



# 2023 – 2024 OFFICE OF RECOVERY PERFORMANCE REPORT

REPORT SUBMITTED NOVEMBER 2024

**Cover Photo:**  
“You Are NOT Alone” by Allison Utz  
2024 Office of Recovery’s Gallery of Hope

***SAMHSA***  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

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## Director's Letter

The *FY2023/FY2024 Office of Recovery (OR) Performance Report* highlights the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) commitment to advancing behavioral health recovery across the nation. It underscores the importance of reducing barriers to recovery supports and driving systemic change through enhanced intra-agency coordination. By aligning efforts with recovery principles and valuing the expertise of individuals with lived and living experience, their families, and caregivers, SAMHSA aims to promote greater access to mental health and substance use recovery services. This report details the OR's strategic partnerships with diverse stakeholders, working to ensure that all individuals can pursue recovery and achieve lives marked by home, health, community, and purpose.

### **A Sample of Major OR Accomplishments from October of 2022 to September of 2024:**

- Convened one hundred thirty-eight (138) meetings with approximately 12,253 people in attendance
- Published thirty-four (34) resource products including factsheets, meeting summaries, and data reports
- Organized approximately thirty-five (35) National Recovery Month webinars and events
- Hosted four (4) National Quarterly Recovery Exchange Meetings
- Provided national training and technical assistance through the Peer Recovery Center of Excellence (PR CoE) and the SAMHSA Program to Advance Recovery Knowledge (SPARK).
- Conducted dozens of presentations at major behavioral health events on recovery approaches at local, state, national, and international events
- Analyzed and released key policy and programmatic guidance on issues such as peer workforce and recovery housing
- Initiated innovative programming such as the *Art of Recovery* and *National Walk for Recovery*
- Released key data findings on recovery and initiated a recovery performance measure
- Established key SAMHSA policies on the inclusion of people with lived experience as well as created an Employee Resource Group for Professionals with Lived and Living Experience
- Began the process for SAMHSA, as the first federal agency, to be recognized as a Recovery Ready Workplace
- Hosted the inaugural SAMHSA Trailblazers in Advancing Recovery (STAR) Awards honoring recovery champions from across the nation, including leaders with lived experience of mental health and/or substance use conditions, young adults, family members, and allies

## History of the Office of Recovery

In September 2021, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, Dr. Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D., announced the establishment of the OR to focus on advancing recovery across the nation. This was the first SAMHSA Office to be established for this purpose. While SAMHSA has a long history of supporting recovery-focused efforts, the creation of the OR marked a significant step toward catalyzing recovery-oriented principles within the structure of federal behavioral health efforts.

That same month, SAMHSA convened a [National Summit on Recovery](#) of people in recovery, family members, and others to help provide guidance on the work of the OR. The OR was launched to align SAMHSA’s work with the evolving understanding of recovery as a process of change that enables individuals to live healthy, independent, and fulfilling lives while overcoming mental health and substance use conditions. The OR serves as a hub for advancing recovery-focused initiatives, by enhancing collaboration across SAMHSA, other federal agencies, states, and local communities, while promoting the importance of including the expertise of individuals and family members with lived and living experience.

In September 2022, SAMHSA launched the operations of the OR with the hiring of key staff. This was followed by the release of SAMHSA’s National Action Plan on Recovery to focus OR’s work on key goals as identified in consultation with the recovery community and others. The OR’s aim, values/principles, and goals direct all strategic direction for the office and have successfully guided the development of a robust agenda over the course of the past two years.

## Aim, Values/Principles, and Goals

SAMHSA’s National Action Plan on Recovery identifies the aim of the OR as promoting and advancing behavioral health recovery for all individuals affected by mental health and substance use conditions. The OR is dedicated to fostering a recovery-oriented system of care that is person-centered, rooted in hope, and grounded in the expertise of individuals with lived and living experience, their families, and caregivers.

The OR’s core values—data-driven, trauma-informed, and rights-focused—are guided by recovery principles: hope, person-driven care, access to and acceptance of multiple pathways to recovery, holistic approaches, cultural humility, strength, accountability, dignity, empathy, teamwork, and inclusion. These principles ensure recovery is possible and accessible to all. The primary goals of the OR are:

- Inclusion: “Nothing About Us Without Us”
- Equity: “Recovery for All”
- Peer Services: “Peers Helping Peers”
- Social Determinants of Recovery: “Whole Health Care”
- Wellness: “Individual, Family, and Community Wellness”

## Administrative Growth and Staffing Structure



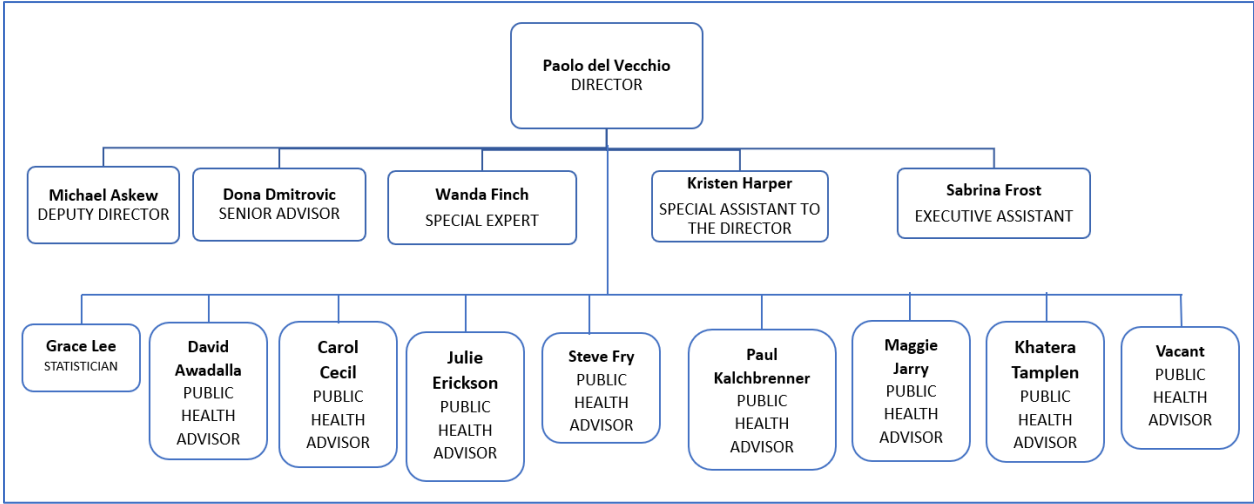
**September 2024 OR Staff Retreat**

The OR launched with just three staff, but by October 1, 2024, the team had grown to 15. This expansion has significantly strengthened the Office's expertise across a wide range of critical areas including peer recovery support services, collegiate and high school recovery programs, family peer support, disability rights,

youth and young adult services, recovery housing, Recovery Ready Workplaces, statistical analysis, recovery research, and more.

