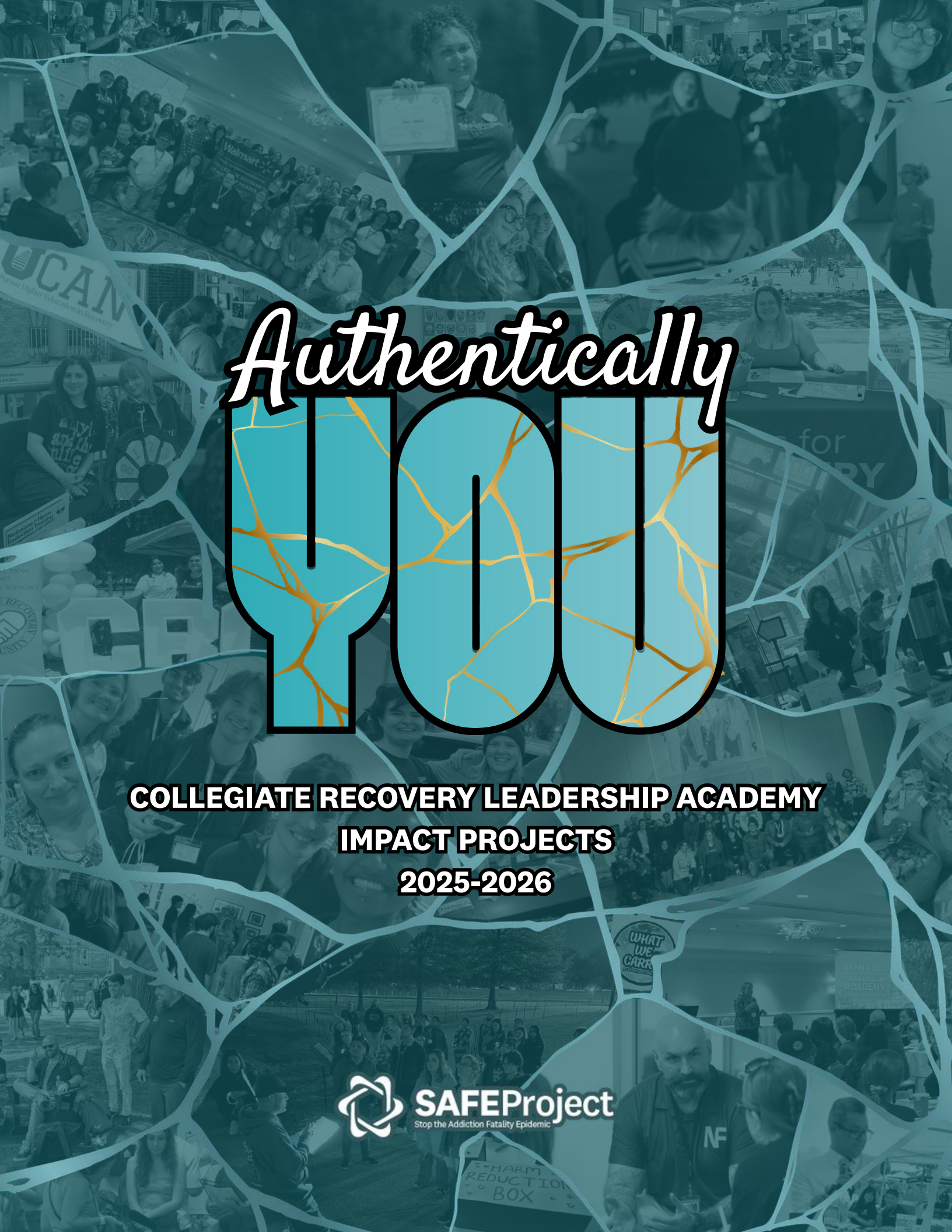




Authentically **YOU**

**COLLEGIATE RECOVERY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
IMPACT PROJECTS
2025-2026**



In Memory of Jonathan Winnefeld

and the Collegiate Recovery Leadership Academy alums we have lost:

Austin Plagge

Jesse Harvey

Shauntelle Hammonds

Susan Clifton

Introduction

The Collegiate Recovery Leadership Academy (CRLA) is an academic-year-long fellowship for students who are passionate about the intersections of collegiate recovery, harm reduction, prevention, leadership, and advocacy. Throughout the year, CRLA Fellows and Working Group Leaders (WGLs) designed and implemented Impact Projects on their campuses, centering prevention, harm reduction, or recovery. Additionally, they participated in trainings focused on leadership and recovery-supportive practices, attended two in-person events, and connected monthly with a supportive cohort of peers and mentors from around the country. At its core, the CRLA seeks to develop student leaders as they create meaningful and lasting change in the lives of those in their communities.

