



LIB NEWS

THE E-NEWSLETTER OF
LIBERATION PROGRAMS
SPRING 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Liberation Programs started in 1971 with a single location in Stamford to address a local rise in drug use. 50 years later we are proud to have locations throughout Fairfield County and be able to serve over 2,400 Recoverees a year.

Liberation was founded with the support of local government and five corporations, GE Capital, Pitney Bowes, Olin, Clairol, and Asea Brown Boveri. We are grateful to these corporations, and our local government, for their continued support today.



We never could have imagined that we would be celebrating our 50th Anniversary in the midst of a Global Pandemic. Or that after all this time, overdoses and Substance Use Disorder diagnoses continue to rise. We remain committed to learning, growing, and expanding our services to meet the ever changing needs of our community. We couldn't do this life saving work without your support and we look forward to the next 50 years together!

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Peace, Love and Liberation

Learning and Growing

We are proud to have hosted Opioid Overdose Narcan Training for an important documentary with Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz. Overdoses can be reversed and Naloxone (Narcan) saves lives.

We provide free Narcan trainings which includes Narcan for each participant. Reach out to us at info@liberationprograms.org to learn more or request a training. Click below to watch the documentary.



Thanks to tremendous support from DMHAS, we have been able to add another Mobile Wellness Van to our services! The second van will spend 4 days each week in Norwalk and 1 day per week in Greenwich.

In addition to providing harm reduction supplies, referrals to service, and educational materials, the van will partner with the local police departments for diversion. The van will respond to substance use incidents to provide resources and support without criminal justice involvement whenever possible.



Coronavirus News

We are grateful that the frontline staff at Liberation Programs, as well as Residential Recoverees, have been eligible to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine. Many of our staff have received both doses of the vaccine and we are thrilled to have another layer of safety in serving our Recoverees.



There are many questions about the COVID19 Vaccine and we aim to educate our Staff, Recoverees, and Community. We had the chance to talk with Dr. Zane Saul, Chief of Infectious Disease at Bridgeport Hospital, about the vaccine and why it is so important to get vaccinated when you are eligible.

Please take a moment to watch the conversation here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=snyqGsH6YFo>

In addition to those already eligible, updated eligibility dates are below and at

<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Vaccinations>

10.2x

more likely to have COVID-19 in those with Opioid Use Disorder diagnosis than those without

CT Vaccine Eligibility

March 1, 2021: Ages 55+, preK-12 teachers & staff, professional childcare providers

March 22, 2021: Ages 45+

April 12, 2021: Ages 35+

May 3, 2021: Ages 16+

Spirit of Hope

Save the Date!

We hope you will join us virtually on Tuesday, June 8th from 7-8PM for our Spirit of Hope Awards! This will celebrate our 50th Anniversary and recognize some truly incredible honorees!

Learn more, purchase tickets, or secure a sponsorship here:
www.liberationprograms.org/soh21

JUNE 8

**LIBERATION PROGRAMS'
VIRTUAL SPIRIT OF HOPE**

SAVE THE DATE



50
Years

HONORING:
US Senator Chris Murphy
Bill Mitchell & The Mitchell Family
Donald Johnson

Thank you to our Committee!

Laura Weintraub Beck, Chair
John Bassler
Sallyan Pelletier
Kari Pollak
Joyce Sixsmith
Honorable Jayme Stevenson
Sara Tucker



A Place Called Home

Families in Recovery Program (FIRP) Success Story

Little Alice* and her mother, Stacy*, are going home - to Gini's House!

After completing the inpatient residential program at FIRP, Stacy has moved into Gini's House - Liberation Programs' Supportive Housing. Gini's House provides a safe environment coupled with on-site support services that focus on connecting moms to the resources they need to continue their education, find employment, and build on their daily living skills.

Stacy and Alice had an emotional tour of their new home where Alice says she is excited to be "living upstairs." This is the result of diligent, persistent and caring work, shared by FIRP's team, Gini's case manager, Stacy, and Alice.



When asked about the move, Stacy said she was looking forward to "a start to a new sober life." Alice put it simply, "I like it. I can't wait to go there."

We wish Stacy and Alice all the best in their new home!

**Names have been changed.*

Raising Awareness

Ryan White Services

The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program was named for Ryan White who was diagnosed with AIDS following a blood transfusion in 1984 and given 6 months to live. He fought for the right to attend school and became the face of public education about the disease. White lived five years longer than predicted dying in 1990.

Liberation Programs has been providing Ryan White Services for 25 years. We are currently funded from Danbury, Stamford, and Bridgeport for Inpatient and Outpatient Services. These services include two Health Educators and two Clinicians. Health educators help persons with HIV navigate and access services they may need such as medical, dental, case management, food, transportation, and emergency housing.

Ryan White clients are provided unique services to include a clinician and a health educator assigned to their case. Liberation Programs prides ourselves on offering priority admissions for anyone living with HIV/AIDS in Fairfield County and beyond.

What is TAG?