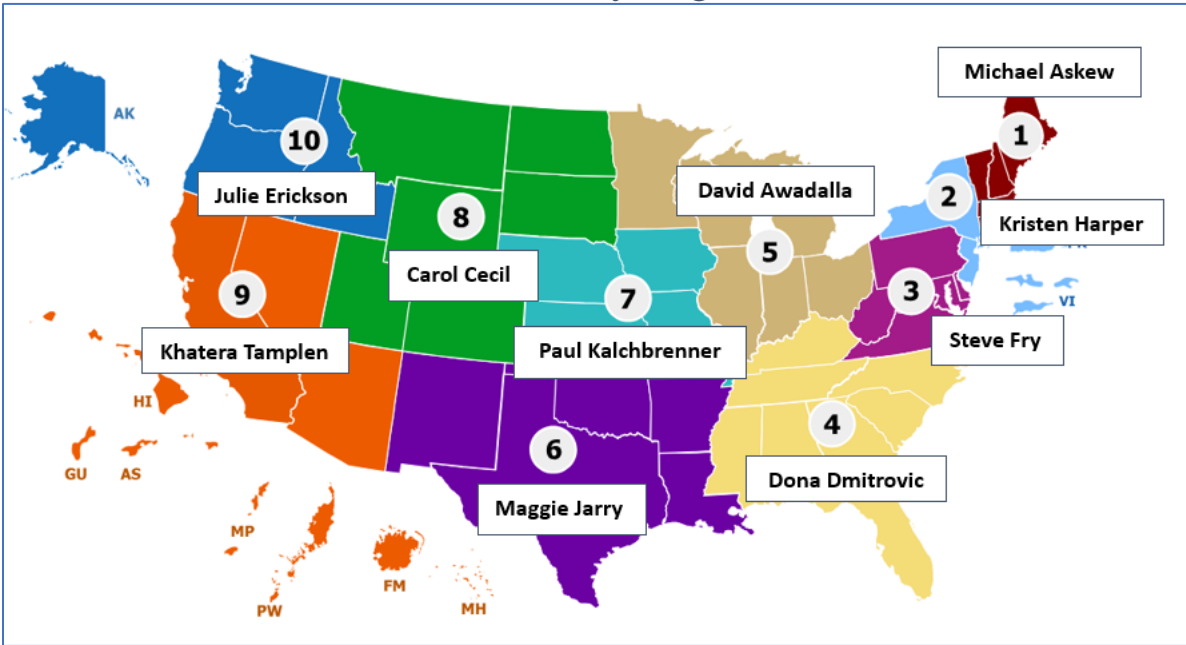
Operating on a budget of approximately \$5 million, the OR has maximized its capacity to support each of SAMHSA's Centers and Offices by instituting organizational liaisons. Additionally, each of SAMHSA's 10 Regional Offices have also been connected to an OR staff liaison. Liaison positions within OR are critical to the success of our mission because they create direct, structured connections across the agency's Centers, Offices, and Regional Offices. By instituting organizational liaisons, the OR maximizes its capacity to coordinate efforts, share information, and ensure alignment with recovery-focused priorities across all of SAMHSA's divisions. These liaisons act as bridges, ensuring that recovery initiatives and policies are integrated into the broader work of SAMHSA, while enabling swift, effective communication and collaboration. This structure promotes a point of responsiveness to the unique needs of regional communities, ensuring that SAMHSA's recovery efforts remain supported nationwide. This collaboration is essential to advancing SAMHSA's mission to lead public health and service delivery efforts that promote mental health, prevent substance misuse, and provide treatments and supports to foster recovery while ensuring equitable access and better outcomes.

# Office of Recovery Organizational Chart



Last Updated January 2025

# Office of Recovery Regional Liaisons



Last updated January 2025

## FY 2023 Office of Recovery Major Accomplishments

During the first year in operation the OR assembled a team of subject matter experts with lived experience and began addressing national recovery agenda goals identified by recovery leaders and allies across the nation. The following represents select accomplishments from the OR during its first year of operation. (Please refer to *Appendix A: Office of Recovery Outcomes: February 2023 – August 2023*).

### **Inclusion: “Nothing About Us Without Us”**

The OR aims to foster the meaningful involvement of a wide array of people with lived experience to improve behavioral health practice and policy while cultivating the social inclusion of people with behavioral health conditions.

- **Established SAMSHA Inclusion Policy:** SAMHSA, based on OR guidance, released the [Policy on the Inclusion of People with Lived Experience](#) that establishes the expectation that people with lived experience will be meaningfully involved in all aspects of SAMHSA’s work. Executive Order 14035 requires Federal agencies to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in the workplace. In 2021, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) identified that “(e)ngaging people with lived experience represents one way that federal agencies gather important information, shape programming and policy, and help improve outcomes for those served.” SAMHSA’s vision reflects a recovery-orientation that “people with, affected by, or at risk for mental health and substance use conditions receive care, thrive and achieve wellbeing.” The policy acts as a model for other federal and state agencies to follow.
- **Convened Regional Recovery Meetings:** In August of 2023, the OR hosted regional convenings for SAMHSA Region 3 and 5 in Philadelphia, PA and Chicago, IL to help elevate the voice of people in recovery and their allies in identifying needed solutions. The goal of these meetings was to engage various stakeholders at the regional level to understand variables that impact the expansion of recovery supports, identify gaps, and discuss scalable solutions to increase recovery support integration in behavioral health systems in the local area. Approximately 50 people in Chicago and 75 people in Philadelphia attended the hybrid meetings either in-person or virtually. Subject matter experts, policy makers, people with lived and living experience, peer recovery support service providers, and harm reductionists spent a day and a half meeting to discuss the level of availability of different types of recovery support services, challenges experienced while implementing and providing services, innovations in outreach and service delivery, funding issues, and diversity, equity, inclusion, and access concerns for under resourced communities.
- **Conducted a [Technical Experts Panel on Recovery Research](#):** On June 15-16, 2023, the OR held the Recovery Research Technical Expert Panel. This was an initiative to identify the current state of research on recovery from mental health and/or substance use conditions and inform the development of a national recovery research agenda. The gathering brought together 26 recovery researchers, federal and state officials, and recovery community leaders. During the 2-day virtual event, the panel discussed current research on recovery and recovery support services, and key directions for recovery research to be pursued in

the future. These discussions were inclusive of recovery from both mental health and substance use conditions and addressed issues related to recovery supports for youth and families.