This booklet reflects the dedication, passion, and hard work of the 2025-2026 cohort of CRLA Fellows and WGLs. Collectively, Fellows and WGLs worked to establish or expand collegiate recovery initiatives, host allyship and educational trainings, distribute harm reduction and overdose prevention supplies, raise awareness and combat stigma, lead artistic recovery support activities, influence campus policy or structural change, conduct research, and secure dedicated space for students in recovery to gather. Projects impacted college students, campus faculty and staff, local communities, and recovery organizations.

Together, Fellows and WGLs worked across 30 campuses, reaching more than 4,250 individuals throughout the United States. They secured over \$17,750 in outside funding to support the sustainability of their initiatives, distributed 2,005 doses of naloxone (Narcan) and 1,206 fentanyl test strips, and expanded their collegiate recovery communities and programs by over 171 students. Yet these numbers only tell part of the story. Throughout the program, Fellows and WGLs navigated challenges, adapted to changing campus climates, built relationships, and made space for connection and support within their communities. While many projects have tangible outcomes, they don't always go as planned, which is why success, in our minds, is not defined by metrics alone. For some participants, the most meaningful impacts were personal and professional growth that came from developing leadership skills, navigating challenges and setbacks, and gaining a deeper understanding of themselves and their communities in the process. Those experiences are every bit as valuable as the measurable outcomes listed above.

The Collegiate Recovery Leadership Academy is no small task and would not be possible without the help of our generous team. A very special thank you to:

- Working Group Leaders: Bryce Dye, Harley Bonner, John Simpson, Joel Tutwiler, Sarah Lotsoff, and Sarah Smith
- Mentors: Allison Smith, Eric Bailly, Keith Murphy, and Shelly Weizman
- CRLA Program Assistant: Zev Keppelman
- SAFE Campuses Team: Victoria “Vic” Menz, Nicole Benigno, Dylan Dunn, and Sydney Cheifetz

This year's CRLA theme, “Authentically You”, asked participants to integrate who they are, what they value, and how they lead throughout their fellowship experience. The projects in this booklet are indicative of the diverse experiences, interests, and approaches of this year's cohort. While each project is unique, together they demonstrate the countless ways students can create positive change on their campuses and in their communities.

A message from Victoria “Vic” Menz

Assistant Director of SAFE Campuses and CRLA program director:

To this year’s CRLA Fellows and WGLs,

As I reflect on this past year, I keep coming back to the idea of resilience. Almost every project in this booklet faced a setback, unexpected obstacle, or change in direction somewhere along the way. I’ve appreciated the chance to witness you troubleshoot, adapt, and persevere even when things didn’t go according to plan. The projects in this booklet illustrate your leadership and commitment to positive change; they also demonstrate your creativity, flexibility, tenacity, and authenticity. Regardless of whether your project went to plan or came to fruition, each and every one of you made an impact and created change. You all showed what growth looks like in all its forms.

This was my first year leading the CRLA, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to have spent it connecting with all of you. As a person in recovery who returned to college through a collegiate recovery program, I know how important it can be to have people who believe in you, challenge you, and remind you that you are capable of more than you think. I saw that happening throughout the cohort this year, whether through casual conversations, mentor relationships, or GroupMe messages.

Thank you for all of your work throughout the fellowship. It was truly inspiring to see what you contributed to your campuses, how you supported each other, and how you grew individually along the way. I hope you take a moment to recognize and be proud of how much you accomplished—I know I am.

