

VAADAC VIEWS

Virginia Association of Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Counselors,
an affiliate of NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals

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Advertising:

VAADAC VIEWS does accept advertising for publications, treatment centers, clinics, and job postings. Contact us if you are interested in advertising.

A Story of Recovery

Alexandria R. Smith: My story of recovery through the Drug Court Program

My name is Alexandria R. Smith, and I am a Newport News Drug Court Participant in Newport News Virginia. I've enclosed these photos to give you a general idea of the road that has led me where I am today.

I came from a highly dysfunctional family. The first time I used drugs was in fifth grade, and this was with my parents. I smoked marijuana all through school as well as experimenting with pills, alcohol, and LSD. I not only graduated High School in 1992, but I also graduated to cocaine as well. This was the beginning of my downward spiral and my criminal lifestyle.

By 1998 I was totally out of control and already had a criminal record. I went homeless and literally lived on an animal level in the streets. My revolving door in and out of jail had already begun. In September of 2000 I turned myself in for possession of



cocaine and a violation of probation, and was sentenced to 4 years in Fluvanna Maximum Security for women Prison. To my dismay I found out I was pregnant in jail and ended up giving birth to my only child while in prison. I was forced to watch her grow up in visitation due to my addiction and detrimental decisions. Unfortunately after my release I still had no idea how to live in society without the use of Drugs, and so my cycle began to repeat itself.

In the end .. I have spent almost the last 7 1/2 - 8 years incarcerated ... Until I entered Drug Court!

Today I own my own home; I'm in school full time at ECPI (College of Technology) pursuing my Bachelor's of Science Degree in Business Administration. My family and I have made amends, I have an awesome recovery support network and foundation ... but most importantly I am now a full time Mom and positive role model for my daughter Quannese. Together we are breaking the cycle of addiction in our family. I owe all of this to Drug Court, and a loving and merciful Higher Power.

So this is my message of HOPE to all those sick & suffering addicts out there. We Do Recover!!!

Recovery through Drug Court Participation

Newport News Drug Court Graduates Celebrate

On June 12th the graduates along with the program staff took a lunch cruise on the Spirit of Norfolk. There were eleven drug court participants that graduated. The cruise included delicious lunch and live entertainment. Upon return the graduates were given gifts of complete computers donated by the Hampton Newport News CSB.

Around the State Celebrations of National Recovery Month

September was National Recovery Month. This year's theme was "Join the Voices for Recovery: Together We Learn, Together We Heal".

VAADAC sponsored recovery events around our state.

Southeastern Region

September 14, 2009

A Recovery Forum took place at Downing Gross Cultural Center in Newport News. Virginia members of the recovery community participated in a panel discussion of specific recovery issues. The panel was narrated by John Haywood. Approximately 70 people attended the event which was open to the public. Sponsored by the Southeastern Region VAADAC.

September 16, 2009

Hampton University Recovery Month included presentations about street drugs, addictive behaviors, prescription medication as well as individual testimonies. Attendance was estimated to be 130 at this event, which was co-sponsored by the Southeastern Region VAADAC and the Hampton University Graduate Program in Counseling.

It took place at the Hampton University Ballroom. The event was open to college students and community substance abuse programs.

September 26, 2009.

Around 110 members of the community attended Recovery Fest 2009, at the Sandy Bottom Nature Park. The event included a picnic, speakers, and fellowship. Members of the Faith Based Community were represented. Recovery Fest 2009 was jointly sponsored by SAARA, Hampton Newport News CSB, Project Link, and the Southeastern Region of VAADAC.

September 28-29, 2009

The Virginia Drug Court Conference, a two day training covered information on drug courts, grief, addiction casemanagement and sanctions. It took place at the Williamsburg Marriott. Attendance was around 265. The South Eastern Region of VAADAC had a display table at the event featuring membership information.

Southwestern Region

Martinsville's first Recovery Month event on Saturday September 19 was enjoyed by all who attended and participated. Jointly sponsored by VAADAC, the Martinsville-Henry County Drug Task Force and local consumer run organization.

WeCare this year's event was held at J Frank Wilson Park and free to the approximately 70 whom attended.

Locally known DJ Jeff had people dancing in the pavilion as people shared covered dishes they brought to go along with the drinks, hot dogs and hamburgers provided.

