

Workforce Development News

Integrated Healthcare Recovery Support Specialist Institute

Yuma, Arizona May 12, 2016



Certified Peer Support Specialist Graduates

Back Row left to right: David Love, Sean Trask, Esteban Duarte, David Rogers, Jeffrey Briggs, Ryan Sill, Jose Navarro, Angel Rico, Edgar Jaquez, Travis Marquart, Rickey Williams (with Snippy), Ryan Carter, Donovan 'Greg' Culver, Jeremiah Bond, Vincent Rascon

Middle Row left to right: Leah Anderson, Karry Wegeforth, Elaine Matteson, Darlene 'Rose' Stover, Yesenia Garcia, Kellie Kay

Front Row left to right: Jaclyn Poell, Jennifer Brown, Lindsay Baumgarner

My Past: My Greatest Gift

David Wyatt Rogers

In early November of 2015, my recovery was in dire despair and active addiction had been crippling my life significantly since 2011. I was simply spectating life from a point of pure misery. At a church service that I eventually agreed to attend after having been invited, a traveling New Covenant ministering prophet, Scott Stimson, approached me in the front pew, held my hand, and told me that my pain and affliction surrounding the last 4 years of my life would end, and he said that I would regain a sense of confidence and purpose in life. He told me that I have a strong voice I can use to help others, as well. He had no knowledge of me prior to my attendance to the service that day, and I had never been to that church before that weekend ever before in my life.

He was right. The loss of a friend at the end of 2011, my mother's diagnosis of lung cancer, the death of my father just four days before my 31st birthday in July of 2013, and a toxic relationship had left me completely isolated in my addiction with no hope in sight. It was a full-blown relapse and a definite rock bottom. I realized I had lost nearly everything meaningful and valuable to me in my life: family, friends, love, my peace of mind, health and a sense of purpose.

After the God of my understanding intervened, the court sent me to the four month rehabilitation program at the Crossroads Mission in Yuma, Arizona in January of 2016 after a period of incarceration and a plea in desperation. From there, finding and restoring hope in my life was found through the New Life program at Crossroads Mission, AA, NA, an outside church, and a dependable group of serious-minded friends



in recovery that I have dubbed, "Team Recovery". It was a miraculous restoration to my recovery.

That hope that had been re-kindled has given me back my sense of purpose in life to carry the message of recovery in any way I can to those with addiction, mental, or co-occurring disorders. A friend of mine that I love with all of my heart and soul once told me what her acronym for hope was. It was Helping Other People Emerge (HOPE). I intend on holding onto this idea because when I help others in recovery, I help further my own recovery, too. My deep, dark and twisted past is my greatest gift and asset that I can use as experiential wisdom now to help others find their own definition of hope in recovery now after being blessed with my own experience of hope. Absolutely no one is a lost cause. I truly believe what I have been taught; the possibility of recovery is 100%.

Hope Now Exists

Angel Rico

My personal experience of hope came to me when I was released to an inpatient treatment facility. There is where I found people exactly like me working with me. It was the first time in my life that I could relate with another person, who for the present was living a good life on the opposite side of the spectrum. Yet knew me in and out for they too have experienced many of the same situations as I had for a very long time. I lived a life of hopelessness due to what I thought of as one failure upon another. They taught me about recovery and now I am living in recovery. My life has completely changed and turned for the better. Hope now exists where hopelessness once lived.



A Sign From Above

David Love



My personal experience with hope for me began in the Yuma County Adult Detention Center, right after my house had been raided for the second time. I found myself in jail again with a 100 plus year sentence hanging over my head and with that I had lost all hope. I was sure I would spend the rest of my life in prison. Then one day before bed I looked at the bottom of the bunk above mine and the word HOPE was displayed there. Something was set into motion at that moment. I wrote the word HAVE right before the word HOPE, and now HAVE HOPE. I decided I would not spend the rest of my life in prison and that I was ready to truly FIGHT FOR MY LIFE. FIGHT FOR MY LIFE I DID! On what was supposed to be an open and shut case and a life sentence, two lawyers and many months later I managed to walk away with probation due to the fact I choose to HAVE HOPE.

