

LIBERATION PROGRAMS
IMPACT
REPORT

2021-2022

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO



The past year has been monumental for Liberation Programs. There has been an increased need for our services as the Opioid Epidemic and COVID Pandemic continue to wreak havoc in our community. We have hired more staff to fill positions that provide enhanced services to our Recoverees. We have received generous funding from new government sources to advance our programs. We have laughed, we have cried, and we have advocated for the dignity and respect of all Recoverees.

As you will read in this report, we recently implemented two new programs. Our Stamford Integrated Health Program addresses the Mental Health needs of Stamford Health patients while the Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Site-Based Program (COSSAP) responds in real time to overdoses in our area.

Department of Public Health data shows accidental drug overdoses are the leading cause of unintentional deaths in Connecticut with Black and Hispanic communities experiencing the most dramatic increases. The effects of the Pandemic have impacted the rate of overdose deaths, but that isn't the only factor. Fentanyl is a leading contributor and was found in 86% of all opioid related deaths last year. A recent study also showed an increase in the number of overdose deaths among teens aged 14-18 in the first half of 2021, largely due to Fentanyl.

In response to these staggering numbers, we are increasing our Prevention efforts with students and parents to understand risk factors and provide additional support where needed. We continue providing Harm Reduction supplies, such as overdose reversal medication Narcan, in the community and through trainings to local businesses, school leaders, and individuals.

Our Outpatient Programs have grown to treat more individuals with innovative programming including incentives based Contingency Management and evidence-based clinical trials. We have expanded our Stamford Outpatient Program in partnership with the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) to provide services as part of criminal justice deflection through treatment for probation individuals with Substance Use Disorders.

In our Inpatient Programs we have continued to face the challenges of COVID in a congregate setting and succeeded in keeping our Recoverees and Staff safe. To meet new waiver requirements, we have added additional staff that will further enhance our services. We are offering advanced opportunities for staff growth and development through increased tuition reimbursement, program wide evidence-based Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) training, and internal advancement opportunities.

The work that we do changes and saves lives. But we can't do it without you. Thank you to all those who made monetary contributions, donated much needed supplies, attended our events, volunteered, and so much more. I hope that you will have the opportunity to see our work in person and look forward to seeing you in the year ahead. In this report you will find more updates on our programs and, should you be so generous as to make a life changing contribution to us, you can [click here](#) to donate. We are all in this together, and we are grateful for you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Horvath".

92%

Recoveree satisfaction
reported

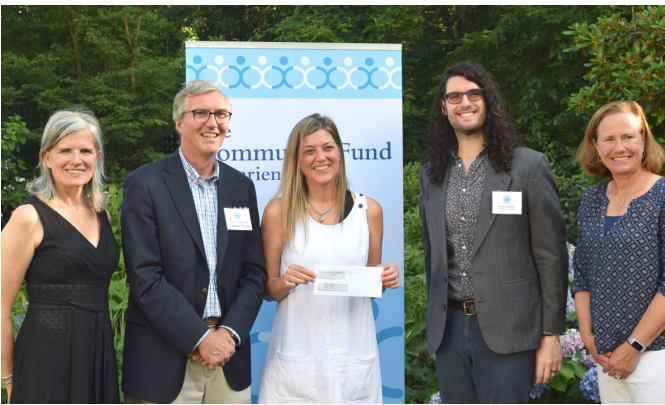
9%

Increase in
Recoveree's served

INTRODUCTION

OUR MISSION

Liberation Programs' mission is to provide prevention, treatment and recovery services to help individuals and their families impacted by substance use and mental health conditions to foster hope and maintain wellness.



"Thank you for all the great things you do for the community."

-Community Outreach Coordinator,
Foundation of Hope

OUR VISION

We share a vision of community that:

- Believes recovery from substance use disorder and mental illness is not only possible but the expectation for all.
- Treats individuals and families with dignity and respect and values all seeking a peaceful and meaningful life.
- Adopts evidence-based and innovative best practices into our community-based setting.
- Readily provides access to care for all, regardless of their ability to pay.
- Integrates prevention, treatment and recovery into the healthcare system and builds the necessary capital to sustain resilient families and strong communities.