- Celebrated 2023 National Recovery Month: The OR convened federal and community representatives to assist with National Recovery Month Planning. With input from these community leaders, the OR sponsored a series of training webinars and convened the inaugural National Walk for Recovery in Washington D.C. to raise awareness and celebrate the millions of Americans who are in recovery.

### Equity: “Recovery for All”

To increase opportunities for recovery for underserved and under-resourced populations and communities including people of color, youth, older adults, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI+) people, rural residents, veterans, and people with disabilities.

- Tribal Recovery Summit: In August 2023, the OR and the Office of Tribal Affairs and Policy (OTAP) jointly hosted the first SAMHSA Tribal Recovery Summit ([YouTube recording](#)) in Dallas, TX, partnering with SAMHSA’s Region 6 Office. The focus of this Summit was to showcase pathways to recovery and highlight multiple ways to support American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribes most impacted by the opioid/fentanyl crisis. Nearly 300 participants attended the hybrid Summit, including Tribal leaders, federal agency staff and leaders, service providers, and practitioners. The OR also collaborated with the OTAP to develop a [webpage](#) devoted to recovery support services for American Indians and Alaskan Natives.



2023 OR Tribal Summit, Dallas, TX

- Justice Involved Technical Experts Panel Meeting: The OR hosted the *Lifted Lived Experience Across Criminal Justice Settings (A Dialogue on Compassion, Innovation, & Recovery Across Court, Corrections, and Reentry Settings)* meeting on August 15-16, 2023. The gathering included over 60 individuals representing persons with lived experience of mental health or substance use conditions who were also criminal justice-involved, criminal justice personnel, reentry program leaders, researchers, technical assistance providers, staff of federal and state partners, and allies. The purpose of this meeting was to bring national awareness to the role that recovery support and lived experience plays across the criminal justice system and to use these insights to drive the OR’s action plan surrounding recovery and justice-involved populations.



## Peer Services: “Peers Helping Peers”

To expand peer-provided services within every community.

- [National Model Standards on Peer Support Certification](#): OR released *SAMHSA’s National Model Standards for Peer Support Certification* designed to expand and improve the quality of the peer workforce, developed in collaboration with federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local partners including peer specialists. The standards were called for by President Biden as part of his Unity Agenda.
- [Peer Possibilities: A National Peer Workforce Summit](#): The Summit was held in August 2023, bringing together over 100 participants, including peer recovery support specialists, recovery coaches, family and youth groups, persons with lived and living experience of mental health or substance use conditions, and staff of federal and state partners. The purpose of the Summit was to solicit insight from stakeholders to better understand the variables that impact the expansion of the peer workforce, as well as identify gaps and scalable solutions to increase peer support across the country. Over the course of two days, speakers and panelists provided perspectives on authenticity, equity, financing of peers, and peer career considerations.
- [Peer-Operated Warm Lines Technical Experts Panel](#): The during the convening, hosted July 10-11, 2023, panel members were asked to showcase different types of warm lines from across the nation and engage in establishing a working definition of peer-operated warm lines. These technical expert panelists brought extensive experience and knowledge on this key recovery support service. Discussions explored the role of warm lines, the operation of warm lines and their unique needs, and how warm lines and crisis lines can support each other’s work. In depth workgroups explored issues around the awareness of and sustainability of warm lines, the integrity of “peer-ness”, equity, and research needs.
- [Digital Innovations to Advance Recovery](#): The OR convened 25 digital recovery support service (D-RSS) subject matter experts for a technology-assisted recovery technical expert panel (TEP), July 27-28, 2023. The purpose of the TEP was to review various topics related to D-RSS and assist the OR in identifying priority areas in need of additional examination.

## Social Determinants of Recovery: “Whole Health Care”

To address key determinants that support recovery, including access to housing, education, social supports, and employment.

- [Addressing the Housing Crisis](#): The team updated and released [The Best Practices for Recovery Housing](#), which serves as an update for the SAMHSA’s 2018 document and outlines best practices for the implementation and operation of recovery housing. These best practices are a tool for states, governing bodies, providers, recovery house operators, and other interested stakeholders to improve the health of their citizens, reduce incidents of overdose, and promote recovery housing as a key support strategy in achieving and sustaining recovery. Additionally, the OR convened meetings that explored the intersection, coordination, and collaboration of [Recovery Housing and Housing First](#) approaches.
- [Promoting School-based Recovery Efforts](#): The OR convened an in-person dialogue with 21 students, staff, and administrators from institutions of higher education (IHE) across the

United States and two representatives from Canada, July 31 - August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Selected in partnership with a collegiate recovery partner planning committee, the diverse group of participants included both students with lived experience and IHE professionals who provide services to students who are in (or may be seeking) recovery from substance use, mental health, or co-occurring conditions. This meeting brought national awareness to the role that recovery support and lived experience play in supporting students who may be experiencing challenges related to mental health and/or substance use conditions. Insights from this convening also informed the OR's action plan surrounding recovery support across higher education.

- Promoting Recovery-Ready Workplaces: The OR worked with the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), U.S. Departments of Labor and Commerce, the Domestic Policy Council, and others on the [Recovery Ready-Workplace Toolkit](#). Collaborating agencies believe that employers, employees, customers, and society all benefit from recovery-ready workplace policies. Benefits include an expanded labor force, increased worker well-being, decreased turnover, improved productivity, and reduced health care costs. Employers adopting such policies help to reduce societal stigma and misunderstanding by fostering a culture in which substance use and mental health conditions are recognized as treatable health conditions from which one can recover and where people in or seeking recovery are welcomed and supported in the workplace.

