

THE R.O.S.S. REVIEW

An inside look at our Recovery Community Organization

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A Word From The Editor

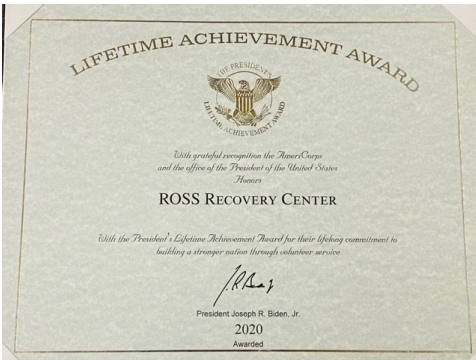
Welcome to the very first edition of our Bi-Monthly Newsletter the R.O.S.S. Review! The Recovery Organization of Support Specialist has grown in operations since we started our Recovery Community Organization. The following publication is an inside look of the work we are doing to reach the people who fall through the cracks. R.O.S.S. is excited to announce that we will be opening three new Recovery Community Centers in Gadsden, Tuscaloosa and Huntsville! Join us as we continue to love people to a better life!

Mark Litvine Director of Marketing

Special Recognition

President Joe Biden awarded R.O.S.S. the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award in 2021 in recognition of our service of 4,000 hours to the United States Of America and delivering solutions to the problems we face with substance use disorder in our country. Our 24/7 Helpline was of much needed support to someone in need and thought we should be recognized for the peer support work we do. R.O.S.S. is honored to have this recognition from our President Of The United States.

Our Montgomery Agency Coordinator, Lorraine Smith, & Marshall County Agency Coordinator, Michael Baker, represented R.O.S.S. at the Recovery Month proclamation signing by Governor Kay Ivey. R.O.S.S. was recognized in Governor Ivey's Recovery Month Proclamation as an Alabama partner advancing the role of recovery support. Recovery is for Everyone; Every Person; Every Family; Every Community!



R.O.S.S. 5 Year Anniversary

On July 24th 2017 we opened our first Recovery Community Center in Birmingham. Today we have three Recovery Community Center campuses; R.O.S.S. Birmingham, Montgomery and Marshall County. As R.O.S.S. recently celebrated 5 years, Christine Smith Wright our Agency Administrator, reported that we used to average 25 people a month at our first Recovery Community Center. Today we average 3,100 people a month at R.O.S.S. Birmingham. Our statewide 24/7 Helpline at 844-307-1760 averages 1,200 calls a month.

RLS Summit

R.O.S.S. attended the Recovery Leadership Summit in Saint Paul, Minnesota at the beginning of October. Since 2017 R.O.S.S. has been a member of ARCO the (Association of Recovery Community Organizations) under Faces & Voices of Recovery.



Pictured are our amazing R.O.S.S. Employees at the 2022 Alabama Peer Conference this past April!

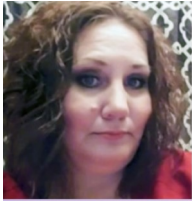


We Adopted A School

In February R.O.S.S. adopted the Miracle Academy to give back to our community! We fixed up the classrooms, provided new equipment and donated laptops to these amazing students! Miracle Academy is a Christian Academy providing quality education to a diverse community of students, including students with special needs, while teaching students according to their individual learning style.

Recovery Month

R.O.S.S.'s very own Dena Boling was featured in the Alabama Department of Mental Health newsletter for Dena's Recovery Story for Recovery Month!



Every September, National Recovery Month is celebrated to encourage and support individuals in recovery and service providers. The goal of National Recovery Month is to educate people about substance use disorders and other co-occurring diseases, as well as the effectiveness of treatment and recovery programs and the fact that recovery is possible. Learn more about the month [here](#). Please pass along information of treatment and recovery throughout the month and beyond; and share stories of success from our partners and individuals served at ADMH providers.