OUR CORE PROGRAMS

OUTPATIENT SERVICES

6 days per week in Stamford and Bridgeport:

- Individual and Group Counseling
- Family Therapy
- Support Groups Facilitated by Recovery Coaches
- Relapse Prevention
- Intensive Outpatient Treatment (IOP)
- Medication Assisted Treatment (including Methadone, Buprenorphine, and Vivitrol)
- Mental Health Services

INPATIENT SERVICES

Families in Recovery Program (FIRP): 10-family Inpatient Program for Pregnant & Parenting Women in Norwalk

Liberation House: 64-bed Inpatient Program for Men in Stamford

- Personalized Recovery Plans
- Individual, Group, and Family Counseling
- Medication Assisted Treatment (including Methadone, Buprenorphine, and Vivitrol)
- Mental Health Services
- Life Skills Building
- Trauma and Gender Sensitive Programming

MOBILE WELLNESS VAN

7 Days Per Week in Bridgeport, Greenwich, Norwalk and Stamford offering:

- Outreach and Recovery Support Services
- Prescriber and Recovery Coach
- Referrals for Treatment
- Prescriptions for Buprenorphine
- Educational and Harm Reduction Resources
- Narcan and Syringe Exchange

75

linkages to treatment
made from visits to the
Wellness Van

OUR CORE PROGRAMS

PREVENTION

A collaborative effort to reduce substance misuse. Key targets of our prevention services include, but are not limited to:

- Recovery
- Suicide Prevention
- Alcohol
- Marijuana
- Vaping
- Prescription Drugs

HOUSING

Gini's House in Norwalk

- 18 units of permanent, supportive housing for families who are without housing or at risk of being unhoused
- Gives women and children a place to rebuild their lives
- On-site support services for employment, education, and life skills
- Recreational activities, holiday celebrations, and a tenant Community Association

YOUTH & FAMILY RESOURCES

Greenwich YMCA, Greenwich High School, Staples High School in Westport

- Addressing the persistent threat of substance misuse which often begins in the teen years through outreach to schools and youth groups to promote youth resiliency
- Support and help for youth and families dealing with loved one's substance use
- Education on risky behaviors associated with Substance Use Disorders

FY22 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

STAMFORD INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES

Liberation Programs was asked to assist Stamford Health Systems in providing mental health services to their patients. This partnership led to a new program for Integrated Services on site at Stamford Health Systems' offices on Long Ridge Road. We provide services to the patients of doctors with offices in the building, offering counseling and referrals to our APRN who is able to prescribe medications for individuals who need it. This program began in July 2021 to meet the growing needs of individuals facing mental health conditions, such as anxiety and depression, largely as a result of COVID. The program has grown so quickly that additional staff were recently hired to meet the needs of the large number of referrals we receive.

Currently this is a pilot program at 292 Long Ridge Road but it continues to grow, and we look forward to expanding to Greenwich in the near future.

168

individuals seen by counselors
for Mental Health with Stamford
Integrated Health Program

COMPREHENSIVE OPIOID, STIMULANT, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SITE-BASED PROGRAM (COSSAP)

In partnership with the McCall Center and the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), Liberation Programs received grant funding to partner with Greenwich, Stamford, and Bridgeport Police Departments for a 24/7 dispatch model for responding to overdoses called CLEAR (Community and Law Enforcement for Addiction Recovery). Liberation Programs will dispatch Overdose Responders with the police department when responding to overdoses to provide a critical connection to care for the person experiencing an overdose as well as their family. In addition to connecting to future care, the team will provide harm reduction supplies, including overdose reversal Narcan, to those on the scene in case of future overdoses. This initiative gives individuals and families increased access and resources for Recovery while reducing the number of fatal and nonfatal overdoses. The team will also be in the community providing harm reduction supplies and resources to those in need 7 days a week.