With gratitude,
Vic

“The miracle is this: the more we share, the more we have.” –Leonard Nimoy

Collegiate Recovery Leadership Academy Timeline

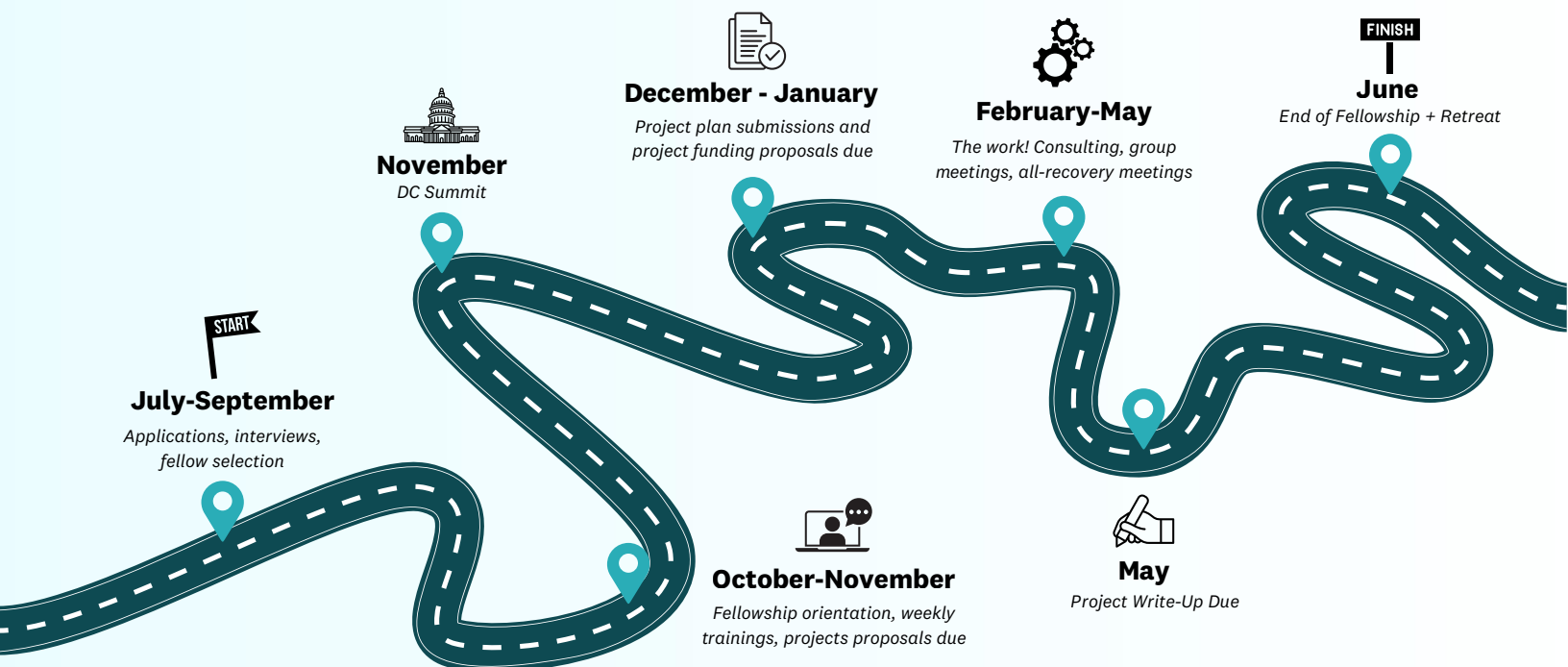


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2025-2026 Working Group Leaders

CRLA Working Group Leaders (WGLs) serve as peer leaders and mentors throughout the academic year, supporting Fellows while honing their own leadership development. Each WGL is an alumnus of the CRLA and draws on their previous experience to guide Fellows navigating the program for the first time. This year, in addition to leading others, WGLs designed and implemented their own Impact Projects focused on recovery, prevention, or harm reduction. Since some WGLs have graduated and are no longer affiliated with their respective campuses, they had the opportunity to focus their projects on either a community or a campus initiative. Their projects reflect the ability to balance support of others and commitment to fostering positive change within and beyond the collegiate community.



Bryce Dye

he, him



Harley Bonner

she, her



John Simpson

he, him



Joel Tutwiler

he, him



Sarah Lotsoff

she, her



Sarah Smith

she, her



Expanding and Measuring the Impact of Harm Reduction Efforts in San Antonio

Bryce Dye

"All that matters in life is that which we do for each other." - William Beall

Impact Project Goals:

- Create a protocol to assess changes in stigma towards people who use drugs over time
- Measure the impact of volunteering at a syringe exchange in service of those who use drugs on volunteer stigma
- Expand access to naloxone at Trinity University by identifying and challenging current barriers

Challenges Along the Way:

A large aspect of my project was a research project that relied on participants to complete multiple surveys. In order for these surveys to be useful, participants had to complete a unique ID code so that the surveys could be paired while their identity remained anonymous. This was an unexpected challenge and led to many surveys being thrown out as they could not be paired through unique ID codes. However, even with this inconvenience we were still able to have enough responses to have statistically meaningful data.

As for the second focus of my work, this was aimed at expanding access to and the distribution of naloxone at Trinity. The greatest challenge I experienced in this work was waiting. Every idea and proposal had to be evaluated at multiple levels of administrators which took lots of time and planning.