I Am Free

Donovan 'Greg' Culver

My personal experience of "Hope" began four months ago. I had been at the Crossroads Mission in Yuma, Arizona for just under one month. I was praying for God to please help me. I could no longer live my life in my alcoholic addiction. Before I came to the Crossroads Mission, I almost drank myself to death, as I had many times before.

On January 14th, 2016, I decided I would go to the evening chapel at 7:00 PM. Four wonderful ladies had come to sing for us that night. I had prayed to myself before they started to sing, "God, please, how much longer do I have to wait to be set free? How much more pain will I go through? Please, God, set me free."

The ladies began singing and I was half-listening. When they started their third song, I was captivated by it. As they continued their song, they came to the chorus. My heart opened as soon as I heard the words they sang, "Don't let go. Just hold on a little bit longer. Help is on the way." My life changed.

I felt a peace, a joy, and a calm I have never felt in my life before. I wanted to stand up and shout, "I am free!" I knew that I had been saved by God. I knew



I had help and that I did not have to drink any more. I could live free now. I knew that I had been saved by God. I knew I had help, and that I did not have to drink anymore. I could live free now. I have a new energy to live, seek out my recovery and my life. I know I now have hope.

God Gave Me Hope

Elaine Matteson

Hi my name is Elaine Matteson and I have 2 years and 7 months clean today, by the grace of GOD. To get to where I am today is a story of faith and Hope.

It all started when substance abuse took over my life. I lost my job and soon my home. I ended up living in a bad place with my two daughters. My oldest was about to have a baby. We stayed with some friends that had a house infested with cockroaches. After a month my daughter had her baby and brought the baby back to this house. Soon after that, the water was shut off and then the power. It was not a safe place for my new grandbaby.

I had a friend who was doing pre trial services. She had a place where my daughter could stay and she was staying clean. Her husband was in jail, so I had my daughter go there to stay. I continued to use.

On October 1, 2013, I was sitting there in this infested house. We had just sent out for another bag of dope. While we were waiting for it to get to the house, I thought about what I was doing. How I had nothing, no money to feed my kid, no water for her to shower, no power to run the AC. And I sat there.

The dope got to the house and I looked at the other people and said 'NO I am done'. I went to sleep that night and didn't sleep much and in the morning I got up and left that house. I went to my friends house who was not using and she let me come stay there with both my daughters and grandbaby.

Two weeks later I was still not using and I got introduced to NA. I started going to meetings



daily. After 30 days I got back the job I had lost because I was clean! Soon I had a little home for my kids and grandbaby to live. I started working the steps of NA and I got a sponsor. I became active in NA making coffee and chairing meetings. I got involved with area meetings and learning alot about recovery.

That is my story about hope. GOD gave me HOPE. And today I have a new life and I am taking this Recovery Support Specialist peer support class to help better my life. I want to give back to people what was freely given to me in NA.

Hope Changed My Life for the Best

Edgar Jaquez



As everything started bad and I thought there was no hope and everything was lost in my life, my life had a big turn and I realized I still had a choice.

On September 22, 2015 I was arrested for my first violation of probation. I had never done time in jail, but my addiction put me in a situation that didn't make me care where I was in life. During the time I was in jail I thought of all my mistakes and how bad I was living my life, what had I lost because my addiction like my job, money and almost my family. I had no hope for myself. Everything ended very bad. By December 19, 2015, I got release after 90 days in jail. I thought

everything was going to be ok, but I was wrong. I was able to spend Christmas with my family and also I thought I would be home for New Year's but my surprise was that on December 28, 2015 my probation officer sent me to a 4 month residential rehab program. I remember that day like it was yesterday. I wanted to go crazy. I never thought I was going to end up in a place like that. It was at that moment I really wanted to disappear from earth but I had no choice but to go because if I denied going, I would end up back and in jail, so I went to the program.

