

FRIENDS OF RECOVERY New York

ONE COMMUNITY
ONE VOICE

Spring Newsletter



Vol. 3 - 2012



Laura Elliot Engel at the 4th Annual Recovery Rally

President's Corner

By Laura Elliott Engel, President – FOR-NY

As 2012 emerges in this early spring, thoughts of renewal, opportunity, and challenges surround me. Spring also brought personal loss of a family member and an unexpected and life threatening medical emergency. Renewal and loss, unpredictability and assurance are the essential realities of life. Recovery provides and nourishes so that these life opportunities are met with the strength of wisdom, ability to confront loss and fear and come out the other end with the confidence that spiritual truths prevail.

FOR-NY is also emerging and growing. The attendance of over 150 people for the Recovery Advocacy Day in Albany was a wonderful event. The jointly sponsored (with Faces and Voices of Recovery) *Listening Forum* in NYC held in February indicates the genuine and growing presence of people in recovery who understand that visibility and numbers make a difference.

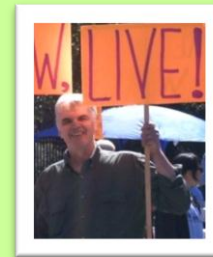
Inside:

Friends of Recovery – NY INTRODUCES ITS NEW FIELD DIRECTOR.....Pg 2
2012 Advocacy Day.....Pg 3
Recovery Around the State.....Pg 4

Upcoming Events.....Pg 6

2012 Policy Statement.....Pg 7

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Recovery Forum

by David Ramsey, FOR-NY Founding Board Member

Every now and then you turn a corner in life and run into your youth. It happened to me the other day while going through some books in a spare bedroom at our house, those boxes you can't quite bring yourself to part with yet. There I was, waiting for myself, right inside a yellowing paperback edition of Hemingway's short stories—that callow, untested, 16-year-old version of myself—the one who discovered and loved that world-weary, savvy life that Hemingway painted so well. I ended up perched on one of the boxes for the better part of an hour, flipping through that long-ago world. One story in particular caught my attention, because I remembered that the 16-year-old had dismissed it impatiently—too static, not enough machismo, apparently. The story was titled, "A Clean, Well-lighted Place".

The story is a simple one; it describes a well-lighted café in Spain late at night, where two waiters, one older and losing confidence in the meaning of his life, one young and arrogant, wait for an old man, described as a drunk, to finish his brandy so the waiters can close the (con't on page 5)

President's Corner (con't from pg. 1)

There are many ways that service is delivered and experienced. A caring hand holding a loved one as he is dying, sharing a hug during sadness or happiness, responding to a call for help, showing up and giving voice with confidence are all manifestations of service.

FOR-NY needs you and your service. We need folks who will continue to show up, speak out and to reach into your pockets and contribute financially to this emerging community. If I could reach out and touch each of you, I would. If I could hug each of you I would. If I could tell you beyond words what your giving means for the movement, I would.

If each of you reading this would give what you can, contact three additional individuals and/or organizations to contribute we would strengthen our presence, increase our staff capacity and our outreach capabilities in a way that firmly established the presence of RECOVERY in NY state.

Finally, we need hands to serve on working committees to create the best ever *NY Celebrates Recovery* scheduled for September 23. The FIFTH Annual event offers a wonderful opportunity to participate in Recovery that is beyond one's own particular focus.

Please visit our website for information about how to donate. If you'd like to volunteer in any capacity, please contact prezforny@gmail.com or samw@for-ny.org.

As the budding plants resist the cold nights and continue to grow towards full bloom, may each of you know the care of someone you love.



**Want to show your support of recovery in NYS?
Click on <https://www.for-ny.org/donate.php> to
become a Friend of Recovery!**

Friends of Recovery – NY INTRODUCES ITS NEW FIELD DIRECTOR



Sam Wiggins

Laura Elliott-Engel, President of The Board of Directors of Friends of Recovery New York (FOR-NY) is pleased to announce the appointment of Samuel Wiggins to the position of Field Director. Mr. Wiggins is married, a father, a veteran and a person in sustained recovery who brings a deeply felt commitment to the reality that recovery is possible for all.