1,000

individuals targeted to be seen
by CLEAR Program Staff monthly

"You Didn't Waste Your Time With Me"

Linsey's story

When Linsey came to our Families in Recovery Program (FIRP) in Fall 2021, it was 15 years since she was first in treatment there. 15 years ago she wasn't ready. This time she was.

Linsey was living on the streets in a dangerous part of New Haven. She frequented the ICU from illnesses she got as a result of eating out of garbage bins. Numerous black outs from Fentanyl resulted in many assaults, once being struck in the back of the head and waking up on the side of the road. No one helped her. Her family had cut her out of their lives to protect themselves from the pain of her substance misuse.

In October 2021, Linsey was hospitalized with a severe skin infection. It was there she found out she was pregnant as the result of an assault while she was blacked out. Linsey does not know who fathered her child. When it was time to leave the hospital, Linsey insisted on being discharged to FIRP. **"If I wasn't at FIRP, I would be dead."**

Linsey arrived at FIRP with nothing but the items in her hospital bag. After trying several treatment programs over many years, Linsey knew the bond she could have with the staff at FIRP would make a difference. She was tired of not knowing if the next time she used would be fatal. She was tired of being taken advantage of. She wanted support and advocated for herself to go directly from the hospital to FIRP. Linsey learned skills during her time at FIRP without which she says, **"I wouldn't have made it."** Counselors worked with Linsey on addressing her many traumas, her mental health diagnosis, and how to set boundaries. Linsey has learned to say no to things that aren't good for her and her daughter, Liliana.

Linsey utilized resources FIRP provided, including Recovery Coaches, and receiving Medication Assisted Treatment at our Bridgeport clinic. Linsey is substance free for the longest stretch she's ever been, with no slip ups. Once she described herself as stubborn, a runner, and a chronic relapser. Today she is living in supportive housing at Liberation's Gini's House with her daughter.

For the first time in 7 years, Linsey's family is back in her life, even visiting now that she is living in a safe, independent place. Linsey is building relationships and trust with her 2 older children, finally making promises she can keep. For the first time, Linsey heard her mother say, **"I'm proud of you."**

Linsey feels safe living at Gini's House. She is proud of the home she has made and the room she has for her daughter, appropriately decorated with lilies. Linsey is looking forward to going back to school but knows she needs to take it slow for herself and her daughter. **"She's my angel. She's here to save me."**



Linsey and Liliana at home at Gini's House

"This is Where I Changed My Life"

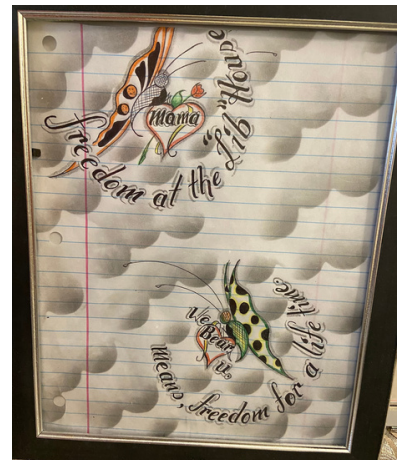
Tony's story

Confused. Rebellious. Homeless. Those are words Tony uses to describe himself before coming to Liberation Programs. He was selling and doing various drugs on the streets of Hartford. He was couch surfing and had pending legal matters. **"I was hurting myself. I didn't know who I was. I didn't care if I lived or died."**

The first time Tony came to Lib House, he was just buying time to complete the program. He quickly went back to his old habits when he left. Tony ended up in jail before returning to Lib House. Something was different for Tony when he returned to the program. He saw familiar faces in staff that knew him and wanted to help him. He was ready to change his life and needed to find something to grab on to. He used the relationships he built with the staff and the groups to better himself. Today Tony has no reservations. He has changed a lot of his behaviors and took tools he learned at Lib House with him. **"I know I'll get there,"** he says.