While I was at program I thought I didn't need any type of help. I thought I was fine like I was, but the truth was that I didn't know anything about myself and that my life had become unmanageable. My bad personal choices had gotten me into this situation. All my life I blamed others, but I was the only one to blame because it was my personal choices that got me there. Then I found HOPE once again in my life. I started to follow a 12 step program, and started going to groups that help me to this day. My life had become manageable once again and then I made a decision to help other people like me that believe that everything in life is lost. I ended up graduating 2 weeks early and I have never been so thankful with everything including my probation officer. I am now completing goals in my life that I thought I would never complete, and my life has changed for the best.

The Best Feeling I Ever Felt

Estaban Duarte

I found myself in a lonely room (jail cell) once again, thinking how this could be happening to me again? I was working paying my own bills supporting my home for my girlfriend (my High School sweetheart) and our 10 year old daughter. Now I'm sitting in this cell just thinking WHY!? Where did I go wrong and what did I do to deserve this?

After a little more time I felt really fed up with myself, mad because there has to be something I'm doing wrong. I thought, this lifestyle of drugs, crime, fast money isn't a job. I had a really long night arguing with my thoughts. Next morning I was on my way to court. I told myself if I get out of this place I'll never do it again.

I was released thinking how to make some fast money, on my way back to what I said I wasn't going to do again. Four days later I woke up with my car in a ditch. I get out of my car, I didn't remember anything that had just happened or how long I had been in that ditch. I did not have a clue of where I was or where I was going. It was pitch black (who knows what hours of the night or morning). I was trying to keep calm but the panic was taking over. I felt hopeless. I found my way home without my car. My home was empty, I felt I was dead. I made a choice, If I'm not dead I'm going to ask for help. I was scared and helpless. I went to find myself. I asked my girlfriend if she could see me, she



slapped me and told me I was stupid, the best feeling I ever felt. She could see me, I wasn't dead. I went back to court with new attitude and goals. The judge gave me another chance for freedom if I could prove that I deserved it in one week. In that week I found help from job resources. I went to my pre-trial officer. He told me to enroll in a place called ACTS. I was able to go to group meetings and get the help I needed. I have my family back and my home is not empty anymore. I'm making better choices.

An Amazing New Feeling

Jaclyn Poell



My journey of hope began on March 17, 2014. I did not know that this was going to be the most significant day of my life. While I was planning my death God was busy planning the new life I've come to know and treasure. A life that I hadn't experienced since April 21, 1989 the day I had my first drink it was so seductive and powerful I remember it like it was yesterday. It was the day I had a spiritual awakening, the day I had become what I always wanted to be in my 17 years on earth, it was the day that I forgot the memories that tormented me and shattered my innocence from years of sexual abuse from my grandfather.

My world had been changed and my mind had been altered. In that very moment, as the strawberry wine cooler touched my lips and warmed my stomach and I felt my cheeks glowing with heat. I was in love for the very first time. It was better than anything I had ever experienced in 17 years of life. It took away all my insecurities, my ugliness, my clumsiness, and all the times I had been picked last for a team in school it all disappeared with this perfectly pink substance, I was altered to state of bliss and hope at least for the first 5 years and then it was consequences like 3 driving while intoxicated charges that were all the police officers fault. They were always out to get me even though it happened in 3 different counties. Then there was the college education that I couldn't finish because I had tried 3 times and had gotten kicked out for poor grades due to drinking but, that was never my fault. It was that boyfriend that talked me into quitting school so that we could live happily ever after together. Then there were the losses of important friendships. It was always their fault it was their problem not mine. In my 30s I was having some significant loss due to my familiar old friend. There was the marriage, business, and my sisters, and my beautiful nieces and nephews that I claimed I loved more than anything, but just not quite enough to show up for their 1st birthdays without my old familiar friend with me.

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An Amazing New Feeling, by Jaclyn Poell, continued...