### **Wellness: “Individual, Family, and Community Wellness”**

To expand holistic, self-care strategies to improve health and behavioral health outcomes – including the reduction of early mortality and impact of chronic health conditions—and to integrate recovery-oriented practices and systemic reform into the full continuum of health and behavioral healthcare including prevention, harm reduction, treatment, crisis care, and recovery support.

- Celebrating Mental Health Awareness Month: The OR convened a series of training events during “May is Mental Health Awareness Month” to highlight the importance of family and youth supports. The Office also hosted a technical experts panel on family caregiving to create new opportunities to support families and other caregivers.
- Building Partnerships Between Psychiatry and the Peer Workforce: The OR and the Office of the Chief Medical Officer (OCMO) convened subject matter experts for the [Peers and Psychiatric Dialogue](#) meeting July 11-12, 2023. The meeting facilitated a two-day in-person dialogue between psychiatrists and persons with lived experience to share perspectives on recovery from mental health and substance use conditions and consider topics related to systemic barriers and elements that foster recovery. Participants identified areas where they could partner to promote recovery-oriented systems of care and a culture of caring.
- Conducted Trauma Trainings: The OR sponsored a series of trainings for SAMHSA staff and managers to promote a trauma-informed workplace.
- Released Key Data on Recovery: The OR released [Recovery from Substance Use and Mental Health Problems Among Adults in the United States](#). This brief report presents self-disclosure of recovery among adults aged 18 and older in the United States who thought they ever had a problem with their use of drugs or alcohol and/or mental health

condition. Additionally, the report highlights the holistic factors that help support recovery for more than 50 million Americans in recovery.

## FY 2024 Office of Recovery Major Accomplishments

Building on the lessons learned and successes from FY 2023, the OR leadership and staff created an ambitious agenda for FY 2024, focused on inclusion, rights protection, peer workforce, families, and equity. The 2024 products, meetings, and activities have propelled the National Action Plan on Recovery into an exciting era. Below is a summary of the 2024 accomplishments. (Please refer to *Appendix B: Office of Recovery Outcomes: September 2023 – August 2024*).

### **Inclusion: “Nothing About Us Without Us”**

- **Convened Family Peer Support Technical Experts Panel:** The OR convened a Technical Expert Panel on Family Peer Support in August, 2024. This event examined the importance of providing family peer support services to people in various family roles (e.g., parent, spouse, sibling, child). A guidance document to share the stories of these family members as well as how states/agencies might move forward on expanding family peer support services to these other family members is in development.

### **2024 National Recovery Month’s Walk for Recovery**



- **Celebrated National Recovery Month:** Leaders from HHS and ONDCP joined SAMHSA and recovery advocates to kick off the 35th National Recovery Month at SAMHSA’s second annual Walk for Recovery, celebrating recovery from substance use and mental health conditions and reducing stigma. With over 200 people participating in the 2024 walk, the OR was excited to welcome attendees to further build community and foster a focus on the power of recovery. Additionally, the OR hosted 12 webinars with more than 2,300 attendees.
- **Hosted the STAR Awards:** The inaugural SAMHSA Trailblazers in Advancing Recovery (STAR) Awards was held on September 24, 2024, honoring recovery champions from across the nation, including leaders with lived experience of mental health and/or substance



### **2024 STAR Award Recipients with Assistant Secretary Dr. Miriam Delphin**

use conditions, young adults, family members, and allies. The STAR Awards also recognized organizations that have demonstrated commitment to promoting equitable and inclusive access to wellness and recovery supports for people with mental health and/or substance use conditions. The ceremony livestreamed and posted to [SAMHSA's YouTube channel](#).

- **Establishing Recovery Measurements:** SAMHSA is revising its client-level grant performance measurement approach. The SAMHSA Unified Client-Level Performance Reporting Tool (SUPTR) is a new client-level performance tool that will incorporate select new measures/questions into a multi-component client-level tool while streamlining the process. The tool now includes SAMHSA's Core Outcomes of Recovery (SCOR) Scale, which constitutes 13 recovery-oriented measures that align with SAMHSA's approach to recovery. The OR is working extensively with the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality to develop SCOR. As the first federal measure of recovery from behavioral health conditions, SCOR is a groundbreaking advancement in how we understand and measure recovery.

### **Equity: "Recovery for All"**

- **Established SPARK:** [SAMHSA's Programs to Advance Recovery Knowledge](#) (SPARK) launched in early 2024. SPARK is operated by the OR with support from the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment to advance recovery-oriented systems of care across the nation for people with mental health and/or substance use conditions. SPARK is a national technical assistance center that supports transformational, recovery-oriented change for

every state, tribal, and territorial behavioral health system while promoting equitable access to recovery supports in the United States. In February 2024, SPARK began receiving requests for technical assistance and training and by July, the team exceeded its goal of 100 requests across 25 different states and hosted 6 meetings with 148 attendees. (See *Appendix C: SPARK Base Year Descriptive Summary*).

- **Supporting Recovery within the LGBTQIA+ Community**: On May 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the OR hosted a first-ever convening with the LGBTQIA+ community to engage stakeholders at the local, state, and national levels to understand variables that impact the expansion of



### **2024 Supporting Recovery in the LGBTQIA+ Community Meeting, San Francisco**

recovery supports, identify gaps, and discuss scalable solutions to increase recovery support service access for the LGBTQIA+ community. As a result of this meeting, the OR published the [Support Recovery within the LGBTQIA+ Community Issue Brief](#) and [LGBTQIA+ and Recovery Factsheet](#) in September, 2024. The issue brief provides a summary of the findings from the convening that included identified gaps, scalable solutions to increase recovery supports and, innovative approaches to meet the unique recovery needs of the LGBTQIA+ community.

- **Convened the Rural Recovery Meeting**: The OR hosted the Rural Recovery Innovations Meeting to identify the foremost challenges facing rural and tribal communities in clinical and recovery support service delivery on July 10-11, 2024. Presenters shared evidence-based and promising practices occurring in rural and tribal communities, which initiated discussions among attendees to formulate recommendations for SAMHSA and other partners. The OR captured these deliberations in a summary report and fact sheet.