TAG is Liberation Programs' internal movement to promote culturally sensitive services that are gender-responsive and trauma-informed. It creates an environment that fosters the emotional and physical safety of our Recoverees. TAG enhances our ability to empower all of those in our care through positive change.



We welcome any staff and Liberation Alumni who wish to join our Steering Committee. Please reach out to chris.cholko@liberationprograms.org if you are interested in joining this group!

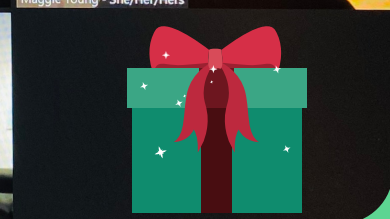
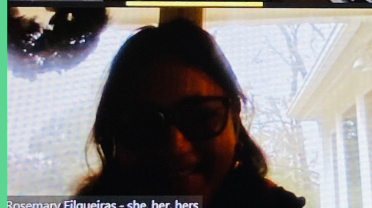
Making the Best in a Pandemic

Things are certainly different this year but that didn't stop the Liberation Team from having some fun celebrating Winter Holidays!

We decorated our sites and dressed in festive attire. The First Congregational Church of Darien visit us with hundreds of books for Lib House.

Mort and Eleanor Lowenthal couldn't be at FIRP for Christmas morning so they joined us, with their families, for gift opening and caroling.

Thank you to everyone who made the holidays bright for Liberation Programs!



Gambling Prevention

March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM) increases awareness about gambling risks and available support. In Connecticut, Regional Gambling Awareness Teams bring together representatives from treatment, prevention, recovery, and local communities to share resources, collect data, assess community awareness and readiness, support efforts to create gambling-informed programs and services, and support the mission of the Connecticut State Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (CT DMHAS) Problem Gambling Services Team.

Gambling is safe for most people but it can lead to a problem for some. The CT DMHAS Problem Gambling Services Team have **3 messages** to help raise awareness around risks and resources.

Gambling is not a risk-free activity

- Problem gambling not only affects your wallet, it can affect your health too.
- There is a strong association between problem gambling and mental health/substance use issues.

Know how to keep the "problem" out of gambling

- Set a Limit on how much time and money and stick to it.
- View Gambling as entertainment, NOT as a way to make money.
 - Balance gambling with other leisure activities.
- If you gamble and spend more time and money than planned, take a break.

Help is available

- Free, confidential helpline 24-hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-888-789-7777.
- Free online chat available at <https://ccpg.org/chat/>.
- Text message support available: text "CTGAMB" to 5334. Masters level counselors respond directly to text messages 24 hours a day/365 days a year.



For more information, contact Ingrid Gillespie, Director of Prevention, at Ingrid.Gillespie@liberationprograms.org

Supporting Liberation

MAKE A DONATION

Monetary contributions can be made online or by calling our office. Cash, check, credit card, wire, money order and stocks are accepted

PLANNED GIVING

Consider a bequest or gift through your estate or name Liberation Programs as a beneficiary of a retirement plan or life insurance

IN KIND GIFTS

We accept donations of items including new clothing and bedding, electronics, home decor, groceries, books and more

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Volunteers can spend time with Recoverees, assist with Administrative tasks, host donation drives and more

SHOP WITH AMAZON SMILE

When you shop on Amazon, use AmazonSmile and choose Liberation Programs as your charity of choice - we will receive 0.5% back from your purchase



@LIBERATIONPROGRAMS

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn - like our pages, share our posts and even consider starting a Facebook fundraiser for us



To learn more about supporting Liberation, please contact our Development Department at development@liberationprograms.org

Spotlight on Recovery




Gratitude from a Recoveree

Liberation Programs saved my life. This is not a metaphor. The program literally saved my life at least twice.

The people who saved my life that are still working here today include: Mike Lee, Glennard, Ms. Maggie and Shalonta. These people took the time to help me when I needed it most. I was so glad to see them again. Some employees who helped me are no longer here, but new people I have met are helping me now. Karl and Amanda in particular are helping me understand why I relapsed... Of course, the above names are saving my life once again.

I am extremely grateful for the people who work at Liberation Programs. I am grateful that you allowed me to return. I knew when I relapsed that I had a safe place that would get me clean again to go to... This time I made it to treatment before I had any legal consequences. I came voluntarily... I know there is a better way to live.

The point of this letter is to give credit where credit is due. There are many good things about this program.



Thanking our Supporters

When a quarantine was put in place in a residential program, you answered the call. Serving large quantities of food in a safe, socially distanced manner while maintaining necessary isolation is difficult. Thank you to all who provided wonderful meals to us during these difficult times!



Board Chair, Debra Hertz, and her husband, John, made a delicious Sunday Dinner - complete with dessert!



Board Member, Brigitte Van Den Houte, made a delicious Spaghetti Dinner for the Recoverees at Lib House.

Thank you to all who
donated meals:

Debra Hertz
Steve Fogarty
Brigitte Van Den Houte
Maria Hancock
Carita's
Corbo's Deli Stamford

