

# Recovery TALK

FRIENDS OF  
RECOVERY  
New York

ONE COMMUNITY  
ONE VOICE

Sponsored by



Quarterly Newsletter - May 2019

A Shining Celebration of the Power & Promise of Recovery...

## RECOVERY GEMS

### An Appetizers & Auction Event to Support our Mission

Friends of Recovery-New York is organizing its first ever auction fundraising event on May 30th at Glennpeter Jewelers Diamond Centre in Albany, NY. This early evening event will take place from 5:30-7:30 p.m. for friends and supporters of the recovery community, and those wanting to learn more about the FOR-NY mission.

During this event, Congressman Paul Tonko, US Representative of the 20th Congressional District of New York, will be in attendance and honored as the first recipient of the Recovery Gem award for [his steadfast championing for prevention and recovery resources](#).

More than 15 amazing auction items will be available to bid on from original pastel artwork to "date night packages." Additionally, there will be a gift card mystery bag pull with a variety of restaurant and store gift cards ranging from \$25 to \$50 in value. Todd Podrazik will offer acoustical guitar background music for guests to enjoy while mixing, mingling and feasting on an abundance of appetizers.

John Craig, local news reporter, will be the guest host and Master of Ceremonies for the evening.

Owned by a local family, Glennpeter Diamond Centre generously opens their store to assist local area non-profits in their fundraising endeavors.

### Recovery Gems

A Shining Celebration  
of the Power & Promise of Recovery

FRIENDS OF  
RECOVERY  
New York

ONE COMMUNITY  
ONE VOICE

Thursday, May 30, 2019

5:30 - 7:30 pm

Glennpeter Jewelers Diamond Centre  
1544 Central Ave, Albany

\$15 per person by May 21st; \$20 at the door

- ❖ Appetizers
- ❖ Silent Auction
- ❖ Gift Card Pull

All proceeds benefit the mission of Friends of Recovery-New York

RSVP and pay online at [www.FOR-NY.org](http://www.FOR-NY.org) by May 21st

~ or ~ Mail in your check, payable to Friends of Recovery-NY, with the full names of attendees, to:  
1529 Western Ave., Albany, NY 12203 also no later than May 21st. Please indicate in memo: Recovery Gems

Congressman Paul Tonko will be honored with the first-ever "Recovery Gem" award  
for his unwavering efforts to help advance our mission



RSVP today through [this registration link](#).  
Ticket price through May 21st is \$15; after that date and at the door, the ticket price goes up to \$20. Proceeds from this event will benefit the FOR-NY mission and vision of a world in which the entire spectrum of effective prevention, treatment and recovery support services are available and accessible to all.

# BOARD CORNER



Dear Friends,

It is an honor to take a turn and serve our statewide community as President for Friends of Recovery – New York. As a person in recovery for the past 33 years, I have the privilege of knowing just how far we have come in the last three decades. The milestones of our collective story as a recovery community and the positive impacts we are now making

in our local communities are important to recognize.

Never before has there been such an extraordinary level of recognition and investment in recovery, largely in response to the opioid crisis.

Yet, like many of us, I'm not ready to celebrate. There is so much more work to do in our communities and the clarity of our voice, perspective and leadership has never been more important.

Accordingly, I am so excited to announce the appointment of Dr. Angelia Smith-Wilson as our incoming Executive Director for FOR-NY, who began her journey with us on May 20, 2019.

Her enthusiasm and dedication to addiction recovery, matched with her extensive background with management, program development, and human services, makes Angelia a perfect fit. She will be able to lead our organization and support our community to another level of recognition of our collective voice and the power of recovery throughout the state.

We need leadership and a strategy that models what it looks like to support the local voices and champions of recovery and leverage the power of our communities. Angelia is anchored with a leadership style and presence that values diversity, fosters collaboration and builds unity. I look forward to you all getting to know Angelia as we begin our important work together across New York State.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Allison Weingarten for holding the position of Interim Executive Director over the past eight months. Allison guided the staff and our community through the transition process with elegance and true dedication to our mission. The Board and staff are so grateful for her outstanding leadership. Allison will resume her extraordinary and important work as the FOR-NY Director of Policy. We are also grateful to our entire staff who remained understanding and flexible throughout the past several months.