## Peer Services: “Peers Helping Peers”

- Center for Addiction Recovery Supports (CARS): The OR awarded a new *National Peer-Run Training and Technical Assistance Center for Addiction Recovery Support* (Short Title: CARS) in September, 2024. CARS will provide training and technical assistance (TTA) to domestic, public, and private non-profit entities that provide (or support) services intended for people who are experiencing challenges related to substance use or co-occurring conditions. The CARS replaced the *Peer Recovery Center of Excellence National TTA Center*, which concluded its work in September of 2024. (See Appendix D: *Peer Center of Excellence Performance Summary*).
- Power of Peers Summit: To further assist in the advancement of the peer workforce, the OR hosted a convening for peer workforce community leaders to discuss equity strategies for recruitment, retention, and expansion of the peer workforce in diverse settings on August 1-2 2024. Over 125 participants discussed issues impacting DEIA in and



**2024 Power of Peers Summit, SAMHSA Headquarters, Rockville, MD**

- surrounding the peer workforce. A meeting summary and issue brief are in development.
- Peer Respite Meeting: SAMHSA’s Expert Panel on Peer Crisis Respite Practices convened June 26-27, 2024. The 18 panelists, representing a range of expertise including lived and living experiences, diverse perspectives and cultural backgrounds and communities, and many with specialized expertise in the establishment and operation of peer-run crisis respite programs, discussed the financing of peer respite programs along with how to promote equitable access to these programs.

- Established SAMHSA’s Employee Resource Group for people with lived and living experience (ERG PLE): The first-ever in the federal government, ERG PLE is dedicated to supporting SAMHSA staff who have lived and living experience with mental health and/or substance use conditions. The mission of the ERG PLE is as a strategic partner with SAMHSA leadership to enhance awareness, opportunities, and support for employees with lived and living experience associated with mental health and/or substance use conditions. The ERG PLE also partnered with the OR to successfully get SAMHSA recognized as the first federal Recovery-Ready Workplace, ensuring recovery-oriented employee resources are a priority for the agency.
- Advised the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS): In 2024, CMS asked for feedback on peer support services in their proposed 2025 Physician Fee Schedule. In the proposed revisions, CMS specifically mentions community-based organizations. The OR worked with community partners and CMS to propose language that ensures the peer workforce is equitably included in the revisions. Additionally, in a [CMS publication from June of 2024](#) that specifically clarifies their regulations on peer supervision, OR training, technical assistance assets, and publications were specifically named as recommended resources for practitioners seeking additional guidance.



### Social Determinants of Recovery: “Whole Health Care”

- Wellness in the Workplace Summit: Access to meaningful and supported employment opportunities are an incredibly important focus area for the OR. The *Wellness in the Workplace Summit* convened federal and non-federal partners from a variety of backgrounds. Over the course of the 2-day meeting, over 100 participants, including employers, human resource professionals, unions, people in recovery discussed innovative workplace approaches to support employees in recovery. The OR collaborated with the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and various external partners to host the convening at SAMHSA headquarters. Guidance from the summit will be released in early 2025.
- Interdepartmental Workgroup on Recovery Housing: The OR, in partnership with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, and others established a workgroup to examine federal efforts to support the expansion of quality recovery housing. The interdepartmental workgroup was established under the Fiscal Year 2024 Consolidated Appropriations Bill (Pub. L. 117-328). The primary purpose of the Recovery Housing Interagency Working Group (“RHIWG”) is to



**2024 Wellness in the Workplace Summit, SAMHSA Headquarters, Rockville, MD**

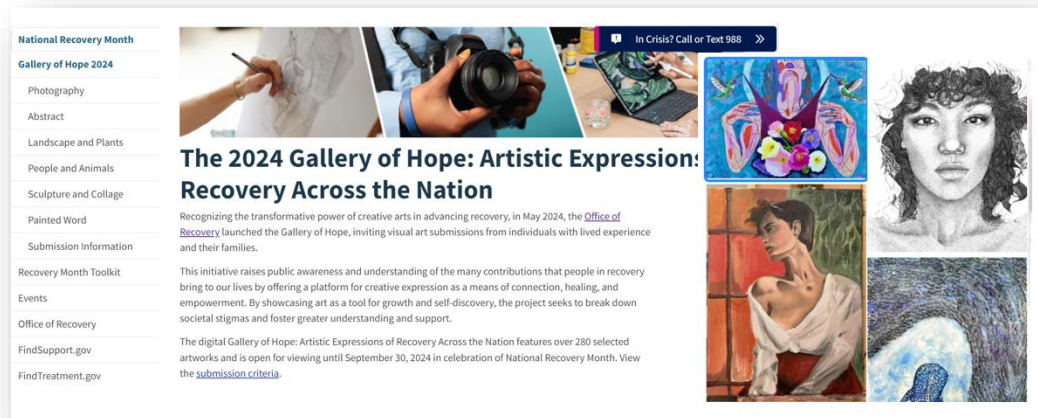


implement Section 1233 , “Coordination of Federal Activities to promote the availability of recovery housing.” The goals of the RHIWG include those set in statutory language: to increase federal collaboration and coordination in the areas of recovery housing, develop a long-term plan to support state, Tribal, and local efforts to operate recovery housing consistent with best practices, and to coordinate fair housing practices and data collection on the quality of recovery housing.

- **Targeted Technical Assistance on Collegiate Recovery and Recovery Schools:** The Peer Recovery Center of Excellence (PRCoE) subcontracted with the Association of Recovery in Higher Education (ARHE) and the Association of Recovery Schools (ARS) to provide TA and develop resources for institutions of higher education and community organizations to support student recovery in September, 2023. This included assessing readiness, identifying barriers, providing tangible next steps, and offering implementation support and guidance. Additionally, it involved introducing the ARHE Standardized Program Assessment for Collegiate Recovery Advancement (SRCRA).