Measurements of Success:

For the research project, the only controllable measure of success was the number of participants in the study. We had aimed to have a total of 60 people with 30 participants in the control group and 30 in the volunteer group. Ultimately, we had 62 people matriculate into paired pre- and post- study data with 42 in the control group and 20 in the volunteer group. As far as the data that we collected, we used a modified version of the OM-PATOS scale to assess stigma towards people who used drugs in university students. Using this scale, we measured changes in the OM-PATOS scores on two subscales that tested for participant attitudes towards people who use drugs and their motivations/behaviors to help people who use drugs. Significant differences in changes in stigma between the control and volunteer groups were assessed using t-tests. Additionally, linear regressions were used to identify significant relationships between the amount of times participants attended the syringe exchange and their changes in stigma.

For the naloxone expansion project, total numbers of naloxone distributed to students by Trinity University was tracked. Additionally, student attrition rate for students who attend university sponsored overdose prevention and response trainings but do not receive naloxone was tracked as changes were made. These numbers were compared across semesters to identify progress being made as a result of the changes that were instituted.

Overall Project Outcome:

In the syringe exchange research project, we had 62 participants fully complete the project, 42 in the control group and 20 in the volunteer group. When comparing the baseline stigma measurements of either group before interventions, there was no statistical difference in the mean stigma values of the two groups. However, after 3-months the individuals who had volunteered at the syringe exchange exhibited a significantly lower stigma score than those who did not. This large difference was broken up between the

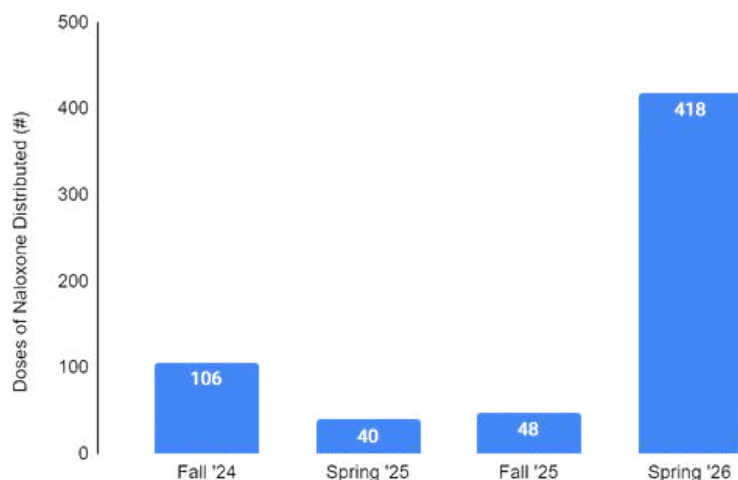
two subscales that comprise the OM-PATOS: attitudes towards people who use drugs and motivations/behaviors to help people who use drugs.

When this was split, it was observed that the change in stigma for those in the volunteer group was driven by changes in the motivations/behaviors to help subscale and not so much the attitudes subscale. This indicates that serving people who use substances is related to improved motivations to continue to support them. When the linear regressions were performed between the number of times participants volunteered and their net change in stigma, it was observed that there was a positive relationship between total times volunteered over three months and a participants net change in stigma. Again, when split between the two subscales this relationship was stronger for the motivations/behaviors to help subscale than for the attitudes subscale.

In the naloxone distribution project, two changes were made to the structure of Trinity University's distribution program to increase its effectiveness. The first change happened in the first semester of this school year to target training attrition. Previously, people who attended the mandatory university overdose prevention and response training to receive naloxone had to then go through a series of steps that could take up to a week before being able to pick up naloxone. Due to this structure, the attrition rate for students who attend trainings and did not receive naloxone was ~84%. To target this, we proposed a modified structure to the required training that would allow students to leave the training with naloxone. This effectively dropped the high attrition rate to 0%. However, even with this drop in attrition in the first semester the total amount of naloxone being distributed was low due to low training attendance. To eliminate the necessity of attending trainings as a potential barrier, we set up the first public naloxone distribution site in this last semester. This was associated with a large increase in naloxone being taken by students. In this last semester, 418 doses of naloxone were given out to students, while only 194 doses had been distributed in the previous three semesters combined. In total, 466 doses of naloxone were given out during this academic year.