DENA

A PERSONAL STORY OF RECOVERY

"I was born on April 24, 1974, to a 15-year-old mom and a 17-year-old dad. My mom was drunk and on LD on the night I was born. She was incredibly young and from a violent upbringing herself. I do not blame my parents for my problems. I blame the disease of addiction.

By 13, I had started experimenting with drugs and marijuana. I was drinking at 15, pregnant at 18, and it was a downward spiral from there. I was working and clubbing on the weekends and partying at night. It was normal to go to work hungover and to take some diet pills to get through work to get to another party. That went on for a few years.

I lost my son to my parents, so I felt I had no responsibilities. I lived with my grandmother and did not help with the bills. I was entitled and selfish. At 20, I met my first husband. I started doing cocaine with him. I started working in clubs because he wanted me to dance so he could party for free. I did. I stayed with him until 24. He ran me over and broke my foot so badly that it had to be completely reconstructed. Here comes the devil of addiction, OPiates. Up until this point, I partied, I worked, I functioned.

While my mom was living a life of alcoholism with a man, who had cheated on her and contracted HIV and did not tell my mom he was positive, I was developing my own misery by taking pain pills, losing both my daytime job and nighttime job. After my mom found out her husband is HIV positive and had been for six months, while giving it to her without her knowledge, she shot and killed him. Nine months later, my mom committed suicide.

I was addicted to opiates at this point. I went from pain pills to intravenous oxycodone and then heroin. I was in and out of prison and jail. During moments of sobriety, I had my second child. I did get sober a few times, but I could never stay that way.

My lifeline was God and Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT). MAT has saved my life. God knew that I needed medicine. I prayed so many times for him to help me and deliver me! I was angry at myself, at him, at my childhood! But little did I know that he had this plan for my life. I remember when Pamela Butler called me about a job with R.O.S.S. I felt humbled and undeserving. I thought, "This woman does not know I am this ex-V-user and a felon. A three-time mother with 23 years' experience in the field."

But she did, and she was giving me, ME, a chance to help others get where I am. I took the job at R.O.S.S. and have helped others find their pathway to recovery. I am grateful for my life today. I am grateful for so many people I would be afraid to start naming them for fear of forgetting someone. I am thankful for opioid treatment programs.

If you have the disease of addiction, please call our R.O.S.S. at 1-844-307-1760. If you are not sure if you do and need someone to talk to, call! We want to help you help yourself. Love you to a better life."

- On Saturday September 3rd, R.O.S.S. Marshall County with the Marshall County Recovery Alliance held our Recovery On The Mountain event. We had around 1,200 attend the event at the Marshall County fairgrounds! Pamela Butler, a Trailblazer of Peer Support Services in Alabama, was one of our guest speakers!
- On Saturday September 10th, R.O.S.S. and our "Birmingham Loves Recovery Month" partners held a Rally For Recovery in Birmingham at UAB Mini Park! We had hundreds of people attend & read at the event was a Recovery Month Proclamation signed by Birmingham Mayor Randall Woodfin! The Jefferson County Department of Health provided FREE Naloxone and our Jefferson County Drug Court Judge, Maria Fortune, was our guest speaker!
- R.O.S.S. Montgomery held our Multiple Pathways Of Recovery Speaker Rally on Saturday September 18th to recognize all Pathways of Recovery!
- R.O.S.S. and the City of Huntsville held our Breaking Down Barriers Event on Saturday September 24th at Max Luther Recreation Center! There was FREE Naloxone, HIV/Hep C. Testing, Assessments, Public Transportation, Showers, Food, Haircuts, Clothing, Resources, Recovery Speakers and Live Music!
- On Thursday September 29th R.O.S.S. Birmingham held our first ever Recovery Art Show. One Artist in Recovery traveled all the way from Bartlett, Tennessee to display their Art.