To the entire FOR-NY family, we thank you for your ongoing support. Together, we will continue to meet and excel in our mission to demonstrate the Power and Promise of Recovery!

*Chacku*

Chacku Mathai, President, FOR-NY Board of Directors

**FRIENDS OF  
RECOVERY**

New York

ONE COMMUNITY  
ONE VOICE

1529 Western Avenue  
Albany, New York 12203  
518-487-4395  
[www.for-ny.org](http://www.for-ny.org)

***"Nothing about us without us"***

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Chacku Mathai** - President  
*Monroe County*

**Debra Rhoades** - Vice President  
*Albany County*

**Donna Pagan** - Secretary  
*New York City*

**Eric Dyer** - Treasurer  
*Albany County*

**Laurie Lieberman**  
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**Ed Olsen**  
*Nassau & Suffolk County*

## FOR-NY STAFF

**Dr. Angelia Smith-Wilson**  
*Executive Director*

**Allison Weingarten**  
*Director of Policy*

**Debbie Brosen**  
*Office Manager*

**Theresa Knorr**  
*Director of Education & Training*

**Paulette Doudoukjian**  
*Development & Communications Manager*

**AmeriCorps VISTA**  
**Shannon Schielke**  
*Data Analyst*

## YOUTH VOICES MATTER-NY

**Youth Recovery Program Specialists**

**Rachelle Brown**  
*New York City Region*

**Lori Teaney**  
*Capital Region*

**Carlee Hulsizer**  
*Western New York*

**Connect with Us**



## 2019 LEE Award Recipient

# Ryan Caldwell - Making a Difference

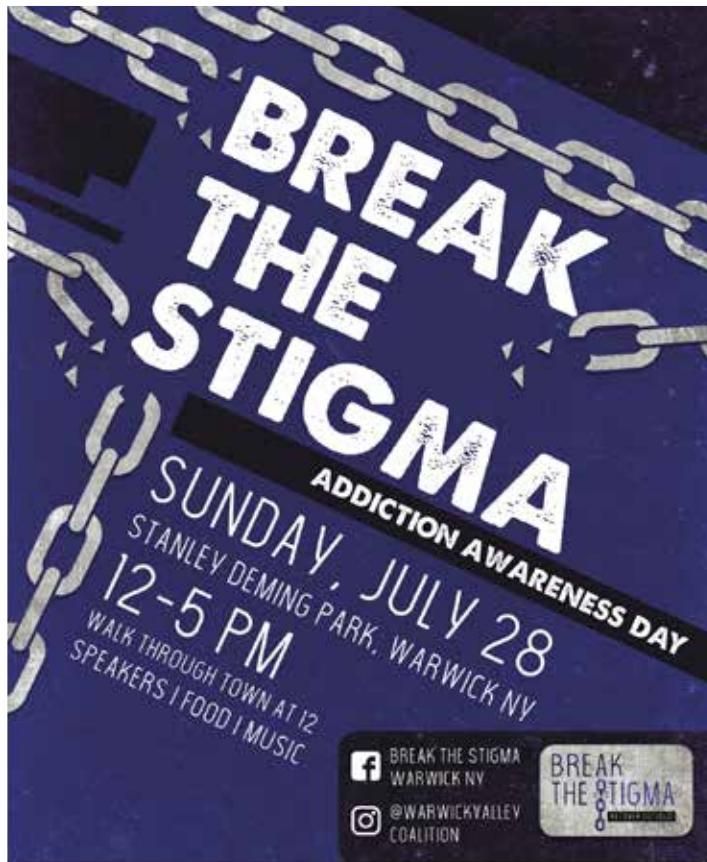
Ryan Caldwell, a young man out to change the world through his humble determination, received the 2019 Laura Elliott Engel Award at this year's Stand Up for Recovery Day. Caldwell garnered the most nominations, with the mother of one person he sponsored crediting him for making her son feel connected: "His effect on my son and the community has been overwhelming and still continues as he uses his experience, knowledge and passion to not just advocate but participate in educating others that recovery exists and continues and more importantly, is achievable."