**Wellness: “Individual, Family, and Community Wellness”**

- **Hosted a Convening on the Intersection Between Harm Reduction and Recovery:** The OR, in collaboration with the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), hosted Exploring the Intersection—Summit on Harm Reduction and Recovery in Denver, CO in June, 2024. This hybrid convening included over 105 participants with invaluable professional, lived, and living expertise associated with harm reduction in substance use and mental health fields. As a result of this meeting, OR is developing a guidance document to inform policies that directly impact local, state, and federal funding opportunities to promote partnerships that advance harm reduction and recovery services across the nation.
- **Launched the Art of Recovery Initiative:** The OR launched the Art of Recovery Initiative, recognizing the transformative power of creative arts in advancing recovery, inviting visual



art submissions from individuals with lived experience and their families in May 2024. This initiative raises public awareness and understanding of the many contributions that people in recovery bring to our lives by offering a platform for creative expression as a means of connection, healing, and empowerment. By showcasing art as a tool for growth and self-discovery, the project seeks to break down societal stigmas and foster greater

understanding and support. The digital [Gallery of Hope: Artistic Expressions of Recovery Across the Nation](#) features over 280 selected artworks.

## On the Horizon:

### 2025 Strategic Planning

Office of Recovery staff and key representatives from SAMHSA's Executive Leadership Team met to reflect on the successes, challenges, and lessons of 2024, and to engage in strategic planning for 2025 on September 25-26, 2024. The session focused on three key areas: reaffirming OR's values and goals, quality improvement across all OR activities, and improving project management. The retreat identified centralized themes for 2025.

- Identify ways to promote SAMHSA's recovery efforts to the public through Recovery Month activities, podcasts, blogs, collaboration with social media influencers, and other innovative social impact strategies.
- Use technology to track engagement and outreach.
- Continue on-going coordination and collaboration with federal and community partners through the regional and federal office liaison system, participate in conferences and community partner events, and provide input on all publications across SAMHSA's Offices and Centers to ensure recovery continues to be a priority.
- Coordinate recovery-focused training and technical assistance efforts through the SPARK and CARS.
- Begin planning 2025 OR meetings, including focuses on the intersection of mental health and substance use recovery, women and leadership, adolescents, older adults, family caregivers, and spirituality/faith communities. An additional large meeting, *RecoveryCon*, will kick-off 2025 National Recovery Month events in August of 2025.
- Finalize updates to the *Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care Model (ROSC)*.
- Continue to amplify workforce challenges facing peers and peer employers, including the need for a more diverse and inclusive peer workforce and supporting the professional development needs of peer staff, supervisors, and organizational leaders.

The central aim for 2025 is the ongoing refinement of OR's policies and procedures to improve services, products, and community relationships, ensuring we continue to deliver the highest quality programming and support for those we serve while also building a sustainable future for the OR. With over 50 million Americans who self-report as living in recovery, the growth of the OR has never been more critical to the fulfillment of SAMHSA's overall mission and vision.

## Appendix A: Office of Recovery Outcomes: February 2023 – August 2024

Table 1: Number of Meetings Held by Office of Recovery and Peer Recovery Center of Excellence

Number of Meetings	OR	PRCOE	Total
Virtual	30		30
In person	31		31
Hybrid	3		3
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>138</b>

Table 2: Number of Attendees at Meetings Held by Office of Recovery and Peer Recovery Center of Excellence

Number of Attendees	OR	PRCOE	Total
Virtual	5081		5081
In person	1422		1422
<b>Total</b>	<b>6503</b>	<b>5750</b>	<b>12253</b>

Table 3: Number of Deliverables from OR Meetings

Number of Deliverables	
Factsheet	5*
Meeting Summary	21*
Other	8
<i>Blog Post</i>	1
<i>Data Report</i>	1
<i>Event</i>	2
<i>Measurement Scale</i>	1
<i>Guidance Document</i>	1
<i>National Model Standard</i>	1
<i>Infographic</i>	1

\*Some are pending

Table 4: Number of Meetings and Attendees by OR Meeting Categories

OR Meeting Category	Number of Meetings	Number of Attendees
Children/Family	10	377
Criminal Justice	1	75
Data/Research	2	106
Education	2	70
Harm Reduction	1	100
LGBTQIA	1	34
Peers	6	432
Planning Committee	8	203*

Quarterly Recovery Exchanges	4	837
Recovery Housing	2	86
Recovery Month	14	2867
Regional	2	120
Rights Protection	1	655
SPARK	6	148
Technology/Innovation	2	140
Tribal	1	251
Workplace	1	112
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>6613</b>

\*Though generally the same 25 attendees per meeting

Table 5: Major Themes from Participant Feedback

<b>Feedback Themes</b>
Grateful for invite
Validation/Felt seen
Rich discussions with diverse group of thought leaders

Table 6: Major Themes for Areas of Improvement

<b>Key Evaluation Findings</b>
For virtual meetings, attendees would have preferred to be in person
Need for more data and meaningful metrics for recovery supports
Continue with efforts to improve inclusion

## Appendix B: Office of Recovery Outcomes: September 2023 – August 2024

Table 1: Number of Meetings Held by Office of Recovery, SPARK, and Peer Recovery Center of Excellence

Number of Meetings	OR	SPARK	PRCOE	Total
Virtual	31	2		33
In person	5	18		23
Hybrid	2	0		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>102</b>

Table 2: Number of Attendees at Meetings Held by Office of Recovery, SPARK, and Peer Recovery Center of Excellence

Number of Attendees	OR	SPARK	PRCOE	Total
Virtual	4518	672		5190
In person	1274	783		2057
<b>Total</b>	<b>5792</b>	<b>1455</b>	<b>3749</b>	<b>10996</b>

Table 3: Number of Deliverables from OR Meetings

Number of Deliverables	
Factsheet	5*
Meeting Summary	10*
Other	5
<i>Data Report</i>	1
<i>Event</i>	2
<i>Guidance Document</i>	1
<i>Infographic</i>	1

\*Some are pending

Table 4: Number of Meetings and Attendees by OR Meeting Categories<sup>+</sup>

OR Meeting Category	Number of Meetings	Number of Attendees
Children/Family	4	125
Data/Research	1	80
Education	1	40
Harm Reduction	1	100
LGBTQIA	1	34
Peers	2	160
Planning Committee	8	203
Quarterly Recovery Exchanges	3	748
Recovery Housing	1	11
Recovery Month	14	2867
Technology/Innovation	1	108

Workplace	1	112
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>4588</b>

## Appendix C: SPARK Base Year Descriptive Summary

### **Overview**

The SPARK was established to advance recovery-oriented systems of care across the nation for people with mental health and/or substance use conditions. Through collaborations with people in recovery from mental health and substance use conditions, their family members and caregivers, and state, tribal, and local authorities, SPARK is charged with expanding recovery support efforts, addressing gaps that impede the adoption or sustainment of recovery supports, and promoting efforts that ensure supports are available to assist individuals in pursuit of recovery with their families and in their communities.

