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**PARSE Coalition Meeting Notes**

**May 16, 2023**

**Moderator**: Allison Weingarten, Clearinghouse for Worker Safety & Health Training

**Introduction:**

Allison introduced **Jonathan Rosen** (Principal Consultant, AJ Rosen & Associates LLC). Jonathan is an industrial hygienist and has worked with labor unions. He notes that the Office of National Drug Control Policy changed their position to me more lenient towards keeping those in recovery employed.

Allison: Priority is to get the December 2023 symposium off the ground.

DOH will support the symposium with around $28,000 for direct costs to rent rooms and pay for speakers’ out-of-state travel.

OASAS is giving $5,000 in funding towards the symposium.

**Jeanette Zoeckler** (Director, Occupational Health Clinical Center at Syracuse University) is supporting Jonathan and Allison in outreach to bring more members to the coalition. They are also in talks with the Department of State for their support.

Appalachian Resource Commission- Jonathan and **Julie Dostal** (LEAF Council on Alcoholism/Addictions, Inc.) are trying to reach them for symposium support. They serve 14 counties in upstate NY.

**Sarah Toledano** (Founding Member of PARSE Coalition): Will devote more time during college break at Siena College to bring in student interns to assist with the coalition.

Allison: Relays message regarding coalition support/funding from **Ashley Livingston** (co-chair of Friends of Recovery Warren & Washington RCO) that we need to reach out to LGU’s (Local Government Units) e.g., regional municipalities, towns, & villages.

**Steering Committee Update by Kristin Chalmers** (University of Rochester):

On Symposium Agenda: Kristin agrees with Jonathan about highlighting the need to reduce stigma as a topic at the symposium. We should bring local and national organizations to the symposium.

Jonathan had suggested Casey Chosewood (Director, Office for Total Worker Health, NIOSH at Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) to provide overview of the situation and work done by NIOSH, ONDCP, and NIEHS.

On Funding: **Dr. Angelia Smith** (FOR-NY Executive Director) noted HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration) can’t directly support PARSE since FOR-NY funds are earmarked for recovery programs, though some tasks PARSE shares with FOR-NY mission might be able to be covered under current funding. HRSA’s next round of funding begins September, perhaps she can get some additional funds then for a PARSE person.

Allison asked if organizations who may have some spenddown dollars to put it towards the symposium? We need a website to collect funds and advertise sponsorships to better determine admission fees to the symposium.

Opioid Settlement status in NY: The largest organizations are getting the funds such as DOH and OASAS.

On Funding/Legislative Agenda: Angelia recommended we reach out to Lt. Governor for funding instead of going only to Gov. Hochul. Angelia had noted the Lt. Governor’s current passion has been job creation and he might be receptive to helping fund the symposium.

**Christopher Assini** (FOR-NY Director of Policy): Notes June 8 is the last day of legislative session to reach our legislators to get any funding.

Jonathan: We need unions and large organizations to attend the symposium and to sponsor some symposium events. On a side note, need to agree on one terminology, Recovery Ready Workplace (RRW) or RFW (Recovery Friendly Workplace.

Research Committee Update: Working with Occupational Health & Epidemiology to get data on SUD in the workplace. Christopher Assini has been invited to join the Research Committee.

**Guest Speaker: Sam Lewandowski, Program Director of the State of New Hampshire’s Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative.**

About the RFW Initiative: Led by Governor Sununu and launched in March 2018, promotes health, safety, & wellness for New Hampshire workplaces and employees. It serves as the model for the rest of the United States. The Governor created the Doorway System to streamline resources to help people in recovery get connected to the help they need.

Granite United Way manages New Hampshire’s RFW program and is overseen by an advisory council working with the Program Director and Multi-State Liaison (Sam Lewandowski). Four Recovery Friendly Advisors report to Sam and is a labor-intensive effort but worth it due to one-to-one connections. Recovery Friendly Advisors deal with workplaces as well as 13 Public Health Network and Recovery Organizations bridging connections between employers, counselors, and those who the counselors are helping. The RFW Initiative is now connected to 30 states and has engaged in more than 4,000 trainings.

When it comes to recruiting RFW’s, there is a fine line with navigating the rules. If too rigid, businesses may shy away, e.g., you can’t say “no alcohol on premises”. As a result of working with the needs of the businesses, New Hampshire now has 350 businesses with over 93,000 employees on board with the Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative. While the RFW Initiative has a workforce development guide, they are looking to dig deeper there.

Steps in the RFW Process in New Hampshire:

1. Submit Letter of Interest
2. Orientation: varies according to the size of the organization, large organizations have detailed formalized training, not so much for mom-and-pop shops.
3. Declaration: Adopt a written declaration stating workplace commitment to RFW principles and participation.
4. Designation: Receive designation from the Governor.

At the end of one year, they do a designation renewal to reaffirm commitment to the initiative.

Q & A with Sam, and reminder to check their online forum through <https://www.recoveryfriendlyworkplace.com/> to get answers to RFW questions.

**Final Thoughts:**

Julie Dostal recommends that at the symposium we address recovery, employers, labor, and organization capacity needed to build RFW in our locales. Also, must have in addition to local/NY State based speakers, those from different parts of the US who could share their knowledge and experience. Julie asks for volunteers with specialty in the above areas to assist. **Bill Doyle** (Program Manager, Seaway Valley Prevention Council) agreed to join Kristin and **Danielle Ompad** (Global Public Health · Urban Initiative at NYU) in the recovery aspect.

Jeanette: There are quantitative and qualitative research goals. This group can help formulate the direction of research, conducting interviews at the symposium by gathering information. What questions can be posed to answer our most pressing needs? Perhaps do a survey in the next coalition meeting polling our concerns/points.

Jonathan: Funding is very important to attract speakers, and he has spoken with legislative chairs interested in sponsoring what he has drafted for 2024 cycle. Health insurance companies and labor unions would also be a great resource.

**Next Full Coalition Meeting is June 15**