When asked what made him want to be a mentor and sponsor, he answers without hesitation and in a straightforward manner that reflects his giving-nature, "We can't keep what we have unless we give it away. Helping other people helps ourselves." Caldwell learned this after serving time in prison as a direct result of using drugs. He credits this as his turning point. "I realized that I can't live life this way and I needed help and guidance," explained Ryan, who then made the effort to change the people, places and things around him for a more positive outcome.

Last year, Ryan coordinated the inaugural "[Break the Stigma](#)" Awareness Day event in Warwick, NY, after a conversation with a friend about someone who passed away from an overdose. No one would acknowledge that the death was due to an addiction. He realized that it's the denial which has a lot to do with the stigma. That is when this event was born... and more than 500 people walked for awareness. This year's event is scheduled for July 28th with anticipation of even more people participating.

Ryan now serves as the coordinator for the Warwick Valley Coalition Prevention Group thanks to his efforts in spearheading this event and his enthusiasm and dedication to serve as a role model for others in recovery. "He has brought fresh ideas to a coalition almost ten years old, melding his passion for recovery with prevention. He is indeed our Recovery Warrior," explained Anna Colonna, his boss and one of the people who nominated Ryan for the LEE award.

"To be honest, it is difficult to receive recognition for something I try to do selflessly, but it was a huge honor to receive the LEE award," says this 29-year-old in a quietly excited voice.



Above is the flyer for the upcoming 2nd annual "Break the Stigma" walk spearheaded and organized by Ryan. To the right is Ryan's family... his fiancée, Bianca, and stepson, Isaiah.



# POLICY UPDATE



Dear Recovery Warriors,

I want to start this policy update with some major gratitude. Recovery warriors including yourselves came from all over NYS to celebrate Recovery and demand change for our 10th annual Stand Up For Recovery Day on March 20, 2019. See our video from the day of action [here](#). From advocates that have been fighting for decades, to young people new to recovery celebrating and advocating with [Youth Voices Matter-NY](#)...we showed up in numbers with more than 1200 representing all corners of state. We advocated for our [policy statement](#), particularly focusing on three areas of interest: an increase of funding for NYS OASAS, support for recovery housing through support of the Sober Living Task Force legislation [A.929 Rosenthal/S.2681 Mayer](#); and support for the [Governor's Parity Package](#).

## STEPS FORWARD

We are extremely grateful for the advocacy work done by warriors around the state on our dedicated advocacy day and throughout the year, which led to the Governor's groundbreaking Parity passage passing, including a tax subsidy for employers who hire people in recovery! The elements passed in the parity package were directly a result of advocates speaking up about the issues people with addiction, family members and those in recovery face. Unfortunately, we were not able to secure an increase in funding for OASAS, however, we are looking ahead to the rest of the NYS Legislative Session scheduled to end mid-June to pass legislation supporting a Recovery Housing taskforce, in which people on the taskforce include people in recovery and family members. Remember our tagline -- "*Nothing About Us Without Us!*"

We will continue to advocate for an increase in funding for OASAS in order to fund Prevention, Treatment and Recovery Support services at the level that is demanded and in a way that is sustainable for years to come.

We are also in great support of [A.7347 \(Rosenthal\)](#), which renames the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services to be the Office of Addiction Services and Supports. We know how language matters and after years of advocacy, we commend OASAS and the legislature for their interest in making this important change!

Finally, our policy committee is always looking for allies with common legislative focuses to work together in solidarity. We are planning a federal legislative day of action during the September Recovery month. We are looking for ways to engage with the new NYS Attorney General, Letitia James, in order to hold opioid manufacturers and distributors accountable, find justice for families with loved ones lost to addiction, and to prevent unnecessary fatalities from occurring in the future.

FOR-NY also offers organizing and advocacy trainings, including Community Asset Mapping, the 45 Second Elevator Pitch, and Building Your Recovery Community Organization (RCO) from the Ground Up. The more we can come together and find commonality, the better chance we have to fight addiction and provide attainable pathways to recovery for every individual and family in NYS. We currently have over 40 RCOs organizing, bringing awareness and advocating for change all around the state. It is through these local organizing efforts that we really show our strength.

