

October – December 2000

1. Area Coordinators: On November 10, 2000 Joey Petrello started work as a CCAR Area Coordinator. On November 13, 2000 Michael Askew and Diane Potvin also began their employment as CCAR Area Coordinators. The primary aspects of their job descriptions are; 1) to develop CCAR Chapters throughout the state using CCAR Central as a developmental model, 2) to put a face on recovery at meetings in their region that need the addiction recovery perspective, 3) to bring local recovery issues to the state level and vice versa, 4) to assist with major CCAR Central events and 5) to develop a special project on a vital recovery issue. Several hours of each week were dedicated to training the Area Coordinators. Chapter meetings will begin in January 2001.
2. Use of the Media: Jeff Blodgett from the Alliance Project provided the CCAR membership (~20 individuals) with a useful 6-hour session on using the media to promote our vision and mission.
3. Legacies: Dee Georgette, a mother who lost her son to a heroin overdose and is also a CCAR member, published an article in the New Haven Register about her story and her desire to start a support group for parents who have experienced the same loss. The story generated several replies and Dee was able to hold three meetings during the quarter. Dee would like to expand “Legacies” to other regions of the state.
4. Annual Meeting: On Tuesday, November 14, 2000 CCAR held its first Annual Meeting with 112 people in attendance at Maneely’s Banquet Facility in South Windsor. With CCAR Board President John Shea presiding over the ceremonies, the audience heard from CCAR Project Director Bob Savage, DMHAS Deputy Commissioner Dr. Art Evans and CCAR Associate Director Phil Valentine who read a piece written by William White. Also, Board elections were held, new videos shown, the third poster unveiled, awards distributed and members shared about their experience with CCAR. Bob Savage also received a plaque from Leadership Involved In family Education (LIIFE) and Women Helping Other Women (WHOW) for his leadership and dedication to the recovery movement. It was an historic evening for the organization.
5. Third Recovery Poster: CCAR developed and printed the third and final recovery poster to complete the series. It features CCAR members in a garden with the byline: “Harvesting the seeds of empowerment – being clean and sober...”. The posters will be widely distributed and continue to put a positive face on recovery.
6. The Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) continues to be at the forefront of the recovery movement. Our mailing list continues to increase. As our core membership of about 100 continues to organize, grow and develop, requests for CCAR participation from outside agencies have increased dramatically. CCAR has established an organizational structure and bylaws and is seeking independent status.

A board of officers has been nominated, elected by the membership, meets regularly and has expanded to 12 individuals.

7. CCAR has continued to provide significant input to the Department, serving on the State Advisory Board, Partnership Council, GA Consumer Advisory Council, GA Quality Management Council, an advocacy monthly meeting with the Commissioner and working on the Grievance Process. We have served on 2 RFP evaluation committees, one for the PILOTS initiative and the Recovery House. With the addition of the Area Coordinators we have started to sit on some ISS meetings in different regions.
8. CCAR continues to vigorously engage recovering people, their families/significant others in all activities. They are consistently updated through monthly meetings. Our Board meets bi-monthly and is kept apprised of developments within the organization. Committees have also been useful in giving members “hands-on” tasks that keep them involved and committed. We have maintained a thorough response system where members are engaged via phone contact, mail and email. Keeping members involved, and acknowledging their contributions, have retained their services and commitment.
9. One of the primary purposes of hiring three Area Coordinators was to more actively engage people in recovery. Over the course of the last two years one of the obstacles frequently mentioned as a barrier to membership growth is the distance factor in traveling to the Middletown site. Also, transportation issues are also mentioned. The Area Coordinators are charged with establishing local Chapters that will get local recovering communities even more involved. Also, by meeting these people in their hometowns, we will bring our advocacy efforts to the level where they can have maximum “hands-on” involvement thus increasing the probability of retaining them.
10. In December, we were successful in revitalizing our committee structure with the intention of giving our members more to do. The atmosphere at the December General membership meeting was one of urgency. Our membership is eager to get involved, to begin some serious advocacy efforts like letter writing, public speaking and putting their face on recovery when given the opportunity. These efforts will engage more members of the recovering community and will retain the ones doing the advocacy.
11. The “Legacies” initiative described in the highlights above is a specific activity that engages family members. This group has an amazing advocacy potential for the recovering community but will take time to develop.