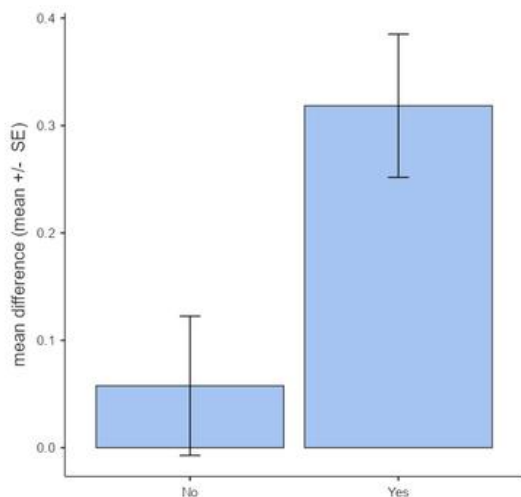
How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

I learned many things during this work. First, this work allowed me to gain exposure to social science research for the first time. This was accompanied with learning many of the skills and techniques that are necessary for this work. Secondly, this helped to identify large barriers to naloxone distribution at Trinity, which was incorporated into my understanding of my role as the Naloxone Distribution and Education Chair at Trinity.



Number of naloxone distributed (left) drastically increased after installation of the public naloxone distribution box (right).





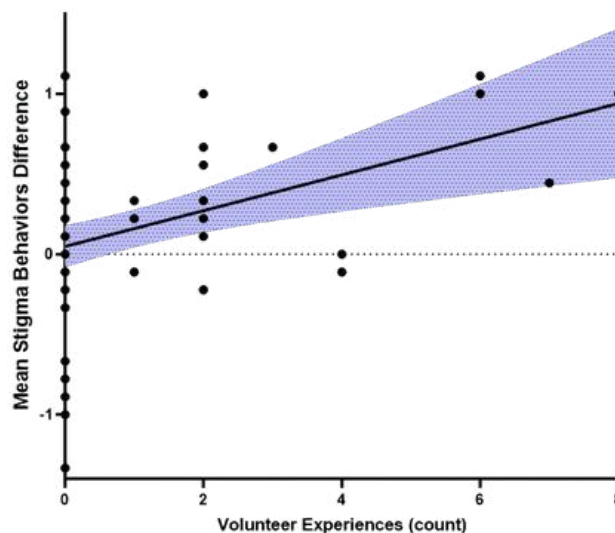
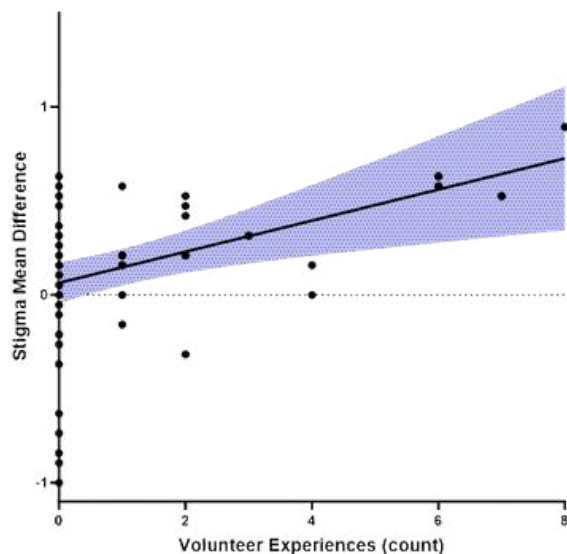
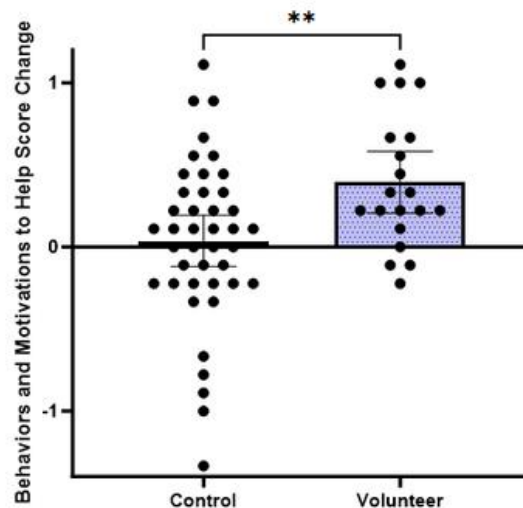
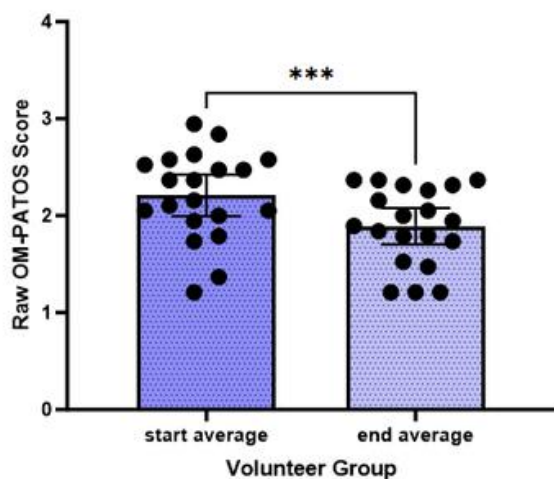
Top Left: After 3 months, volunteers displayed a significant change in total stigma, relative to controls, as measured by OM-PATOS ($p < 0.01$)