During his time at Lib House, Tony was respected by his peers and was honored to be the House Voice at Community Meetings. He collected concerns and compliments from his fellow Recoverees to pass along to the staff. Lib House was a stepping stone for Tony and who he has become. Tony is a motivational speaker and talks in many groups with the Hartford Police Department. He is passionate about being a voice for kids going down the wrong path.

Throughout his journey, Tony doesn't forget the lessons he learned at Lib House and the people who inspired him. Tony has a bag full of reminders - the resume he created at Lib House, letters of recommendation from staff, his certificate of completion from his Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP). Tony formed strong bonds with the staff at Liberation Programs, perhaps none stronger than the one he formed with Intake Coordinator, Cathy Festo, AKA "Mama Bear." Tony's eyes fill with tears when he sees Cathy. He sees success, recovery, and possibilities in her. She is his role model and they both say he is a "cub for life."



One of the many drawings Tony made that decorate Cathy's office



Cathy "Mama Bear" Festo and Tony embrace during a recent visit

As part of his passion for giving back, Tony shares his experience with Recoverees, including those at Lib House. Tony encourages them to embrace the process to learn about themselves and to learn to love themselves. **"I am proud to be a Lib House alum."**

Leader. Teacher. Compassionate. Those are the words that Tony now uses to describe himself.

Financial Overview

FY Ending June 30, 2022

**Unaudited, preliminary figures*

PROGRAM SERVICE FEES

\$7,131,279

60.65%

SOURCES OF SUPPORT AND REVENUES

\$11,757,618

DEPT OF MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION SERVICES (DMHAS)

\$3,043,378

25.88%

FUNDRAISING & MISC INCOME

\$497,048

4.23%

FED, STATE, & MUNICIPAL GRANTS

\$1,085,913

9.24%

"I have to thank Liberation and the staff for giving me my life back."

-Former Lib House Recoveree

MANAGEMENT & GENERAL OPERATING

\$1,747,309

14.99%

FUNDRAISING

\$229,619

1.97%

ALLOCATIONS AND EXPENSES

\$11,652,037

83.04%

PROGRAM EXPENSES

\$9,675,309

Year in Review



Spirit of Hope 2022



Supporting Liberation

MAKE A DONATION

Contributions can be made online by [clicking here](#) or by calling our office. Cash, check, wire, money order, and stocks are accepted.



IN KIND GIFTS

Shop our Amazon Wishlist by [clicking here](#) to purchase items needed in our programs and to support our Recoverees.

PLANNED GIVING

Consider a bequest or gift through your estate, name Liberation Programs as a beneficiary of a retirement plan or life insurance, or list us for memorial contributions in an obituary.

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.



BECOME A VOLUNTEER

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

GIVE AT CHECKOUT

Set Liberation Programs as your favorite charity in [PayPal](#) and choose to donate \$1 when you checkout with PayPal.

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

Acknowledgements

Donors Making Monetary Contributions from July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

CHAMPION: \$25,000 and up

City of Stamford OPM
Ernie Steiner
Greenwich United Way
Town of Greenwich

BENEFACTOR: \$10,000 - \$24,999

Ali and Doug Milne
Atlantic Diagnostic Laboratories LLC
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Mort Lowenthal
New Canaan Community Foundation
Sally and John Bassler
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The Community Fund of Darien
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ADVOCATE: \$5,000 - \$9,999

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Yale New Haven Health

SUPPORTER: \$1,000 - \$2,499

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Southwest Community Health Center
United Way Suncoast
William Platt

We regret any errors in this listing. Please contact us if any error is noted.

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Amy Elrod

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Andrew Gold
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LIBERATION PROGRAMS

339 West Avenue

Bridgeport, CT 06604

www.liberationprograms.org

info@liberationprograms.org

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