January – March 2001

12. Regional Initiative with Area Coordinators: During this quarter, all three Area Coordinators hosted the first local CCAR Chapter meetings, Michaela Askew in Stamford, Joey Petrello in Windsor and Diane Potvin in Windham. A total of seven

new recovery advocacy meetings were held throughout the state, three in Stamford, three in Windsor and one meeting in Windham (2 scheduled meetings were cancelled because of blizzards). Over 50 new recovery advocates were recruited as a result of hearing the CCAR message of “putting a positive face on recovery”.

13. On January 5, 2001: CCAR staff delivered a 6-hour course to about 25 treatment professionals titled “The Recovery Perspective – Beyond the Treatment Episode”. This is the second year that CCAR has had the opportunity to present this course and again, evaluations were excellent.
14. In January, CCAR members took an active role with speaking commitments at the NEAAR Policy Conference held in Andover, MA.
15. February 16, 2001: 11 CCAR members testify at the Appropriations Committee Public Hearing on the DMAHS budget in support of more funding for recovery support services on a snowy Friday evening. Legislators, department commissioners and other agencies commented on the power of the CCAR presence at this hearing.
16. February: Filming and editing is completed on the one-hour recovery documentary “Putting a Face on Recovery”.
17. CCAR members and staff attend and complete 5-day Multicultural Institute delivered by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Office of Multicultural Affairs.
18. February: Project Director Bob Savage, Associate Director Phil Valentine, Advocacy Unlimited, Inc. Executive Director Yvette Sangster and DMHAS Consumer and Family Liaison Steve Fry, present “Recovery Basic Premises and Recovery Core Values” to the National Association of Mental Health Program Directors at their annual conference in Washington DC.
19. CCAR has significant breakthroughs with the media with several newspaper articles, television appearances and radio spots for example, Hartford Courant article Susan Campbell, Connecticut Newsmakers, Street Beat, New Haven Register on Dee entitled “Searching for Solace” and others. See attachments.
20. March 2001: CCAR hosts its third annual Legislative Day with grassroots members taking the lead by hosting, greeting and speaking. This year the number of legislators sponsoring more than doubled to 36. The attendance more than doubled to over 200. The overflow of people spilled out into the hallways. Passersby in the hallway peeked inside out of curiosity, telling us that laughter, shouts and applause ringing out from a legislative hearing room was rare indeed. CCAR Administrative Assistant Melissa Scheffey’s son Nate, home on college break described himself as “blown away” by the experience.

21. CCAR has an active role in five informational forums across the state coinciding with the release of a DMHAS 6-year compendium on substance abuse, providing personal recovery stories to correlate with this groundbreaking report.
22. In March, Joey Petrello raised \$4000 in support of CCAR's 2nd annual "Recovery Walks!" event scheduled for September 16, 2001.

April – June 2001

23. This quarter, a great deal of staff time and energy was poured into the CSAT grant application.
24. Members were provided opportunity to participate and attend some significant events, the New England School of Addiction Studies (NESAS) in Brunswick, ME; the CT Alcohol & Drug Policy Conference "Prevention, Treatment, Criminal Justice: Forging Partnerships for Substance Abuse Services"; the CSAT conference "Voices Making Choices, Communities Creating Change: An RCSP Gathering and Celebration"
25. The CCAR website went live, check it out at www.ccar-recovery.org
26. The one-hour CCAR documentary "Putting a Face on Recovery" was shown at some local cable television stations across the state
27. This video is being packaged for distribution this quarter.
28. The CCAR CD-ROM "Putting a Face on Recovery" has been updated, finalized and is currently being packaged for distribution.
29. During this quarter we ran out of CD-ROMs (2000 have been distributed nationwide).
30. During this quarter we ran out of Recovery Posters (10,000 have been distributed nationwide).

