

THE R.O.S.S. REVIEW

R.O.S.S.

An inside look at our Recovery Community Organization

In this issue:

- Word from the Editor
- A Chance Encounter
- Nothing Short Of A Miracle
- We Are Family
- Gas Station Pump Campaign
- RCC/ Helpline Updates
- Become An Intern!

A Word From The Editor

Welcome to the second Holiday edition of our Bi-Monthly Newsletter the R.O.S.S. Review! This December's Newsletter theme is Hope for the Holiday's. Hope is the most important affirmation our R.O.S.S. peer specialists give to the people we serve. We wanted to showcase the Hope we provide everyday through personal stories, a highlight of some of our programs and more! Enjoy and Happy Holiday's from all of us at R.O.S.S.

- Mark Litvine Director of Marketing

A Chance Encounter

The Recovery Organization of Support Specialist has been a huge plus in my life. Being a person who has struggled for many years & needing so many different things, R.O.S.S. has helped me arrange things in order to make my life doable. Without the help of my R.O.S.S. Outreach worker Sharon Anderson I do not think I would have ever begun my recovery journey. On the streets of Tuscaloosa, feeling lost and alone, is where my Outreach worker Sharon found me.

It was almost like a dream. I know it was an act of a Greater Power. When I called Sharon, she asked me where I was. Unbelievably, Sharon was driving down the road that I was about to cross! There I met the woman, the Certified Recovery Support Specialist who would later become a huge part of my story. Sharon never abandoned me and for that I will be forever grateful. Sharon was very knowledgeable of the ways of peer support and guided me in such a comforting & understanding way.

After learning more about the Certified Recovery Support Specialist certification and what it stands for, I became interested in becoming a part of an Organization of people who had traveled similar paths. These individuals went on to become productive members of society. Today it warms my heart to know that I too can reach out and touch the lives of so many people who still struggle with a substance use disorder. Much thanks to all my R.O.S.S. family.

- Peggy Hudson CRSS

Nothing Short Of A Miracle

I started using substances at 18 years old due to a medical condition that caused a doctor to prescribe me pain pills for a solid year. By the time I was 19 I had a full blown addiction that would end up taking me places I never imagined or would wish upon my worst enemy. The next 20 years would be filled with institutions, prisons, and despair. When I was 39 Years old, I had three kids having just given birth to my last one right after getting out of jail. I had finally EOS (ended my last sentence.) The state was wanting my rights to all 3 kids and I had nothing but this addiction that kept screaming my name. I was tired, scared and I wanted my babies. I could not hardly breathe without them.

Finally, I was able to get into the Birmingham Fellowship House where I stayed 90 days. This is where I met Mark Litvine who introduced me to the R.O.S.S. Program. All I knew is that I wanted what Mark had and I wanted to be that for other people! When I left Treatment, I went back to North Alabama. I got my mom, packed up everything mom owned & what little I had and moved back to Birmingham. We stayed in hotels, and I worked day labor jobs until we were able to move into a family members house. The way God showed up in my life is nothing short of a miracle without Him leading my way there is no way I would be sitting here today!

I joined R.O.S.S. as an intern in the Recovery Community Services Program & started doing my classes all while doing what the courts wanted of me. Because of me going to treatment I was able to stop the termination of my rights! I gained custody of all three of my kids with the case completely closed! (Continued at top of page)

(Continued from bottom of page) I continued with R.O.S.S. as a paid intern. I gained my Certified Recovery Support Specialist Certification and was hired on full time with the R.O.S.S. 24/7 Helpline call center! I also now work as a Peer Specialist at the Aletheia House! It amazes me when I think of where I come from. Life hasn't been easy sometimes & can be a struggle but at the end of each day I can kiss my kid's goodnight. It makes everything I've been through worth it!

- Dana Vernon CRSS

We Are Family

My name is Emily Jacobs and I have been at R.O.S.S. for 2 years now! I started out as an administrative assistant, and while I still do some of those duties, I have in the last year started doing more data entry and report writing. I absolutely love working here at R.O.S.S. and every single person that I work with. I am actually a Recovery Ally, meaning I am not in Recovery myself, and I am one of the few people that work here who is not. When I first started here, I was nervous about being seen as an outsider, but everyone has welcomed me in with open arms and I truly feel like I've become part of the family.

While I do not face a substance use disorder myself, I have spent a lot of time around close family members who did. It shaped my thoughts and opinions surrounding a SUD heavily and it wasn't until I got to R.O.S.S. and met all these remarkable people that my opinions began to shift. People in Recovery amaze me every single day. They are a group of people that I admire and honestly, strive to be more like. Every day they choose to wake up and fight a disease they cannot control. Every day they wake up and decide to face the day head on instead of taking the path they walked before. Every day the people in Recovery here at R.O.S.S. choose to help someone else that is walking that same path currently. It's truly incredible and I am so proud to be such a small part of this extraordinary organization.

I think my favorite part about working here at R.O.S.S. is the community and the sense of belonging that comes with it. As I mentioned earlier, we are a family at R.O.S.S., but not only that- every person in Recovery (and even those who aren't yet) that walks through our doors is shown love and compassion. Everyone here believes you can always choose to be better than you were the day before, and that is something I hope to be able to emulate one day. To say the people at R.O.S.S. have become my family would be an understatement. They accept me for exactly who I am and push me to be my best self every day. I love this place and each one of you so much and I am so thankful for all of you!