Consultation with the National Faculty and Steering Committee and the completion of an environmental scan provided invaluable knowledge and expertise to inform training, technical assistance, and programmatic efforts in a constantly evolving environment of perspectives on recovery and recovery services at state and federal levels. Each year the SPARK team reviews and analyzes information from the previous updates on the behavioral health ecosystem to inform future implementation activities and identify targeted outcomes.

### **Summary of Outcomes**

The following themes were identified in the situational analysis and informed the development of essential training and technical assistance work in the base year.

#### **Operationally and systemically addressing barriers to equitable recovery support services**

During the base year, the SPARK received 165 technical assistance (TA) request, 65% more than target of 100.

- SPARK TA had a broad reach across 38 states and one US territory, advancing the first SPARK goal of supporting all people, families, and communities impacted by behavioral health conditions to pursue recovery.
- Twenty-two TA requests were received within 48 hours of the SPARK website launch, and the first international TA requests was received after 5 weeks. By end of the base year, SPARK received three more international requests, including requests for mental health resources and training and SUD intervention information.
- Outcomes of SPARK TA include:
  - Successfully facilitating strategic planning sessions and identifying organizations to collaboratively enhance impacts and scalability of requestor programming.
  - Supporting enhancements to effective supervision of peer support workers as well as self-care practices to ensure the well-being and resilience of both the workers and the individuals they support.
  - Supporting organizations looking to enhance both trauma-informed care and the expanded use of peer specialists in statewide systems.

#### **Advancing equity in recovery through an explicit commitment to underserved groups**

Approximately 16.9% of TA requests focused on peer support, a driving force to increasing recovery opportunities in historically underserved and under-resourced populations. Regional and



national meetings provided an opportunity to engage stakeholders on how to address critical issues that create barriers to advancing and implementing recovery supports and services.

Two SAMHSA regional meetings with peer leadership aimed to enhance peer leadership development in discussions on recovery trends and equip participants with actionable strategies to improve equity services in recovery. Each meeting emphasized collaboration and continuous learning to promote meaningful change. The discussions also emphasized and modelled opportunities to build alliances, shared strategies to enhance funding strategies, and prioritize equity across regions and the nation.

The OR convened a national meeting of diverse stakeholders for collaborative improvement of recovery services for marginalized communities, using real-world experiences to advance recovery science, and encouraging inclusivity through relationship-building, peer support, and respect.

### **Supported states advancing recovery**

Targeted TA addressed unique challenges for equitable recovery activities at the state level.

Employment Support Targeted TA:

- Supported partnerships with diverse stakeholders to advance recovery supports and services
- Addressed interest in recovery outreach and education offerings through SPARK social media and website posts, as well as through SPARK partner and NFSC outreach
- Fostered broad conversations regarding the fostering of social inclusion of peers and people with lived experiences within recovery organizations to expand peer support efforts for historically underrepresented groups and communities.

Recovery Housing Targeted TA:

- Provided TA for expansion of recovery housing access to communities with high need
- Addressed various key topics aligned with the goals of SAMHSA, including expanding equity, ensuring cultural awareness and responsiveness, and identifying substantive focus areas and strategies that can be incorporated into future years of targeted TA
- Offered equity-focused insights to inform the peer-reviewed article on recovery housing expansion

### **Supported recovery organizations and delivery of recovery support services with fidelity to core recovery principles and standards**

- Approximately 15% of TA requests were focused on capacity building, in alignment with the second SPARK goal of expanding recovery support in behavioral health systems and the fifth SPARK goal of addressing systemic inequities that disproportionately impact recovery service and support access.
- The SPARK conducted an inventory of recovery support information and resource material and curated the lack of knowledge about recovery in a library on the SAMSHA website. The most viewed (3,954) and downloaded (2,316) product was the *Creating a Healthier Life: A Step-by-Step Guide to Wellness*.

### **Supporting the recovery workforce**

- Demonstrated the various degrees of effectiveness in engaging peers as part of a supported employment team, identified key topics for technical assistance, and facilitated discussions on roles, funding, and methodologies to systematize integrating peers in supported employment. Coordinated ongoing training programs for supervisors of peers and developed relationships with state leaders to share subject matter expertise and address workforce challenges.
- Convened two virtual dialogues on the workforce. These convenings facilitated conversations and knowledge exchange amongst partners, provided information to inform strategies for project implementation, and established trajectories for future activities aligned with agency priorities and the national recovery agenda.

### **The Way Forward**

Professionals and partners expressed appreciation that SPARK allows anyone to request TA, highlighting the potential for meaningful engagement across various professionals and groups to strengthen a diverse, unified national recovery community, rather than a focus on specific cohorts observed with other initiatives. Option Year 1 presented an opportunity to deepen the reach of the SPARK to:

- Focus on capacity building for peer run organizations, particularly to ensure successful contracting with programs such as the CCBHCs and to leverage connection to other SAMSHA programs that can further recovery-oriented practices.
- Further leadership development in evolving the behavioral health ecosystem for state recovery leaders, peer leaders, including youth, family members, and caregivers.
- Activate and advance SAMHSA recovery goals through active engagement with opportunities to realize a unified recovery agenda.
- Finalize development and rollout of innovative tools and resources for recovery programs and participants to advance recovery in their communities through multidisciplinary training and other opportunities to ensure equitable access to recovery for all.

## Appendix D: Peer Center of Excellence (PRCoE) Summary

### Overview

The Office of Recovery’s Peer Recovery Center of Excellence (PRCoE) was funded by SAMHSA between 2020 and 2024 to provide training and technical assistance (TTA) to the peer workforce, recovery community organizations, and other organizations in the ecosystem of recovery to support the implementation of peer recovery support services. The PRCoE provided TTA to build and elevate an equitable peer workforce to deliver peer recovery support services. This was accomplished by supporting peer integration, building recovery community organization capacity, developing the peer workforce, disseminating evidence-based practices, and promoting health equity.