July 2001 – September 2001

31. This quarter, the highlight was Recovery Walks! summarized as follows:



On a picture perfect Sunday, only five days after the terrorist attack on the United States, CCAR hosted the 2nd annual Recovery Walks! drawing between **1800-2000** people in support of recovery from alcohol and drug addiction. Organizers made a difficult decision to proceed with the walk and it turned out to provide a much-needed time for grieving and healing. As CCAR Area Coordinator Diane Potvin would write,

"Considering the events of September 11th and the Walk today, (one extreme to the other), recovering bodies to recovering lives, was almost too much for my heart to bear. God bless America...God bless those in and out of recovery."

Bushnell Park in Hartford was set up using the existing Bandshell, a tent for Registration, a tent for CCAR Information (beautifully decorated by CCAR Administrative Assistant Dottie Callahan) and a tent for T-shirt and hat distribution as the magnificence of the Capitol building commanded attention on the adjacent hillside. White, yellow and green helium balloons dotted the landscape.

The entertainment schedule, coordinated skillfully by CCAR member Ken Aligata flowed perfectly and included Sister Deborah and her poetry, the Teen Challenge Choir from New Haven, Devon (the one-legged tap dancer), Amanda Halsted with a stirring rendition of the National Anthem, Arno Groot with a powerful Lords' Prayer solo on alto saxophone, Crossroads Choir, Selfish Steam, Tommy Dest and the Celtic Pirates. Javier Maldonado, age 2, cut the ribbon to start the walk. Speakers were DMHAS Commissioner Thomas Kirk, CCAR Project Director Bob Savage, CCAR Associate Director Phillip Valentine and CCAR Board Secretary Felix Rivera who welcomed the crowd in Spanish.

14 entries were made in the Team competition with many carrying colorful banners and one carried a large American flag. Many treatment providers brought staff and clients and cited that the hope and power of the recovery community was an incredible boost to morale and attitude. 27 different agencies, businesses, organizations and individuals sponsored the event. The program listed 55 specific acknowledgments. There were hundreds of children enjoying the bounce house, the cotton candy, the sno-cones and the 3 clowns. 2000 hot dogs, boxes of chips, baked goods by the dozen, hundreds and hundreds of bottles of water, soda by the gallon and other beverages were all donated and happily consumed. The Recovery Walks! planning committee poured countless hours into preparing for this event. On Sunday, more than 145 CCAR volunteers rose to the occasion led by Felix Rivera, Ron Verderame, Ed Marrero, Chuck Berry, Al Bolin, Donna Gold, Karl Russotto, Sandy Pelley, Catapult, Loretta Vasso, Albert Kydd, Dave Armstrong, Brian Roy and others.

480 surveys about recovery community demographics, dynamics and attitudes were completed that will help shape CCAR policy and action over the next year. 338 individuals registered to become new CCAR members. The Hartford Courant and Channel 3 covered the event. Over \$19,000 was raised in support of recovery advocacy.

CCAR extends a heartfelt "Thank you!" to all who participated, volunteered, sponsored or otherwise made Recovery Walks! 2001 an extraordinary event. Thank you.

32. This quarter, 7000 copies of the Recovery Herald, the CCAR newsletter, was written, published and distributed.
33. This quarter, CCAR held 2 General Membership meetings and 13 Chapter meetings.
34. CCAR worked with DMHAS and Advocacy Unlimited to plan a Recovery Conference scheduled for November 29, 2001.
35. CCAR volunteers and staff poured countless hours into the planning of Recovery Walks!
36. CCAR worked on developing linkage with the Department of Children & Families

37. The CCAR website was maintained (www.ccar-recovery.org)
38. This quarter, on September 10, the New London Chapter held its first meeting.
39. The one-hour CCAR documentary “Putting a Face on Recovery” was shown at most every local cable television station across the state
40. Several hundred videos were distributed across the country this quarter.
- 41.** Several hundred CCAR CD-ROMs “Putting a Face on Recovery” updated, was distributed across the country this quarter.