The biggest loss I saw was the complete utter destruction of my self. I remember looking in the mirror and not recognizing anything that resembled me. My body was starving for food my heart was starving for love, and my spirit was longing to be free. I was truly imprisoned in my own mind and body without any restraints around me was beaten, battered, and empty. I had absolutely no hope left. I had planned my physical death cause god knows, I had already died spiritually.

Prior to that date, I had been in and out of mental hospitals and residential treatment centers for alcoholism since the age of 25. I had accepted the fact that life was just painful and I was never going to feel happiness again. I had tried every happy pill or antidepressant on the market. Nothing worked because I couldn't stay away from my old faithful friend long enough to give them a fair chance.

I prepared the room where I wanted to die. I had securely hung the rope in my basement the night before to insure its success in my attempt to end my suffering. The next morning I had made sure all my doors were locked and my telephone was turned off. I had the letter to my family all written out neatly tucked in an envelope on the kitchen table. I didn't want anyone to interrupt my plan of ending the hell I was living in. I took three big gulps of my familiar friend and got on my knees. With tears running down my face, I said, "God? If you won't let me die today, please help me to stop drinking"? The answer came with a loud knock

at the door. A voice deep within my soul told me to open the door. Standing in front of me was my probation officer Amanda. I had been on probation for a whole year without a home visit from her. Why was she here today? She smelled my old familiar friend on my breath and arrested me on the spot. I went to jail for three weeks. Judge Dixon would not let me out of jail because she had a sense that I was not going to be alive to make the next court appearance. Little did she know how correct her premonition was. It was then; I realized the life I was going to end with my two hands was saved by the hands of god, and the law.

It was an amazing new feeling that I hadn't felt in years. I believe now, it was a twinkle of hope. Dressed in my orange jail wardrobe, behind the cold steel bars, and the chatter of the other prisoners, I spoke to God and asked him to show me how to live without alcohol. I had a new willingness and a sense of surrender as I asked the judge if I could go to treatment. The next day my parents and I were making the 8 hour drive from my past into my future life. I didn't know what the future held for me but, I was on my way to Hazelden Betty Ford the very next day. I walked through the doors with a new found freedom and a relief. It felt like coming home after a long trip. When I met my counselor Amy (my angel here on earth), I told her I was willing to do anything and everything she asked of me. I could tell she liked that comment. I couldn't believe that someone as beautiful as her had struggled with anything. The sparkle in her eyes and the glow of pure

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An Amazing New Feeling, by Jaclyn Poell, continued...

happiness and contentment beamed from her face. I dreamed of having what she had. I thought to myself I am far too damaged to look that way. She was the first person I had ever met that shared her experience, strength, and most of all hope. I have never known somebody that had been sexually abused as a child like I was. She told me she had wanted to die and had difficulties with trust, fear, shame, and the ability to connect with others. She lost her innocence by someone she had loved and trusted in the same way I had. I FINALLY was not alone. She knew my pain!

I had found someone I could trust who really understood me. It was the first time I had talked about my dirty secret for 37 years (my sexual abuse at the age of 5 by my grandfather). Leaving Hazelden I was fearful but there was hope. I stayed in a sober house for 14 months because that was what Amy had told me I needed to do. I was given the opportunity to be a senior peer/ manager of the women's facility in exchange for half my rent paid which was \$450 out of my pocket but I knew I had to be there. I got cutting edge mental health therapy for PTSD.

I had meetings, service work, a sponsor, and people who cared about me. On my 1 year sobriety anniversary I was asked by Hazelden Betty Ford to share MY experience, strength and hope. It was such an honor I said yes before I even thought twice about it.

The day of March 17, 2015 I put my shoulders back, held my head high, and walked on that stage with a message. When I was done my counselor Amy and 200 men and women that were sitting in the seats I sat in gave me a standing ovation. I felt a transformation that had taken place inside and outside as a result of someone giving me hope. My greatest treasure I have to offer someone that has struggled like I have is a genuine connection, healing through relationship, and my story of how God rescued a 42 year old alcoholic, depressed, suicidal woman out of her small town and gave her the city of St. Paul Minnesota aka the recovery capital of the United States to Yuma to become a peer support to possibly be someone's angel here on earth and share the only thing that saved my life which was HOPE.

