

# Workforce Development News

Integrated Healthcare Recovery Support Specialist Institute

Safford, March 30, 2017



## Certified Peer Support Specialist Graduating Class

*Back Row (Left to Right): Ruben Baca, Jason Wright, Leroy Farnsworth, Brock Crandall*

*Front Row (Left to Right): Janet "Lynn" Hart, Chis Cotton, Harold Wright*



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## Be Hopeful

By Brock Crandall

Hope is an ever changing thing, never to be taken lightly. Hope can bring together the greatest of enemies and best of friends. Hope is diverse like colors, and as complicated as the universe. Hope can be a spirit of time, passion in our work, and in our families. There are war torn places; we all know war can come in millions of ways. Without the message of hope we cannot have humanity.

Hope is a chain of people that walk by knowing that there are lessons to be learned in life. People understand that without these lessons we have no hope. Believing in hope for ourselves is incredibly powerful. As Peer Supports we can pass the torch to others. So to the wise and old, and to the young - stay hopeful. Pass hope as a torch; like a blizzard, the mightiest storm, it can sweep through us and move outward from ourselves. So be hopeful.



# Hope for the Future

by Christopher Cotton

Hope is a good thing, sometimes the best defense.

My recovery started when I started going to Wellness Connections. I started helping with Appliance Connections and learning about groups. That started helping me build the hope that I have for the future. I later got a staff position at Wellness Connections, almost two years ago. Wellness Connections has also helped me with my anger. I am so blessed and honored to be with Wellness Connections.



# Hope a Good Place to Go

by Harold Wright

Harold Wright came to the Institute determined to learn as much as he could about recovery and helping others. He lives with his two cats, Tiger and Calico, in Solomon, AZ. He can often be seen along highway 70 participating in his favorite activity – walking. Harold is a member of Southeastern Arizona Behavioral Health Services Inc. (SEABHS) and participates in programs with Wellness Connections, who hosted this training. He gives glowing reviews of both agencies and the staff that work there. Harold values the connections he has made and looks forward to the time he gets to spend with his peers.

Harold has had many points in his life that have helped him gain hope for recovery. He has an extensive history of recovery, and was proud to share that he hasn't smoked a cigarette since 1971! He has successfully been in recovery from alcohol for 6 years now, and with the support of his peers, obtained his GED in 2016! He states that he feels a lot better about himself and when asked what he would like to share about his experience he stated "Everybody should strive for better health. This is a good place to go".





# I Have Opened My Eyes

by Leroy Farnsworth



I remember when I decided to quit drugs and drinking. It was at a "Jack and Jill" party for my wife and I, one day before we got married. We had plenty of alcohol and drugs available. I don't know what I was thinking; that night I used incredibly dangerous amounts of substances. The day after the wedding, I tried to drink and couldn't feel a thing. I decided to quit that day, and I have not touched any drugs or alcohol

since August 2, 2012. I realized that I had 2 choices in my life. 1.) I could keep drinking and ruin my marriage, and kill myself on the path I was heading, or 2.) Stop drinking and doing drugs, and begin to live the rest of my life with my new wife.

I felt that my wife and my life were more important than continuing to use. I know that if it was not for my wife I would not be where I am now. A few years ago, I lost my father to cancer from all the years of his drinking, then a year later my older brother died from the same circumstances. My younger brother passed away after drinking with diabetes; he went into a coma and never woke from it. I lost my entire family to drug and alcohol related problems. So I woke up and smelled the coffee, and realized what was important in my life.

My wife and I have been married since 2012, but we have been together off and on for 21 years. I have raised 6 children and 4 grandchildren. I would never have any of it if I did not stop my substance use. I talk to different people I know who live with substance use disorders, and I tell them that if they want to quit I am there for them. I found out that I have the passion for helping others with their addictions. That is my personal experience in hope - I give hope.



# Life Experience

by Jason Wright

My experience of hope occurred over a period during which I was hospitalized 17 different times. The staff at the hospital helped me through my recovery. They helped me throughout each day when I was in the hospital. The role these hospital stays played was that they helped me understand things I went through during my recovery journey. They helped me to progress in my recovery. Today, people understand me better. I believe there is hope for all people in recovery.



# Recovery is Possible

by Janet "Lynn" Hart

Hope for me is the possibility that recovery from Bipolar and Substance Use disorders can happen. I believe this because I am now in a very good place in my life. Hope occurred throughout my recovery, this is how I know hope is real.

Hope really happened for me while being a caregiver to my Mother. Because even after her passing, I was able to hold it together, and continue to be substance free. I also did not have any occurrences of a mental crisis. My Mother is a very big influence on my hope for recovery.





# A Cure Called Recovery

by Ruben Baca



I write with the intention that I may help someone in their recovery journey of hope. I have seen many things in my 25 years of substance and mental health issues - most of it loss. I never thought I would lose the things I did, and as I reflect back I see how things could have been different. But because of the choices I made, my life took a certain path. I see the pain and suffering I caused myself, my family, at jobs, and so on.

Anyone who knows the pain of this path will understand that we must at one point in our lives say NO MORE! The loss and pain are too great; what brought me here?! My answer is apparent, but one which is difficult to face – myself, the ugly truth as I look in the mirror. But there is definitely a cure, which we call recovery. On May 27, 2012, I found this answer and my first glimpse of hope. This has been my walk ever since, and there is no doubt that in my recovery this was my Higher Power's intervention. It let me know my self-worth, and love for myself. I stand today the man I was meant to be, renewed and recovering. I will live and die an Alcoholic and Drug addict, but I am free of these vices yesterday, today, and tomorrow. As long as HOPE and RECOVERY remain my focus through my Higher Power's will for me, I am free.

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## Dazed and Confused

by Victor Marin

September 19, 1983, I committed a reprehensible crime. I remember thinking that I was sick and needed help. Then the next day I attended a meeting with a group who worked to stop the cycle of the abuse I had carried out. I attended many classes of this type, and by doing so I learned empathy for survivors of trauma. I received help for several months. Ever since then, I've been able to help other people come to terms with their trauma. I just recently celebrated 33 years without offending. I also drank for many years, finally quitting in 1997. Last year I celebrated 19 years of sobriety.



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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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