Center Left: After 3 months, volunteers experienced a significant reduction in their own stigma towards people who use substances as measured by the OM-PATOS ($p < 0.001$)

Center Right: After 3 months, volunteers displayed a significant improvement in the Behaviors and Motivations to Help People Who Use Substances subscale of the OM-PATOS, relative to controls ($p < 0.01$)

Bottom Left: Over a 3 month period, the number of volunteer experiences was significantly correlated with the net change in total stigma as measured by the OM-PATOS ($p < 0.01$)

Bottom Right: Over a 3 month period, the number of volunteer experiences was significantly correlated with the net change in the Behaviors and Motivations to Help People Who Use Substances subscale of the OM-PATOS ($p < 0.01$)



Recovery Through Community: Increasing Student Engagement at Baylor University

Harley Bonner

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." –Helen Keller

Impact Project Goals:

- Increase Baylor CRC student engagement
- Create opportunities for connection and education
- Expand awareness surrounding recovery experiences
- Reach at least 50 students through programming

Challenges Along the Way:

One of the biggest challenges involved miscommunication during planning and implementation. Due to communication breakdowns, my original vision changed significantly, and portions of the project were redesigned. After addressing concerns with my supervisor, a compromise was reached. I co-led the panel and additionally facilitated a Peer Ally Training that had 30 attendees.

Measurements of Success:

The project exceeded expectations. My goal was to impact 50 students, and approximately 110 students were reached through programming efforts. Peer Ally Training attendance was also the highest participation we had seen for that type of training. Attendance, engagement, and student participation demonstrated project success.

Overall Project Outcome:

This project focused on continuing to increase student engagement at Baylor University's Collegiate Recovery Center (CRC) through Collegiate Recovery Week programming. My original vision was to create a panel featuring people from different walks of recovery to provide students with diverse experiences and perspectives. During implementation, communication challenges shifted the direction of the project toward featuring CRC donors who shared their story after losing their son to an opioid overdose.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?:

Through this project, I learned that miscommunication can happen when it is least expected. While frustrating and different from what I originally envisioned, I learned flexibility, communication, and the importance of advocating professionally for ideas. I also learned that projects can still create meaningful outcomes when plans change. Challenges do not always mean failure—sometimes they lead to growth and positive results.



Collegiate Recovery Week programming event highlighting student engagement and participation at Baylor CRC.

UC Berkeley

Transitional Programming at the University of California-Berkeley Joel Tutwiler

“I recognize that there is garbage in me. I am going to transform this garbage into nourishing compost that can make my love reappear.” –Thích Nhất Hạnh

Impact Project Goals:

- The CRP wanted graduating students to receive additional support in achieving their goals
- Through workshops and one-on-one meetings, we provided students with personalized administrative support and resource navigation related to academic, mental/physical health, and recovery goals
- Ultimately, we hoped to ensure that graduating and continuing students felt they were fully supported by university and community resources as they transitioned out of the university to minimize stress and the risk of relapse

Challenges Along the Way:

The Transitional Programming was designed to provide additional support to CRP members and Recovery Scholars (RS). The Recovery Scholars Program offers a \$500 scholarship to students who attend a required number of meetings and sober social events and complete additional activities that encourage engagement in their recovery. One component of the program is a goal-setting meeting, which is encouraged rather than required, as CRP staff consistently seek to balance support for students' health and wellness without creating additional stress or overwhelm. This balance became a challenge for implementing the Transitional Programming timeline.

To maximize student participation, we extended the Recovery Scholars application deadline by two weeks, ultimately enrolling 23 students in the program. While the increased enrollment was a positive outcome, it required us to adjust our initial implementation plan. We wanted to avoid placing additional obligations on students already completing Recovery Scholars requirements and aimed for students to engage with the workshops out of a desire to strengthen their recovery rather than perceive them as another demand on their schedules. As a result, we modified our approach by holding one workshop while continuing individualized follow-ups with students regarding their goals and organizing monthly attendance at a local Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting near the school.