Trust in God, Pray and Hope for the Best

Yesenia Garcia

Back in 2015 I got in trouble for assaulting a man with a magnum flashlight, I hit him in the head and he called the cops on me, I went to jail. At that point I had hope for my self and him that he would be ok .

He was ok. After a while his head healed and asked the judge if he could drop the charges. The judge said absolutely not so he asked the judge if he could give me standard probation so the judge agreed. I spent 30 days in jail and 3 years on standard probation. Every day I have a lot of hope in my life that I can get re-established in my life get a full time job and get a nice home for my kids. I just got full custody of my two younger boys Nathon and Angel and my next goal is to get custody of my two older kids Julissa and Marcos. To get family reunification. I trust in God and pray and hope for the best.



Out of Chaos, Hope

Vincent Rascon



I am very blessed to be alive today and free from active addiction. I spent the majority of my life drinking vodka and doing meth on a daily basis. As a result, my life was horrible to say the least. Every so often I would make attempts to change my life and quit doing drugs without little success. It was one failed attempt after another. Eventually, I was convinced that it was my destiny to live out my days as full-blown drunk and meth addict.

Two years ago I was going through the darkest period I ever faced and during this chaos out of desperation I made one good decision and checked myself into rehab for one more shot at getting clean.

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My Personal Road to Hope

Jeff Briggs



I contracted the horrible disease of addiction at the very young age of fifteen. For the next twenty-seven years, it led me to some not so wonderful places, such as homelessness, prison and isolation. It did not stop there though, it also stripped me of my family, friends, dignity,

self-worth and eventually any hope of ever being happy or “normal” again.

On October 11th, 2015, I was arrested and again found myself in jail, but this time I knew things desperately had to change. I was sent to the Crossroads Mission New Life rehabilitation program. After arriving there, I decided this was going to be when and where I made that change. So, one day in complete and absolute desperation, I hit my knees and cried out for help to a God that I didn't really know or understand at the time. Amazingly He answered my cry for help and a new door of opportunity was opened. The light shined through, and at that moment, I knew I never had to be scared, lonely, or succumb to the suffering of this horrible disease ever again.

Here I am forty-two years old and seven months clean. I am ready to share my experience, strength and newfound hope, so that others do not have to travel the same long, hard road that I did.

“With faith and hope, all things are possible!”

Out of Chaos, Hope by Vincent Rascon, continued...

It was in rehab that I began to pray. I remember praying to Christ to help me through those rough days of my early recovery. My prayers were answered and I began to have hope. Once a week N.A. meetings were brought in to the rehab, and my hope continued to grow. I continued to pray and also to work my steps. This was how my recovery began. I can see

now that my faith in Christ and the 12 steps of Narcotics Anonymous is the solid foundation that my new life is being built upon. I continue to stay active in my faith and in N.A. and my life continues to improve. I am very grateful that out of the chaos of my addiction I was able to find hope and ultimately recovery. .

Inspirations

Jennifer Brown

My story of hope started in June, 2013 when I met my fiancé, Uriah; on a dating site. I was diagnosed with bi-polar, anxiety, and depression since 2005 and it was June 2012. I had just found out that my grandpa (popee) was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and no one knew how long he had to live. I was drinking every Thursday after going to church to cope with my grandpa's illness. I was with my ex-boyfriend at the time and felt that even though he was present physically he was not present emotionally.

In late May early June 2014, I had moved in with my boyfriend and now, my fiancé Uriah, where he lived in Mesa, Arizona from where I lived with my parents in Avondale, Arizona and I had obtained a floater job at a daycare close by; so, I quit my Substitute Teacher's Assistant for children and teenagers with special needs. I loved the job that I quit; but, I was getting exhausted from traveling to and from work; which, would take anywhere from forty five minutes to two hours on bus and trolley in Phoenix, Arizona. A week after I started the job at the daycare; I got fired for being too slow for the daycare environment.