Mr. Wiggins states: "To be the newly appointed Field Director of the Friends Of Recovery – New York (FOR-NY) organization is an esteemed honor. The privilege to work with this assembly of people whose commitment to carving out pathways of access to recovery support services is awesome. My vision is to expand FOR-NY's reach into the lives of all who are touched by addiction beginning with the community, city, statewide, and beyond. This forward looking perspective is inspired by the momentum that is currently present in FOR-NY's accomplishments. Through outreach, advocacy, and policy promotion, effective change has occurred. I am committed to furthering these undertakings through increased exposure on every level so that improvement of social health occurs in our communities".

FOR-NY's 2012 Advocacy Day



Laura Elliott Engel

On February 7, FOR-NY held its 2012 Advocacy Day at the Emmanuel Baptist Church in Albany, NY. The Day brought out 150 people to lend their voice to the message that Recovery Supports must be advocated for by our legislators. An exciting aspect to the day was the filming by Greg Williams of *Connecticut Turning to Youth and Families* who is currently making a documentary about recovery.

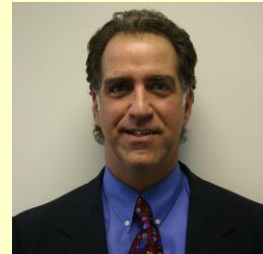
On the eve of Advocacy Day, FOR-NY delivered the 2012 Policy Statement (pg. 7) to all of the New York State legislators. This document focused on three key areas in recovery for the 2012 legislative session - access to treatment, recovery services and reinvestment. The statement helped frame the important issues of the day.

The next day, FOR-NY's dedicated volunteers led by Orlando Hernandez from the Recovery Center - The Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse of Sullivan County came by van and helped us prepare for the day. Their helping hands pitched in with the final preparations and were truly appreciated. As always, Orlando pledged to help FOR-NY with other events in the future.

The inspirational day was opened by FOR-NY Board President, Laura Elliott-Engel and Fr. Peter Young, founder & CEO of Peter Young Housing, Industries & Treatment. Arlene Gonzalez Sanchez, Commissioner of the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services spoke next to share her thoughts on the need for recovery advocacy.

Attendees also had the opportunity to hear from several legislators including Assemblyman Cymbrowitz, Senators Diane Savino, Neil Breslin and Tom Duane who all shared personal stories about why they were committed to advancing recovery supports.

Also on the program for the day were two Teach-in Sessions. John Coppola, the Executive Director of the Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Providers of NYS provided attendees with an overview on "Advocating for Recovery". Betty Currier, FOR-NY's Treasurer and Recovery Coach Core Trainer spoke to the crowd about "The Language of Recovery".



John Coppola

As the crowd prepared to move on to their meetings with the Legislature, Laura Elliott-Engel invited participants to share their messages of recovery. Several participants opened up to the crowd with their recovery stories. Their comments reminded everyone who was present why we had come together - to share the message that helping those in recovery can truly make the difference in someone's life.

Thank you so much to our friends at Emmanuel Baptist Church - Beverly and John! They were wonderful stewards of their beautiful and historic church and they helped us so much.



Betty Currier

Senator Tom Duane



Orlando Hernandez

More Advocacy Day photos – Pg 5

Recovery Around the State



Recovery around the State was well represented in Albany on February 7. People from all parts of NYS joined us at our Advocacy Day.

Our motivated and active friends from LIRA on **Long Island** came and took part in our Rally at the Church. From there they headed to the legislature.



Also taking part in Advocacy Day were our friends from Samaritan Village in **Ellenville**, Credo Community Center in **Watertown**, SPARC in **Albany**, Crouse in **Syracuse**, **Bronx** Community Recovery Center, Twin County Recovery Services in **Catskill**, Council on Addictions, **Olean**, Alcohol & Substance Abuse Council of Jefferson County also in **Watertown**, the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Delaware County, Inc. in **Delhi**.