Drug Task Force chair Valerie Blevins spoke about the reason for Recovery Month and briefly about each organization to open the day.

And throughout the afternoon she and Ron Mills of VAADAC gave door prizes of t-shirts and gift cards.

During the event people had the opportunity to write anonymously how long they had been in recovery-ranging from three people with four days up to one person with 35 years - with a total of 235 years 6 months and 24 days!

VAADAC and the DTF and Piedmont Community Services also had magazines, pamphlets and other information about their services and organizations on display. By the end of the afternoon people were already volunteering to help next year.

Central Region

September 12, 2009

The 2009 McShin Foundation RecoveryFest was held in Glenn Allen on the grounds of Mount Vernon Baptist Church. The event was open to the community, featured barbecue tastings, and outstanding entertainment including live music by Peter Tork (formerly of the Monkees), Shoe Suede Blues, Jonny Change and Homeward Bound.

Those working the addictions field, those in recovery, and the general public stopped by the VAADAC display.

A crowd estimated at 5000 attended this event. The event was sponsored by McShin Foundation, Substance Abuse & Addiction Recovery Alliance of Va. (SAARA), Celebrate Recovery (Mount Vernon Baptist Church), and VAADAC.

September 19, 2009



A Walk for Recovery was jointly sponsored by Augusta Health, Valley Community Services Board, Mental Health America of Augusta a United Way Agency, NAADAC, SAMSHA, the Central Region of VAADAC and Shenandoah Valley Teen Challenge.

Approximately 50 individuals attended the free event held in Fishersville at Augusta Health.

VAADAC Call for Award Nominations

Nominations for VAADAC's 2010 Awards can be made by any member of VAADAC by submitting a nomination letter to Jennifer Johnson, Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee. Letters may be sent via snail mail to: Jennifer Johnson, RMH-Life Recovery Program, 235 Cantrell Ave, Harrisonburg, Va 22801 or via e-mail to: jjohnson@rhcc.com

Consider nominating someone for any of these awards:

Counselor of the Year: An active VAADAC member for the past year who is not a Board member, who has made outstanding contributions to the treatment and recovery of clients, has exceptional dedication to the field, and a high level of professionalism.

Distinguished Service Award. A person or organization distinguished by outstanding contributions in the field of addiction and recovery (award limited to one per year). Current members of the Association Board are not eligible for nomination.

Citizen of the Year Award. A person who has made significant contribution to the field of addiction and is not employed in addiction counseling.

Walter Kloetzli Award. This award is in honor of Walter Kloetzli, a long time VAADAC member and past President of VAADAC, who has spent the better part of three decades advocating on behalf of addiction professionals and those in their care. His relentless pursuit of appropriate support and recognition for substance abuse professionals has been unmatched and integral to the growth and development of VAADAC and the profession. The recipient of this award will be VAADAC member who has served at the chapter, regional or state board level and who has demonstrated extraordinary dedication in advocating for the addiction profession and VAADAC. -

--- Article written by a VAADAC member

Reminders

Submitting Articles

If you would like to submit a newspaper article or an article that you have written yourself such as articles on current topics of interest, trends in counseling, or book reviews to VAADAC VIEWS for publication, contact VAADACcentral@embarqmail.com

By-Lines

If you wish a by-line, please submit the article title along with your name.

Change in Your E-Mail Address

Please write Donna Croy, Director of Membership Services, at dcroy@naadac.org to update your address with NAADAC as well as VAADAC. (VAADAC will receive your address with the next NAADAC update.)

Upcoming Events

December 1, 2009

Deadline: Submission to VAADAC VIEWS (Winter Edition)

March 26, 2010

Annual Member's Meeting

Training:
To be determined

Hours of Education:
To Be Determined

Schedule:
Registration on site:
8:30-9:00 AM

Event:
(Presentation, Lunch, Awards)
9:00 AM – About 3- 4 PM
End Time to Be Determined

Cost:
Free to individual members

Location:
Marriott
50 Kingsmill Rd
Williamsburg, Va
1-757-220-2500

VAADAC 2009 Sustaining Members

Alliance for the Prevention and Treatment of Nicotine Addiction

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VAADAC 2009 Sustaining Members

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The Farley Center at Williamsburg Place

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