I was behind in my rent when I got fired and I had not even gotten my first check from my daycare work. And Uriah who I lived with in Mesa, Arizona got fired from his IT job and spent every bit of his 401k trying to help out with the bills; so, we could not get caught up with our rent. We had gotten a 7-day notice. My boyfriend wanted to stay together and work things out and he did not want me living on the streets. He knew I could not handle it. So, we decided to move



to Yuma, Arizona with his mother.

I tell you all this to tell you where my hope comes from. I was living with Uriah and his mother and grandma. I would come to the Transitional Living Center Recovery (TLCR) to meet up with him. So many people and things give me hope.

I quit going to the center for a while; and I started going again in May 2015. In June to July, 2015 I was visiting family in Phoenix, Arizona and I had the option of staying there to live again; but, I chose to come back to Yuma, Arizona to be with my friends from TLCR. I felt happier in Yuma than I did in Phoenix because I had more supports in Yuma. I was participating in everything I could to help me recover from mental illness.

Hope Happened

Jose Navarro



My name is Jose Navarro and am from San Luis AZ. As everything started bad I thought it was going to stay like that. I went to County jail for 45 days and I was in Probation. Before I was released I was screened for Drug Court and I had been accepted so they took me to rehab for 4 months. I completed the program. Hope is what happened in my life. I got into the Peer Support training and I really like it.

I Have Hope Today

Kellie Kay

My personal experience of hope...has insured me I do not have to use dope, to cope...

With everyday situations this world of life has to offer me...

Drinking and using used to be the only way I knew...it served its purpose and got me through...

It took away what I love and cherish in life...it took away my mom, my dad, my life...

I was a survivor you see...I really didn't have a life nor did I know what it meant to me...

I got clean and sober one day...and knew this was a better way...I just didn't stay that way...

Back and forth I was torn...til God came into my life and said "Now Kellie you are reborn...do My will and fret no more".

I believe and so it is... I have hope today...



Let The Past Go

Rickey Williams and Snippy



I have been an IV drug user (meth) for forty five years. I managed my drug use to cope and mask pain, but as time went on it slowly began to tear my life down a little at a time. I'm smart so I would adapt and continue on. But one's addiction is smarter than one's self. As this progression is so slow. One's self becomes blinded to what they are trying to adapt too, and in turn lose sight of who they are and how they got where they are. Hope for me is just admitting I got out-smarted by myself and willing to let the past go and begin again not knowing anything about what I'm doing now. But knowing it will be easier than before because me and myself will be working together not against each other.

Surrender, Faith and Hope

Lindsay Baumgarner

"I don't think of all the misery, but of the beauty that still remains." --Anne Frank

I have been a person with a substance use disorder since the age of 14. Somewhere over the years I lost touch with myself, isolated myself from family and friends and lost all hope of recovery and living the life that I truly wanted to live. In 2011 while living in a residential treatment program, I made the decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God, as I understood him. While there have been setbacks since then, this was the turning point of my life and my recovery. I was able to surrender and found the faith I needed and all hope was restored through working a program of recovery with the help of my God and my personal relationship with my creator. There have been so many people who have helped me along my journey of recovery including peers, counselors and my family and friends. This restoration of hope has brought happiness back to my life and is the reasons I look forward to helping others find the hope they need in their journey of recovery!



Hope

Jeremiah Bond

I have been using meth and other drugs for twenty nine years. I have been in and out of jails and institutions because of my addiction. I have done four prison terms, and without hope I wouldn't be where I am at today in my recovery. My first experience with hope occurred during

my last prison term. I finally realized that life is too short to spend it in prison, at that time I started to set certain expectations for myself in my life, to be a better father, to obtain a career, etc... I believe with hope, I will be able to expand my role in this life time beyond the expectations of society, of a person with a general mental illness and substance use disorder, and I do believe that I can accomplish this with hope.