New York City

On February 25, Faces & Voices of Recovery hosted its Community Listening Forum. They partnered with FOR-NY, Beth Israel Medical Center, Exponents, and the National Alliance of Medication Assisted Recovery. The Forum was well attended with about 100-150 in attendance. The purpose of the forum was to highlight issues facing people in, or seeking long-term recovery from addiction who are also affected by HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and other chronic health conditions.

Each speaker was given 5 minutes to deliver his or her message. Approximately 30 people, mostly people in recovery spoke. The listening panel was comprised of notable speakers including Westley Clark from CSAT, Adam Karpati NYC Dept. of Health and Human Services, and Ramon Rodriguez COO OASAS.



Also in NYC, Dona Pagan (front row right) organized a Recovery Coach Academy held at the Resource Recovery & Life Coaching Academy.

Watertown

In March Betty Carrier conducted a Recovery Coach Academy and Training of Trainers in Watertown at Alcohol & Substance Abuse Council of Jefferson County.



Recovery Links:

Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network:

www.attcnetwork.org

Faces and Voices of Recovery: www.facesandvoices.org
Institute for Research, Education and Training in Addiction (IRETA): www.ireta.org

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD): ncadd.org

NYS Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers (ASAP) of NYS: asapnys.org

Rockstar/Superstar Project:

<http://www.rockstarsuperstarproject.com/>

Recovery Forum

by David Ramsey, FOR-NY Founding Board Member (con't from pg1)

café and leave. The old man, who is deaf, comes frequently to the café when he is drunk and has no place to go. The waiters discuss the old man's recent suicide attempt, which was interrupted by his daughter. The young waiter finally refuses to serve the old man more brandy; the old man leaves, and the waiters argue mildly about the old man and why they should stay open for drunks like him.

"I am of those who like to stay late at the cafe," the older waiter said. "With all those who do not want to go to bed. With all those who need a light for the night."

The young one said, "I want to go home and into bed."

"We are of two different kinds," the older waiter said. He was now dressed to go home. "It is not only a question of youth and confidence although those things are very beautiful. Each night I am reluctant to close up because there may be someone who needs the cafe."

"Hombre, there are bodegas open all night long."

"You do not understand. This is a clean and pleasant cafe. It is well lighted. The light is very good and also, now, there are shadows of the leaves."

Perhaps like you, I came to understand all too well what brought the old man to the café. At the end, even getting to the café became too much, and I succumbed to the terrifying loneliness of drinking alone, deaf to the sounds of life around me.

In 1981 I joined a fellowship that taught me how to stay sober. Perhaps like you, I have been blessed since those dark days with a life rich with friendships and family. Twelve years ago, I helped start Friends of Recovery—Delaware/Otsego. We've opened two recovery community centers, one in Oneonta, one in Delhi. Other groups have opened recovery centers in Rochester and Brooklyn. A few years ago, I joined with others and started Friends of Recovery-New York; among our other initiatives, we are working to assist recovering communities across the state in opening more of these centers—grassroots-style places at the heart of recovery communities, where individuals and families in recovery from addictions share their stories, share their laughter, share their hope. All paths of recovery are welcome.

It's been satisfying work for us, these centers. I like to think Hemingway's older waiter would approve. No brandy, of course, but lots of coffee--and if he walked into one of these places at night, he would most certainly hear the laughter of people who have found each other. They are clean, well-lighted places. Come see for yourself.

More Photos from Advocacy Day 2012



Our volunteers from the Recovery Center



Fr. Peter Young & Congressman John Sweeney



Senator Diane Savino



Commissioner Gonzalez-Sanchez

Just in Time for Mother's Day!

FOR-NY's Recovery Art Cards

FOR-NY Recovery Art Greeting cards are a great gift for moms, grandmoms and all the other wonderful women in our lives! The cards are 5 for \$10 for one image or 6 for \$12 for a mixed set of each image. The sale of the products will benefit FOR-NY's work to advance recovery in New York State. To purchase the cards and show your support of recovery in NYS call 518-487-4395.



"Change": Derek Thompson



"Growth Pains are Worth It":
Christine Pfeiffer



Winter Doves – Recovery Frees Us to Love Again:
Daniel J. Burns

Thank you to Derek Thompson, Christine Pfeiffer and Daniel Burns, the artists who donated their work to support recovery in NYS!