Although we were unable to maintain the originally planned multi-workshop timeline, we successfully met our primary goals. The workshop itself was well-received, and students responded positively to the additional support. Given its success as a pilot program, the Transitional Programming will continue and be further developed by future CRP staff in the coming academic year.

Measurements of Success & Overall Project Outcome:

The impact of Transitional Programming was measured through both quantitative and qualitative assessment methods. The Program Coordinator distributed an exit survey to Recovery Scholar students that included the BARC-10 to assess recovery capital and gather feedback regarding students' experiences in the Recovery Scholars Program overall. Students who participated in the Transitional Programming workshop also completed an additional exit survey designed to evaluate the specific impact of the programming. Students rated statements on a 1–5 scale, with 5 indicating the most positive response, and were also provided opportunities to give open-ended feedback.

Of the 23 students enrolled in the Recovery Scholars Program, 16 students (approximately 70%) utilized administrative and peer support to establish and maintain goals throughout the semester, while 9 students participated in the Transitional Programming workshop. Survey responses indicated positive outcomes among participants. Students reported an average rating of 4.0/5 when asked whether participation made them feel more prepared to leave UC Berkeley, 4.4/5 when asked whether participation increased their sense of security in recovery, and a perfect average score of 5.0/5 regarding feeling supported by CRP staff.

Qualitative feedback further reinforced these findings. Students described the program as supportive, informative, and community-oriented. Participants specifically highlighted feeling connected to both peers and staff and valued discussions related to practical transition skills such as resume writing. Students also provided constructive recommendations, including inviting a Career Service Center counselor to a workshop and having alumni share their experiences with applying to grad school and finding community after graduation.

Beyond survey responses, students who utilized Transitional Programming and ongoing support made meaningful progress. Students chose pathways to recovery, celebrated sobriety milestones, connected with psychiatric and therapeutic services, applied for and were accepted into research opportunities, completed challenging coursework, established employment goals, and built stronger community connections. Overall, these outcomes suggest that Transitional Programming successfully advanced its primary goals of providing graduating and continuing students with additional support as they navigated periods of transition and worked toward personal, academic, and recovery goals.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

The lessons I learned throughout this experience were both professional and personal. Professionally, I learned that maintaining timelines is challenging, and coordinating multiple timelines can be even more difficult. For example, the deadline for Recovery Scholars to complete the exit survey was May 17, while the deadline for this write-up occurred one week earlier. I had not considered that conflict until the write-up deadline approached. Fortunately, SAFE Project recognizes that Fellows and Working Group Leaders are continuously learning, and the flexibility and grace provided through the program create opportunities for growth and improvement.

Additionally, I learned early on that the most effective approach to “servant leadership” was allowing Fellows the space to lead their own projects while remaining available for support without creating unnecessary pressure. I came to understand “servant leadership” as being a collaborative support when needed, a facilitator of growth, and not a project director. The greatest joy of this experience came from witnessing Fellows’ successes and being a support along the way.

Personally, this year involved both significant accomplishments and challenges. I celebrated 10 years of recovery, graduated from UC Berkeley, and experienced rejection from every law school to which I applied. Similar to the lessons from my project, I learned that while timelines may shift, goals remain achievable. This year, SAFE Project continued to strengthen my skills and further reinforced my commitment to pursuing public interest work focused on healing and recovery from substance use and trauma.



Hickory Harm Reduction Hubs John Simpson

*"Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded.
It's a relationship between equals." –Pema Chödrön*

Impact Project Goals:

- Provide people in my community who use drugs with safe and low-barrier access to harm reduction supplies
- Provide and stock multiple harm reduction kiosks around the community, providing accessible and discreet 24-hour access
- Raise awareness and educate about overdose prevention
- Provide wound care supplies to community organizations to directly supply people who use drugs

Challenges Along the Way:

The biggest initial challenge surrounding my project was building partnerships with local organizations as an individual. I found it difficult to receive responses from most of the organizations and potential harm reduction hub locations I reached out to. I thought it was important to build these partnerships and obtain funding and support for the project in this way to establish a sustainable project. Additionally, I found it challenging to operate outside of work hours, as I was working an 8am-5pm, Monday through Friday job.

Measurements of Success:

Through the connections I have been able to make, I plan to implement the action of my plan over the summer by co-hosting multiple kit-making events. These events will produce approximately 300 wound care kits for direct distribution by organizations in my community that already supply individuals with naloxone and test strips, using funding allocated by those organizations. Additionally, I will use one of these events to educate students at my former campus about harm reduction and prevention in connection with the Charlotte Recovery Program, helping to continue the efforts currently taking place on that campus and keeping the subject and spirit of harm reduction alive on the Charlotte campus.