Finally, we encourage you to come to our [Community Based Recovery Supports](#) meetings with locations in NYC, Middletown (Orange County), Albany, Rochester and Buffalo. The next meeting is on May 30, where we will have a special panel on Recovery Employment. [Register here!](#)

Thank you again for all the work you do on a local and statewide basis. Your efforts do not go unnoticed!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alison Weingarten".

Allison Weingarten  
*Director of Policy*  
Friends of Recovery - New York

## ~ FRIENDS OF RECOVERY-NY FIVE CORE BELIEFS ~

- 1 Addiction is a public health issue.
- 2 Recovery is possible for everyone.
- 3 There are many paths to recovery and everyone gets there in his or her own way.
- 4 Adequate resources and support are necessary for sustained recovery.
- 5 Recovery is about reclaiming a meaningful life and role in society.

# The PILLARS NYC Providing Balance

The PILLARS is Manhattan's first OASAS-funded Recovery Community and Outreach Center located in the Village of Harlem. We guide individuals to tap into their existing strengths and offer services to help fill the gaps. Through our comprehensive network of partnerships, all who are in recovery and those loving someone in active addiction, can receive the support they need for a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

Our mission is to guide individuals toward reintegration with self, family, community, and society. These are the four "pillars" that our services focus on. For self we offer Yoga, Tai Chi, Meditation, Acupressure, Dance and Reiki. These classes assist individuals to embrace healthy ways to manage stress, emotions, and environments. It is only through self-care that we can learn to care for others. For the second "pillar," which is family, we have Sober Parenting Journey, Domestic Violence Prevention, and Batterers' Accountability classes. They are designed to create a collective team to support the member during reintegration into their family. For Community, we deliver Narcan and Community Mental Health First Aid Trainings, AA/NA/ACOA/Refuge Recovery, and Volunteerism. This "pillar" provides support, encouragement, accountability, and mentorship for our recovery "community". Lastly, the fourth "pillar," society, includes Workforce Development, Resume Building, GED prep, Computer, and Career Readiness Classes. These services offer crucial resources for job acquisition. The PILLARS partners with healthcare professionals, financial advisors and legal experts to assist individuals in rebuilding their foundation.

One of our members states that, "The PILLARS has changed my life. Everyone here is welcoming and wants the best for others. The PILLARS is a family and a great place to grow as a person." This testimony highlights the

welcoming environment that makes The PILLARS unique and shows first-hand how the classes positively impact members' lives. We are eager to continue to expand our services and to empower hundreds of individuals in Manhattan. We have many additions happening in the coming months, so check out our website to hear the specifics!

## The PILLARS NYC

289 St Nicholas Ave. New York, NY 10027

212-222-3470

[www.pillarsnyc.org](http://www.pillarsnyc.org)

[@pillarsnyc](mailto:@pillarsnyc)



# 2019 RECOVERY CONFERENCE

## Here is what's in store for you!

On October 20-22, 2019 at the Albany Marriott, hundreds of dedicated warriors will gather once again for the Recovery Conference, co-sponsored by the Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers of New York State (ASAPNYS) and Friends of Recovery-New York (FOR-NY). This annual and much anticipated gathering provides unique educational and networking opportunities for the entire Recovery Community.

The Recovery Conference begins on October 20th with a Pre-Conference sponsored by OASAS and will be an excellent opportunity to provide training for peers.

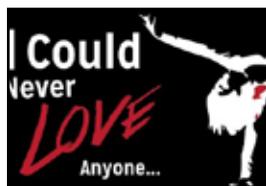
The theme of this year's conference is "Working Our Recovery." As we move through the stages of change we get busy! The workshop tracks will mirror SAMHSA's working definition of Recovery – "A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives and strive to reach their full potential." Workshops will reflect: **Processes of Change** (Multiple Pathways), **Health and Wellness** (Everything We Do to Keep Healthy), **Self –Directed Lives** (Advocacy and Community) and **Reaching our Full Potential** (Living with Purpose).