Recovery Fine Arts Festival

FOR-NY will again host the Recovery Fine Arts Festival during Recovery Month in September. Recovery Artists will be asked to submit their art in the categories of photography, pen and ink, acrylic, watercolor, poetry, oil/pastel, pencil, poetry hip hop, multi-media and mixed media. A new category of a 30 - 45 second video on overdose prevention or prescription drug abuse prevention will also be added. Submissions must be made by August 24. The art will be displayed on the Empire State Plaza from September 3 – 28th and winners in each category will be presented with their awards at the Rally for Recovery on September 23. For more information please contact Michelle Cleary at michelle@for-ny.org.

New York: Recovery Community Coalition (NYRCC)



NYRCC is a group of community and faith based organizations committed to strengthening communities by combining resources to support individuals and families in recovery. On April 26, 2012 NYRCC hosted a forum entitled **Recovery 2012—A Journey to Wellness** at the OASAS office, 501 7th Avenue (37th Street), 8th floor 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The forum was designed to provide information on the recovery movement in New York City and strategies to achieve and sustain recovery.

5th Annual Rally for Recovery

Plans are underway for the 5th Annual Rally for Recovery which will take place in beautiful Riverfront Park at the Corning Preserve in Albany. A family oriented day celebrating recovery is being planned. To volunteer to help with fundraising, planning or to help with site set-up and crowd support please call 518-487-4395.

FOR-NY Board of Directors

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Bill Bowman
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Richard Buckman
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FOR-NY 2012 POLICY STATEMENT

Friends of Recovery New York (FOR-NY), the statewide Recovery Addiction Advocacy not for profit remains committed to confront discrimination and to educate decision makers and the general public by advocating for access to addiction treatment, support for and expansion of regionally located recovery centers and the use of recovery coaches to provide peer driven, recovery support services. We therefore, urge the NYS Legislature and Administration to consider and act on the following:

Access to Treatment

- Individuals with substance abuse disorders have long been discriminated against by the failure to integrate addiction treatment into the New York State insurance system in a meaningful way. In the rare instance when an insurance policy does provide coverage, there is almost always a limit on the days covered or the number of times one can receive services. Managed care has made it even harder for addicted people to gain access to treatment placing roadblocks in the form of gatekeepers before one can get approved.
- FOR-NY encourages support for innovative legislation similar to the existing Pennsylvania Act 106 which would authorize addiction treatment professionals to make the ultimate determination on length and level of care for addiction treatment. The existing system with insurers making these dollar driven decisions has contributed to numerous preventable deaths and a cycle of short term abstinence and relapse draining our state of vital resources

Recovery Services

- FOR-NY strongly urges reinvestment of resources dedicated to Recovery Coaching. Like any chronic illness, relapse is an integral part of addictive behavior and the development of a positive support system is a necessary adjunct to effective long-term recovery. Recovery Coaches are trained individuals who have their own recovery experience (including the addiction of family, friends or loved-ones). Recovery Coaches, can help individuals gain access to needed resources, services, or supports, address the multiple areas in their life that have been impacted by addiction: e.g. assist with employment, locate stable housing and offer intervention at the first sign of relapse. Recovery Coaching can greatly increase the success rate of people in recovery while lowering the cost to the health care and criminal justice systems.

Reinvestment

- FOR-NY supports a small tax increase on alcohol sales and gaming outlets to be used to reinvest in community resources for prevention, treatment, and recovery services which must include transitional housing and employment opportunities. We strongly urge investment to stand up community recovery centers which provide access to recovery by utilizing a peer driven focus. Recovery Coaches, can help individuals gain access to needed resources, services, or supports, address the multiple areas in their life impacted by addiction, and offer intervention at the first sign of relapse.

For too long, discrimination and stigma related to substance use disorders have determined access and outcomes for individuals and their families seeking help. The NYS legislature and Governor's office working with this constituency can make significant sustained change.

People in Recovery Vote, Show Up and Speak!

For more information contact: Laura Elliott-Engel, Board President - 716 378 5961 or Richard Buckman, 15bucks@optonline.net