The PRCoE exhibited and presented at national conferences, including NatCon23 and Mobilize Recovery Bus Tours, highlighting its commitment to sharing knowledge and expanding recovery support. During the grant period, PRCoE hosted 232 trainings, reaching 17,444 participants. These trainings built capacity in the recovery field by equipping participants with the skills and knowledge necessary to provide effective peer recovery support services (PRSS). The PRCoE also collected performance data through GPRA across all its activities. Among the 1,857 survey respondents, 65.1% were very satisfied with the quality of events and 93.5% would recommend these events to others. Topics included building recovery capital, addressing stigma, peer ethics, and the intersection of prevention and recovery. Expectations for fostering skill-building, improving the professional development of the peer workforce, and expanding the capacity of recovery support organizations nationwide were exceeded. PRCoE activities directly enhanced peer recovery support services across settings, including education, healthcare, and community-based organizations.

In addition to multiple trainings, webinars, and communities of practice (CoP), the PRCoE published several notable resources such as [\*Medicaid Reimbursement for Peer Support Services: A Detailed Analysis of Rates, Processes, and Procedures\*](#) and the [\*Measuring Peer Recovery Outcomes Toolkit\*](#). These resources empowered organizations to document and demonstrate the impact of peer recovery services and provided guidance on Medicaid reimbursement processes.

### Training & Technical Assistance Requests

During its final year of operation, the PRCoE provided extensive TA supporting the development and integration of peer recovery support services (PRSS) nationwide. The web-based TA request system allowed for real-time data analytics, tracking over 1,000 requests. More than 55% of



### KEY TRAINING TOPICS

- Creating a Recovery-Ready Community
- Guiding Principles of Recovery
- Ethics, Values, and Boundaries in Peer Recovery Support Work
- Peer Supervision Training of Trainers
- Effective Survey Design and Encouraging Survey Participation

requests were accepted and worked on by core teams within the PRCoE. Some key areas of TA that were provided include:

1. **Workforce Development** - The PRCoE provided TA for PRSS employers, helping them build infrastructure and tools for staff retention, particularly in organizations experiencing turnover challenges. In 2024, the Workforce Retention Learning Collaborative supported 15 organizations with strategies for improving peer retention by addressing employer policies and organizational structures.
2. **Medicaid Billing and Sustainability** - In response to multiple TA requests, PRCoE developed a comprehensive Medicaid Billing Guide and self-assessment tools for RCOs, enabling them to bill Medicaid for peer services. These resources were created to strengthen RCO capacity and ensure financial sustainability. Additionally, the PRCoE provided training and individual TA to RCOs navigating the complex Medicaid reimbursement process.
3. **Peer Certification and National Standards** - In partnership with the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC), PRCoE promoted state-level adoption of SAMHSA's National Model Standards for Peer Support Certification. The TA involved supporting state governments and certification bodies in aligning their certification processes with national standards, thus enhancing peer certification reciprocity and professionalization. The result was a comprehensive report reviewing the alignment of different states with SAMHSA's standards, providing a roadmap for future improvements.
4. **RCO Capacity Building and Expansion**. RCOs benefitted from tailored TA to strengthen their internal operations, strategic planning, and leadership development. PRCoE helped organizations develop and implement processes to support their growth, such as a state-by-state Medicaid billing analysis, empowering RCOs to integrate peer recovery support services into their funding streams. Specific TA requests involved helping organizations with leadership transitions, developing orientation processes, and building capacity in data collection and reporting.
5. **Health Equity and Culturally Responsive TA**. A central focus of PRCoE's TA efforts was to address health disparities by supporting organizations serving underserved populations. The Health Equity Learning Community, launched in 2023, provided a platform for organizations to engage with experts on best practices for promoting health equity. TA services were provided to support culturally responsive approaches to recovery support, focusing on addressing the needs of Black, Latinx, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and rural communities.
6. **Educational Settings and Collegiate Recovery Programs**. The PRCoE extended its TA services into educational settings by collaborating with the Association of Recovery Schools (ARS) and the Association of Recovery in Higher Education (ARHE). TA requests related to developing and operating collegiate recovery programs and recovery high schools were addressed, with PRCoE supporting schools in implementing recovery support services tailored

to the needs of students in recovery. TA also included guidance on accreditation processes, curriculum design, and program sustainability for recovery high schools.



## Social Media and Outreach

*Through social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter/X, LinkedIn, and Vimeo), PRCoE gained over 5,500 followers and generated over 100,000 impressions. The most popular content focused on highlights, training updates, and collaborations. PRCoE's presence on Vimeo helped disseminate multimedia resources, including over 100 recorded training videos with thousands of views, making knowledge easily accessible to a broader audience.*

### National Impact

TTA designed and provided by the PRCoE directly contributed to expanded peer recovery support services across various settings. From enhancing RCO operations to providing state governments with the tools necessary to align peer certification processes with national standards, this TTA played a significant role in professionalizing and expanding the peer workforce. These efforts, combined with a strong emphasis on cultural responsiveness and equity, ensured that underserved communities had access to high-quality, sustainable recovery support services.

### Collaborations

PRCoE collaborated with a wide array of partners, many of whom possessed invaluable lived or living experience to inform the development and provision of TTA. Some important collaborating partners included the National Steering Committee, One World Recovery Network, the National Hispanic & Latino Behavioral Health Center of Excellence, and the Mobilize Recovery Project. The collaboration with the Center for African American Recovery Development (CAARD) was also critical in tailoring technical assistance to Black-led RCOs, focusing on cultural competency and systemic change.

### Program Sustainability and Future Directions

As the grant concluded, PRCoE focused on ensuring the sustainability of its initiatives. The creation of Medicaid billing guides, self-assessment frameworks, and state-by-state Medicaid analysis laid the groundwork for ongoing capacity-building in the recovery field. Additionally, PRCoE's emphasis on diversity and health equity ensured that its impact extended to marginalized populations, including people of color, LGBTQIA+, and rural communities.



**Cover Photo:**  
“You Are NOT Alone” by Allison Utz  
2024 Office of Recovery’s Gallery of Hope

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