Hope in the Sonoran Desert of Arizona

Leah Anderson



The experience I had with Hope seems like a long time ago, approximately 25 years ago! I was drunk out of control and had black outs and ended up in jails and prison. I wasn't certain what my future held, but most days I didn't even care. I was mainly concerned about where my next drink came from and how would I get it. I was worried about my future and started to think I wanted to improve my life. I wondered how I would accumulate the information and resources. I knew there was a Native Health Facility on Toronto Ontario Canada's main street. I had been by it many times.

It was morning but I didn't know what day it was. So I got up and told my friend I was done drinking. He said "I'm getting my check for \$800 dollars today this afternoon". I said,

"no I am quitting cold turkey". Then I turned around and climbed down the fire escape, on the big city building. It was raining and dreary, I felt immediately depressed. I started walking wondering how my day would play out; I thought I was being brave and strong. No home, no friends, no plan, just a thought planted in my head to be strong and to not give up on myself because it was worth the fight. I was hopeful. I didn't want to bump into any confrontation, negative people or anyone persuading me to drink. This walk seemed far and a bit demanding every step grew a bit more of my anxiety. Would I break or be strong?

I had hoped the center would be open and I would find someone to talk to. Someone who might understand what I have been going through and understand the struggles of living on the streets, having no family, no one sober, and what an alcoholic goes through with withdraws and homelessness. For myself being 21 and a Native female, I wasn't sure if anyone could help me in my time of despair. I said a prayer to God in hopes that I would be guided toward help. The sweat was pouring out of me. I was anxious, excited, worried, and felt uncomfortable. I didn't know what to expect. When I found the Native Health Center I was relieved. I walked in and they noticed that I looked like a wreck. The alcohol emitted from my pores. I was wet and felt exhausted. The hope came when I was allowed to talk to an alcohol counselor. The counselor told me if I could stay sober for 30 days he would send me to a treatment center in the Sonoran Desert of Arizona. I felt privileged and immediate relief. I found hope at last. The funny thing is I have been sober for 24 years now and live in Arizona... A happy Canadian.

A Power Greater Than Myself

Ryan Carter

In the end of my addiction I was staying with friends, they had no water or electricity. One day I had enough of living like that. I tried to call my friend Robert to ask him what I should do. He did not answer. Fifteen minutes later I was walking across Fourth Ave to use the restroom at the Giant gas station. He was there with his wife Elaine and our friend Brian. I told him I needed to talk to him, he told me if I wanted to talk I would have to go with them. That's when I went to my first twelve step meeting. Three days later on February 6, 2014 I got my first 24 hours clean. That night my friends Robert and Elaine took me to detox. That was the first time I recognized that a power greater than my self was working in my life, I realized I never had to use again.



A bright Future Ahead of Me

Ryan Sill



Hope; well up until about a few months ago I had none. I was going to be an active heroin user for the rest of my life, or so I thought. It wasn't until I started the New Life Program at the Crossroads Mission that I began to see what hope really was. Hope for a new life, hope for freedom from my past ways, and hope that I would no longer have to be chained down by my addiction. Throughout the program people would tell me the progress and change that they could see in me and I began to see that there actually was an enjoyable life outside of using drugs. Since I have completed the program so many opportunities have been opened up in my life and now for the first time in longer than I can remember I genuinely have hope that I will have a bright future ahead of me that I am really looking forward to.

"Cool Beans"

Sean Trask



My experience with hope started long before I entered recovery for my substance use disorder.

I was 17, living with my mother in Dallas Texas. I had been diagnosed as bi-polar and ADD/ADHD at age 9. After my parents' divorce at age 13, both of my grandfathers passing away at age 15, I was a very bitter young man.

One day in September of 2003, my mother and I got into a very heated argument and she called the police on me for domestic violence. I was given the choice of either jail or a "crisis center". Well I did not want a criminal record so I opted for the crisis center.

