties in Indiana. I mentor men in prison and after they are released. I am blessed to be alive and living in Recovery with a severe mental illness and I am trying my best to help as many as I can along their path of Recovery and maintaining my stability. I collaborate with many organizations and burn up some of the abundant amount of energy of which I possess in a positive manner. I have regained the love and trust of family and I am the recipient of a Consumer-operated business grant where I promote Recovery throughout the state and I love it. I am constantly working on me because I am well aware that my condition isn't gone anywhere; it is chronic and I must be chronically vigilant with it. I not only respect my condition, I embrace it. That is how I live with it. Stress less for success's

I leave you now with just the love of the serenity prayer for it goes with us all. Warm safe travels with your Recovery.

Ray Lay
**FOOD 4 SOULS**

Food 4 Souls is a non-profit, faith based homeless organization that exists to go out and serve our homeless community with unconditional love and acceptance by providing hope in Christ, meeting daily needs and aligning resources to those who are ready to move into a life beyond homelessness.

In September of 2012, a small group of willing volunteers started traveling to downtown Indianapolis on Sunday afternoons after learning about the homeless camps that existed within the city and the tremendous needs of the people that lived within them. Guided by faith, the group had initially set out to meet the immediate needs of the homeless population, but found very quickly that the individuals within these camps were looking for more than a hot meal. The group's consistent presence and approach of unconditional love and acceptance quickly broke down the social barriers that existed, which allowed the opportunity for trusting and lasting relationships to be created. It is within these relationships that the real needs of the homeless population have been discovered, which in turn also provided the mission and focus for Food 4 Souls.

F4S has played a key role with helping to get homeless individuals off the streets and into recovery, transitional housing or shelters. F4S has also been able to help homeless individuals obtain their ID, Birth Certificate, SSI and disability. This is in part to creating wonderful relationships with recovery homes, hospital case workers/social workers and other organizations that play a role in helping the homeless community.

F4S has an Outreach Advocate that not only serves in the homeless camps on Sundays but throughout the week. The Outreach Advocate continually follows up with individuals to see how they are doing, if they are needing assistance or simply just to have a conversation with them. The Outreach Advocate and the Community Relations Director, Dawn Adams, also follow up with individuals F4S assisted into recovery. Ongoing support and spending time with a familiar person help that individual continue to stay in recovery and give them the encouragement they may need to stay on the right path.

Volunteers are always welcome and play a key role in making a difference in someone's life. To find out more about how you can become a volunteer, go to [www.food4souls.org](http://www.food4souls.org) and click on the volunteers section. If you are not able to join us on a Sunday, there are other ways to get involved.

To see F4S stories, pictures and more, follow us on the Food 4 Souls Facebook Page. [https://www.facebook.com/food4soulsindy/?fref=ts](https://www.facebook.com/food4soulsindy/?fref=ts)
Working with the Realities of Homeless and Substance Use

Dennis Watson, MA, PhD

Indiana University Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health, Indianapolis
http://www.healthpolicy.iupui.edu/leadership.aspx

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) annual homeless census counted 4,694 adults experiencing homelessness in Indiana this past year. Of these individuals, 596 were chronically homeless (meaning they have a diagnosed disability and have experienced continuous homelessness for at least one year or have been homeless at least 3 times in the past 4 years), 933 had a chronic substance use issue, and a significant number of those individuals with substance use issues are likely experiencing a co-occurring mental health problem. A treatment first mentality (requiring individuals to address substance abuse and mental health issues before accessing necessary services) among providers is a significant barrier to needed services many individuals experiencing homelessness face.

However, new trends in homeless services drawing upon the principles of harm reduction are resulting in improved outcomes for this population. Individuals experiencing homelessness often have difficulty meeting demands of programs requiring abstinence or participation in substance use services because they are not ready to give up their substance use. In many cases, this is because behaviors providers see as negative are providing some sort of benefit to the person in light of all of the adversity they experience on the streets. In cases where individuals do obtain abstinence for the purpose of accessing services, relapse often follows because their end goal was the service (which has been obtained) and not sobriety itself. Harm reduction is a more practical avenue for working with members of vulnerable populations who have experienced significant levels of trauma, as well as individuals who are simply not ready to choose sobriety. While many individuals see harm reduction and abstinence-focused approaches such as Alcoholics Anonymous as being in opposition to each other, harm reduction is actually highly accepting of abstinence as a goal as long as it is the individual’s choice. As such, the successful harm reduction practitioner will help guide an individual toward ever safer behaviors, but will never force abstinence on her/him.

Perhaps the best example of the positive effect of harm reduction services within the homeless population is the Housing First model of permanent supportive housing. The Housing First approach was developed in the early 1990s to address discrepancies between abstinence-only housing services and the realities of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. As such, it places minimal demands on clients related to substance use and service engagement. Since its development, Housing First programs have been associated with a number of positive outcomes when compared to abstinence-only programs such as higher perceived choice in services among residents, increased access and higher use of behavioral health services, fewer emergency room visits for detox purposes, and reduced involvement in criminal activity. It is because of these and similar outcomes that Housing First is considered an evidence-based practice by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration.