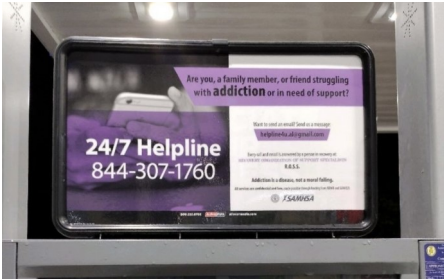
- Emily Jacobs M.P.A. Criminal Justice Services & Outreach Administrative Assistant

Gas Station Pump Campaign

For the past 2 Years R.O.S.S. has collaborated with All Over Media. Our R.O.S.S. 24/7 Helpline Advertisements have been featured on Gas Station pumps across Alabama so that we can reach the people who fall through the cracks.

The campaign started in September 2022 and will last until March 2023 in 29 Alabama Counties. Next time you fill up at the pump you may just see our 844-307-1760 Helpline number. All calls are confidential and you are always talking to a Certified Recovery Support Specialist.

Call the Helpline today if you, a family member or friend is struggling with a substance use disorder. The Helpline will help you to navigate the substance use disorder system of care in Alabama. All services are free of charge.



RCC/Helpline Updates

Our R.O.S.S. Birmingham Recovery Community Center at 3616 5th Ave S. in Avondale will be collaborating with Assurance Wireless in the near future to provide our peers with free phones and services. We will be having our Annual Christmas Day Dinner on December 25th for individuals in need of a safe, supportive and fun environment for the Holidays. During this time we will also provide scarves, hats and socks as gifts for the people we serve.

Our R.O.S.S. Montgomery Recovery Community Center at 2100 Mt. Meigs Rd. held a Soup For The Soul Luncheon on Monday November 28th. We had over 60 individuals stop by and enjoy a hot bowl of soup. On Monday December 19th we will be having our Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest. Coming Soon in January 2023 R.O.S.S. Montgomery will be collaborating with the City of Montgomery's Office of Violence Prevention to host a Stop The Violence Community Cookout for our Montgomery community. We are excited to collaborate with our City so that we can love people to a better life.

Our R.O.S.S. Marshall County Recovery Community Center at 1280 U.S. Hwy 431 in Boaz is having Christmas at R.O.S.S. on Saturday December 17th and Santa will be there for the kids. R.O.S.S. Marshall County welcomes our collaboration with Thrive Alabama and we will start having free HIV/Hepatitis C. testing at the Recovery Community Center which started on Monday December 12th.

Our Birmingham, Montgomery and Marshall County campuses are once again collaborating with the League of Women Voters and we will be having another Voter Registration Day on Tuesday January 10th 2023 from 12pm to 3pm. There will be Advocates present at each location to help individuals get their voting rights back.

Our total number of R.O.S.S. Statewide 24/7 Helpline calls for the month of November 2022 was 789 calls.

Employee Sobriety Birthdays

George Williams 12 Years , Tammy Curry 11 Years

Stephanie Richardson 28 Years , Theodis Christian 27 Years

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

Become An Intern!

RCSP? Recovery Community Services Program? Originally this is what I thought when I entered R.O.S.S. to volunteer. After being informed of what the program was it was easy to join & begin training to help others with their own recovery. The openness of the approach to recovery within the program is more than beneficial to everyone at any stage of recovery. Also, offering additional support groups, alcohol and drug free activities, and Peer/Recovery mentors for One-On-One counseling was an approach that was refreshing and new. With the focus placed on the individual, their recovery time, background & beliefs. This means there is a better chance of success.

Within the 4 Phases there is so much room for growth. Starting with Phase 1 you can assess who you are and what you need to work on to maintain recovery. Each Phase prepares you for the next with emphasis on growth and maintaining the Peers best chance at continued recovery. All the possibilities of a life after addiction during recovery are represented. Including the following; support groups, educational classes, and workforce development which expands the Peers world of recovery. Providing all of these services at one location is a wonderful asset to the community of recovery as a whole. Not only do the Peers benefit but also the Peer Mentors benefit as well.

Along with all the services provided the program prepares you with the training to become a Certified Recovery Support Specialist certified by the Alabama Department Of Mental Health. With this Certification a Peer can provide the education they received to others. A Peer in the program can choose from training in the Helpline Call Center to shadowing as an Outreach Specialist. There are other training opportunities as well which prepares the Peer with the abilities to not only be hired by R.O.S.S. but also hold other positions in the community. Holding this high standard only helps to advance R.O.S.S., the community, and the individuals we serve through all aspects of Recovery. During my time in this program I have furthered my recovery. I have learned & grown. I wish to continue on my path of recovery to provide Hope and be an example of what can be accomplished by the Recovery Community Service Program. RCSP!

- Jennifer McDowell CRSS/RCSP Facilitator

For more information on our Recovery Community Services Program call our 24/7 Helpline at 844-307-1760



Pictured is our amazing RCSP Team from left to right—Samantha Houston, Jennifer McDowell, Nikisha Morris and Stephanie Richardson. Stephanie is also an RCSP Outreach Specialist.