After arriving at the center I befriended (against all rules) a 15 year old girl named Candice. She was kind, sweet and caring. When not in group or other things we played cards. We bonded very quickly. We passed notes (again VERY much against the rules) just stating how we were doing, and feeling. Hers were always longer than mine, and

most the time mine were more feedback and encouragement to her than anything else.

But I noticed something that at the time I found strange about Candice, she always wore long sleeves, and pants or long skirts. This is in Dallas where the heat index is still running about 105 degrees.

So I asked why. She told me she did not want to tell me because she was afraid I would shun her and think that she "F---ing nuts" I told her that would not happen and that she was my friend and I cared for her.

She pulled up her sleeves and on her arms were hundreds of scars and some cuts that were still healing. She showed me her legs and they were the same way. I asked her what happened and she told me she was a "cutter" and she cut herself to make herself feel better.

I told her that she was not crazy and that she was my friend and if that is what made her feel better then that was "cool beans".

She fell into my arms sobbing and thanking me over and over. (I was truly bewildered as to why she was crying and thanking me) of course staff came, tearing her away from me, demanding (in very angry tones) to tell them what I had done and why she was crying.

Before I could say anything she said "he accepted me for me. LEAVE HIM ALONE"

Her attitude improved and she smiled a lot more in the days to come. The day I was "discharged" she thanked me again. It has been 13 years, I have searched trying to get back into contact with her. My efforts have been unsuccessful.

I had no clue as to what I was doing or the profound affect it would have or the feeling that I felt.

She made a bracelet that I wore for years until it broke to remind myself of that feeling that I now, 13 years later know as Hope.

Celebrate Recovery

Travis Marquart

My personal experience of HOPE occurred just over a year ago. I have worked in the medical profession since I was 17 years old. Taking care and helping others is who I am and what I do. But I was living my life all wrong. Working 16 hour days 7 days a week, month after month. Using drugs to help me keep up the pace soon took its toll on every aspect of my life. Before I knew it my life was unmanageable and moving way to fast and in my eyes hopeless.

On March 22nd, 2015 my eyes were opened up to see just how bad I had messed up my life. As I laid on an emergency room gurney drifting in and out of consciousness bleeding from a gun shot wound. I saw my hopeless looking life. A failing marriage, jobless, penniless, suffering from depression, co-dependency and the disease of addiction. I was later released from the hospital. Instead of being dead I was alive, but moving very slowly. With the help of my very loving wife and family I began my road to recovery.

A short time after my hospitalization my wife asked me to attend church with her. Normally I would have said "No", But this time I said "Yes". At that church service it was as if the pastor was talking directly to me and no one else was in the chapel. There was my first flicker of HOPE.

Soon after I was asked to attend another different service at a different church. This service was called Celebrate Recovery. All I could say was WOW. There I met others who suffered from the same flaws as me and I wasn't alone. There was my second flicker of HOPE.



After attending a few of the Celebrate Recovery services I met a young woman named Mrs. Kimberly. She didn't say much she could see right throw me and crazy enough she knew my story. One night she gave me a card and told me to call the number if I was ready to stop the destruction in my life and ready to rebuild it. When I flipped the card over there it was the phone number for HOPE Inc. There was my Third flicker of HOPE.

I started at HOPE Inc. few weeks after and my life has only gotten brighter and more hope filled everyday. Since my start the staff has helped me see that I do have a purpose in life. To assist others who have lost hope when dealing with life's struggles and unmanageable life styles. There is always hope even when there is no hope insight.

The Integrated Healthcare Recovery Support Specialist Institute is administered by the Workforce Development Program in the Department of Family and Community Medicine (DFCM) at the University of Arizona. The Institute is funded by Cenpatico Arizona. Cenpatico Integrated Care of Arizona (Cenpatico) services are funded through a contract with the Arizona Department of Health Services/Division of Behavioral Health Services (ADHS/DBHS) and AHCCCS.

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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