While harm reduction is only one “ingredient” of Housing First programming, it is one of the most critical to its success. While there are many concerns that harm reduction leads to enabling, it is not an “anything goes model”. Clinicians who employ harm reduction appropriately do not protect their consumers from the natural consequences of their actions, but rather work with them to understand how their behaviors led to those consequences in the first place. (Natural consequences refers to consequences faced by the majority of society, not consequences resulting from arbitrary program rules more often faced by those living poverty. ) In my research, I have seen how harm reduction leads to improved relationships between Housing First staff and residents, which is essential for facilitating positive change. This is because residents are more likely to discuss their substance use openly and seek help related to it when necessary because they do not have to fear being thrown out of their apartments. It is these kinds of open and honest discussions that tools like motivational interviewing and the transtheoretical/stages of change model (tools most substance abuse professionals utilize) hinge on for their success.

If you are interested in learning more about harm reduction and Housing First, I am happy to share copies of my research reports (dpwatson@iupui.edu), or you can access helpful information from the following organizations:
The Harm Reduction Coalition (http://harmreduction.org/)
The Midwest Harm Reduction Institute (http://www.heartlandalliance.org/mhri/)
Pathways to Housing (https://pathwaystohousing.org/)
The At Home/Chez Soi Project (http://athome.nfb.ca/)
Events

Recovery Network Alliance (RNA)
December 9, 2015
12:00 pm
Progress House
201 E. Shelby Street
Indpls, IN
This will be the last RNA meeting this year. Please join us!

Heroes for Recovery
December 10, 2015
12:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Columbia Club Grand Ballroom
This program celebrates these “Heroes” and their families. The program recognizes and celebrates the heroic work of many people who fight for better mental health and better lives on a daily basis in their community.
For more information follow the URL below:
https://mhai.net/events/event-registration/event/41/Heroes-for-Recovery

Fort Wayne
Recovery Coach Training
January 25-29, 2016
8:30 am — 4:30 pm
Sweetwater
5501 US 30
Fort Wayne, IN 46818
To Register, Follow the URL Below:
https://www.eventbrite.com/e/project-peers-5-day-30-hour-recovery-coach-training-tickets-19639486232

TASTE OF HOPE
Sunday, February 21, 2016
Time: 12 - 2 p.m.
Fairbanks Recovery Center
8102 Clearvista Parkway,
Indianapolis, IN
$50 per person
http://www.hopeacademyrhs.org/tasteofhope

Hoosier Idol
Mar 8, 2016 — 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM
Indiana Roof Ballroom
140 W. Washington St., Indianapolis IN 46204
Join MHAI, Speaker Brian Bosma, Phil Terry, Roger Harvey, and our panel of Celebrity Judges on March 8, 2016 as members of the Indiana General Assembly showcase their hidden talents to compete for the title of the 2016 Hoosier Idol. https://mhai.net/events/event-registration
MY MENTAL HEALTH JOURNEY

I was born March 21st, 1991, at 6:12 AM. I have struggled with mental illness my whole life; I have had many outbursts in my life. I have been hospitalized on and off through my teenage years. I have learned many things and changed my ways dramatically. I have been an advocate ever since I went to LaRue D. Carter in Indianapolis, Indiana; that was back in 2004 – 2005. I have been sharing my experiences and stories with many people and changed a few people’s minds about some stuff in the mental health field. I know it can change lives. How so? Let’s just say that when I spoke to a class of high school students, two girls cried and told me I actually understood what it was like. They came up and gave me a hug. For that reason I might have helped them in a way that could have changed their lives… that is another reason I will continue advocating for others for as long as I am.

My name is Kelsey Pyron and I work with Youth M.O.V.E. Indiana as a recovery advocate. I have a history of once living as an addict along with battling mental health issues, including bipolar. My goal today is to live one day at a time and to help others like myself find a sense of peace within themselves.

Trek Limitless Recovery’s

TLR’s vision is to be the universal force in transforming our cultural landscape to sustain long term recovery. TLR’s mission is to inspire limitless recovery opportunities by creating soul-deep connection and unbounded community.

We are a peer-based model grounded in the "Recovery To" philosophy - working within the larger recovery-oriented system of care. We offer recovery management, assertive linkage of services, endless activities and events that focus on the whole being, workshops, trainings, and trekking each part of the terrain with people who have Substance Use Disorders.

We not only connect people to a recovery community, but believe deeply in involving and connecting to the entire community as a whole. www.treklimitlessrecovery.com

HOW ABOUT SOME GOOD NEWS FROM DOWN SOUTH...

Congrats to Austin High School on increasing graduation rates from 62% a few years ago up to 87.6% in 2013-14. Advancements to educational opportunities also continue with access to Prosser trade programs and College credits. The number of college credits earned by Austin High School students has increased from 99 in 2010-2011 to 1,524 college credit hours earned by Austin High School students in 2014. GO AUSTIN HIGH!!