Program Updates

R.O.S.S. is opening another Recovery Community Center! Etowah County Here We Come! Coming Soon, we will open our newest center. Our new location is at 1135 West Meighan Blvd. Gadsden, Alabama. Dena Boling, CRSS, will be the Agency Coordinator of the Gadsden center. Dena's email address is dboling@ross4u.org. Contact Dena with questions, job opportunities, scheduling a support group or volunteering. We are excited to bring R.O.S.S.'s inspiration and resources to your doorsteps.

Our R.O.S.S. Montgomery Recovery Community Center has moved to a larger location at 2100 Mt. Meigs Rd. Montgomery, Alabama! We invited our community network partners to join us for our Open House which we held on Friday September 2nd! R.O.S.S. Montgomery started a new support group in effort to stop the stigma associated with Medication - Assisted Recovery, the MAR Support Group. We held a Luncheon for our Homeless Community on Monday October 24th. We were able to hire one of our interns from our Recovery Community Services Program, she is now a full-time staff member. We wanted to look back a year ago at the number of individuals we have had the pleasure of supporting in our community.

- A) In June of 2021 we served 995 individuals.
- B) In July of 2021 we were able to serve 979 individuals.
- C) In June of 2022 we served 1111 individuals.
- D) In July of 2022 we served 976 individuals.

Since last year our R.O.S.S. 24/7 Helpline calls have increased to 225 calls per week from 130 calls per week on average on our day shift, Stephanie Hudson, our Helpline Supervisor, reports. The numbers for our evening and overnight shifts have doubled. We are aware that due to the hard work of our Outreach team, marketing and other various team members, this has created an increase in our call volume. Stephanie has been working on ways to improve the caller's experience and making sure they are treated with kindness and respect. Stephanie is helping our team to improve by implementing training based on their individual needs. By doing this, our callers can feel confident in knowing they are received by a professional. This, in time, will increase our volume & make a difference and thus require more employment & increase new opportunities.

Employee Sobriety Birthdays

Stephan Burton 9 Yrs, Cynthia Kee 32 Yrs, Shirley Jones 21 Yrs, Pam Williams 19 Yrs, Stephanie Hudson 16 Yrs, George Williams 9 Yrs, Jessica Evans 8 Yrs, Lisa Weber 5 Yrs, Brandon Creamer 4 Yrs, Dana Vernon 3 Yrs, Stan Whitfield 3 Yrs, Mark Sims 2 Yrs, Celia Stuckey 2 Yrs, Mary Shores 18 Yrs, Belinda Arrington 19 Yrs

Visit us at ross4u.org, rosshelpline4u.org & ace.ross4u.org

It's Almost Halloween!

- There were many more amazing Recovery Month events that our incredible Outreach Specialists hosted across Alabama starting in August and lasting through out the month of September! Thank you all for all that you do!
- R.O.S.S. Birmingham Trunk Or Treat is Saturday October 29th from 6:30pm to 9pm at 3616 5th Avenue S. in Avondale!
- R.O.S.S. Montgomery Trunk Or Treat is Saturday October 29th from 5pm to 8pm at 2100 Mt Meigs Rd!
- R.O.S.S. Marshall County Trunk Or Treat is Saturday October 29th from 5pm to 8pm at 1280 US Hwy 431 in Boaz!

Our R.O.S.S. Marshall County Recovery Community Center has gained so much support from our Marshall County community! We sponsored a Donation Drive to collect school supplies for our community on June 15th. All of us wanted to help our kids with needed supplies for the new school year. We held a Community Cookout on June 20th celebrating Juneteenth, to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved people in the United States. We incorporated this event into our weekly Anger Management classes and our Narcotics Anonymous meetings. New Groups include the following: Wednesday's at 6pm: Veterans Support Group, Saturday 's at 2pm: Medication - Assisted Recovery (MAR), Saturday's at 10am: Spanish/ English Class (Beginning November 5th)

Annual Visitor Totals:

September 2021 = 1,415

September 2022 = 1,720