Keynote speakers, 24 workshops and morning wellness activities are planned around the four pillars of recovery! **Plan to join us by registering today at the early bird special price of \$175...** you can register now and pay later! If you are not in the registration cue by June 30th, the price then goes up to \$250.

### The Program



National Addiction Recovery Advocate, [Ryan Hampton](#) and International Mindfulness Addiction Expert and Award-winning Author [Dr. Valerie Mason-John, M. A.](#) are two of our confirmed Keynote speakers. Both will be available for book signings. Dr. Mason-John (Vimilasara) will also lead a workshop on Eight Step Recovery using Buddhist Teachings to overcome addiction.



One of our most exciting workshops is a presentation of "I Could Never Love Anyone... (As Much as I Love My Sisters)" offered by [Katherine Pettit Creative](#) from NYC. Born from personal experience, it's the story of three sisters, told entirely through choreography, empowering young people to be free from stigma, and enabled by music & movement to communicate.



Another top-notch workshop is The 13th Step: Yoga for Recovery led by [Hope Zvara](#). Hope will share her story and how she used yoga to help her overcome traumatic events in her life, including her recovery from an Eating Disorder. She developed the HOPE Process designed to Help Others Purposefully Excel by using the three B's: Breathe, Body, and Belief.



[Billy Manas](#), author of soon-to-be released Rockstar Recovery will lead an interactive workshop, "From Your First Year Clean to the Life of Your Dreams." Billy is a poet, singer-songwriter, and truck driver from the Hudson Valley. His distinct voice in both song and poetry is likely the result of his degree in literature and his teenage years spent outside of [CBGB's](#) on the Lower East Side. Read his blogs in the Elephant Journal [The One Thing we can do Today to Get out of our Funk](#).

## **Wellness Activities**

Rise early for movement and meditation to center yourself before the day starts. Join us for a mindful moving meditation to mend mood using Tai Chi for Recovery with [Theresa Knorr](#) and other offerings to be determined.



## **Pre-Conference**

A free Pre-Conference for Recovery Support Providers on Sunday, October 20, 2019 is being planned using a peer participatory process with support from OASAS. Some of the topics discussed include Self Care, Trauma Informed Care, Documentation and Supervision.

There will be networking events for Peers, RCOs and trainers, and a dance is in the works again as well!

So don't miss out on this well-rounded Recovery Conference... **RSVP now and save \$75 by registering early! Again, REGISTER NOW... PAY LATER! This will lock you in to the \$175 price.**

## **CONFERENCE REGISTRATION**

# **New York State RECOVERY CONFERENCE**

**October 20-22, 2019**

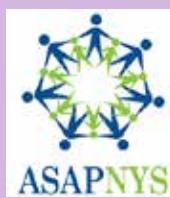
**Albany Marriott  
189 Wolf Road, Albany, NY**



***“Working Our Recovery”***

## **Conference Highlights**

- ❖ Speakers
- ❖ Workshops
- ❖ Sunday Night Dance
- ❖ Exhibitors
- ❖ Networking



**#NYSRecoveryCon**

## FRIENDS of RECOVERY

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# Arts Festival

Open to all Recovery Artists to submit one original form of art in the following five categories:

- Poetry
- Drawing (graphite, pen & ink, colored pencil)
- Painting (oil, acrylic, pastel, watercolor)
- Photography
- Mixed Media

All artwork will be on display in the Concourse level of the Empire State Plaza during the month of September. Certificates of award will be presented during the annual Recovery Conference in October for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and honorable mention in each category. The esteemed OASAS Commissioner's Choice certificate will be chosen from one of the categories.

More information and a submission form available on our website: [www.FOR-NY.org](http://www.FOR-NY.org)



"Art is a lie that makes us realize the truth." ~ Pablo Picasso

Recovery Fine Arts Festival [Submission Guidelines and Entry Form](#) can be found on our website

## STAND UP FOR RECOVERY DAY... SUCCESS!



More highlights from this year's Stand Up for Recovery Day can be seen in [THIS VIDEO](#).

Mark Your Calendar for next year's Stand Up for Recovery Day

**FEBRUARY 11, 2020**  
Empire State Convention Hall, Albany