

Workforce Development News

Integrated Healthcare Recovery Support Specialist Institute
Apache Junction June 25, 2015



Certified Peer Support Specialist Graduating Class

Amber Osorio, Michelle Isasi, Marie Penfield-Williams, Sharon Easterday



Thank You

By Marie Penfield-Williams

What hope means to me, well I have always had hope even through all the dark times in my life. When I saw my husband, mom, and sister all die in a three month period, I wanted them to live long enough to see that I finally made it. I had the faith and hope for that better life. My hope comes from never letting life take my desire for something better. I hope that my children and grandchildren are proud of me. I hope that they will look at me and know how far I have come and only see how much further they can go. I believe you tell some one that you have hope and/or faith that they can go so very far in life. I had hope to find myself and a happy life and I do believe I have found that within myself. And I hope that others hear me and I hope I can always hear them. I had hope to make it in life. There are so many people I need to thank because they all held that hope when I couldn't so THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH for this great life I have been given.



Hope and Reality

By Sharon Easterday



My recovery of hope started on February 20, 2014. I was 55 years old and did not want to spend the next 55 years of my life the same way. The following week I signed up for Vocational Rehab Services and with their help I put together a 12 month plan for getting back on track. I have enrolled in the Recovery Support Specialist program through the University of Arizona Workforce Development Program. After completion and successful employment I will attempt to reestablish my credit, at which time I will purchase my own transportation. Upon purchase of my own vehicle and my credit established, Vocational Rehab and myself will sit down and reevaluate my status and how to move forward. With some real effort on my part I see my 12 month plan becoming a reality.

Happy, Healthy and Stable

By Michelle Isasi



As far back as I can remember I have struggled with these things. Even as a child, I knew that somehow, something was wrong with me that wasn't wrong with other people. What I didn't

know was that I would one day pass on that illness to my children. There finally came a day when I had to decide: What was I going to teach my children about mental illness? What lessons would they learn from watching me struggle? What kind of future was I telling them that they would have ahead of them? Sometimes we can do things for our children that we would not have the courage to demand for ourselves. I decided that my children feeling doomed to a life of non-stop struggle was not acceptable to me. I knew that the only way they would believe me is if I showed them what to do. Once I was able to - in fact, NEEDED to - believe that a happy, successful life was possible with mental illness, it became almost a game to discover how many ways I could find to be happy, healthy and stable. How many tools can I use to achieve the life I want? If my children are going to live happy lives, I have to show them how.

Say it From Your Heart

By Amber Osorio

When I was in a woman's group in 2010 I was asked by the counselor to speak at the next class. I was so nervous, but I had a plan. I felt empowered. I got to the class and started to talk. I felt so nervous. A lady in class tells me "just say it from your heart". So I did, I opened up and told my story. After that class some of the ladies came up to me and told me how much I had helped them, how I made them feel like they weren't alone. I was so humbled by their kind words.

At my next one-on-one with my counselor, she told me thank you for what I shared and that some of the ladies wanted to know if they could have my number. I ended up giving out my number and started talking with the ladies. After a while it hit me that talking to them about what they have been through was helping me as well as them. I decided that I needed to step out and help-help people that have been through similar things as I have.

I feel so empowered now that I have taken this class in peer support. While taking this class I found Hope. A hope



that this is just the beginning of a path for me to help women that have suffered and are struggling. I hope to continue to find Hope in every step I take and to give Hope to those around me.

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Workforce
Development News

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UA Workforce Development Program promotes recovery and expanded opportunities for people with mental illness, substance use, and dual diagnosis by employing a collaborative approach to advocacy, service, education, and research.

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