Overall Project Outcome:

I was not able to acquire the harm reduction hub boxes and sites as I had initially planned, but that plan is still in motion. I believe that through consistent dedication and results, as well as building trust and rapport in my community, that plan will become a reality. I see it as a success that I will be able to supplement agencies that are already doing work with wound care supplies, as I have noticed this is often an overlooked need in my area. I also see education as always being a success, as this only multiplies exponentially the number of potential lives touched.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

I learned a lot about my own resilience when things were difficult and hard to navigate. I also learned a lot about operations in harm reduction. I housed support programs outside of the school setting, and what some of the very real boundaries can look like. Finally, I learned that things can move slowly, and it is important to stay the course.



REDWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
HOME OF THE GIANTS



Roseland
Collegiate Prep

Youth Harm Reduction Education: A Duology at Bay Area High Schools

Sarah Lotsoff

"If you work really hard, and you're kind, amazing things will happen." –Conan O'Brien

Impact Project Goals:

- Present to three classrooms of students on the subject of overdose prevention and naloxone training
- Distribute naloxone to interested students
- Support students in disseminating harm reduction information throughout the student body

Challenges Along the Way:

I was ultimately unable to connect with enough schools to complete three trainings, so while I did much outreach to local schools and even planned to connect with my local library to host a naloxone training event, I ended up putting my focus towards the two schools and student groups I already connected with that were eager and enthusiastic to learn more about harm reduction.

Measurements of Success:

My project's measurement of success was that they happened and students attended! Given the fact that I was presenting to peer educators who wanted to be there with me and learn, I based my measurement of success on the subjective enthusiasm I perceived from interacting with them during the presentation itself. By asking questions and actively participating in the session, I could tell that the students there were absorbing new information. Six students joined my first presentation, and I expect ten more to be in attendance at my next presentation. Also, since these students are tasked with disseminating this information to their student body and administrators, I feel confident that they will take the information they learned and exponentially increase the impact!

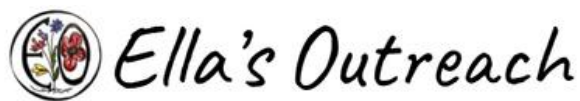
Overall Project Outcome:

I was ultimately able to present to two classrooms of high school students, at two different schools in the Bay Area! In speaking with the Department of Public Health in Santa Rosa County, I was connected to a high school teacher that led a group of peer educators who were specifically interested in adolescent cannabis use. They met once every other Friday during their lunch break to learn about cannabis, its properties and effects on the adolescent brain and body, and the ways in which it is marketed to teens; they would then go on to present the information they learned to their principal and a local cannabis dispensary, and create posters and flyers to distribute amongst the student body. I put together a presentation on underage cannabis use, the impacts of cannabis on the developing brain and mental health, and harm reduction strategies to stay safe. I then presented this information to the group of peer educators during their lunch break and was able to answer their questions.

The second presentation is scheduled for late-May and, at the time of this overview being written, it has not taken place yet. It is also tailored to a group of peer educators and will entail overdose prevention education and naloxone training. Their teacher has assured me that they are quite knowledgeable already, so I will quiz them on what they know and then distribute naloxone at the end of the training.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

I have never worked directly with students before, when I myself have not already been a part of that student body, so this was a great challenge in being thoughtful about how I present information to my audience and doing so in a way they will find engaging. I was also very heartened to learn that this information is already being taught to students in my neighboring counties and that students have taken the initiative to learn about and disseminate this information to their peers.



Grant Writing for a Community-Based Harm Reduction Project at Ella's Outreach
Sarah Smith

"The only thing that keeps those in power in that position is the illusion of our powerlessness. A moment of freedom and connection can undo a lifetime of social conditioning and scatter seeds in a thousand directions." -Dean Spade

Impact Project Goals:

- Secure at least \$3,000 in funding for a community-based harm reduction program
- Develop grant writing and organizational budgeting skills
- Continue providing life-saving supplies to unhoused community members

Challenges Along the Way:

During my search for funding, I found a difficult grant-writing landscape due to federal cuts, with many organizations competing for limited funds. One of my applications was denied because we received substantial funding from donations. The funders shared that the volume of completely unfunded programs applying was so high that they were unable to support programs with any amount of funding. Another foundation shut down its website just a few days before I applied with no explanation. Next, a local funder was unable to fund us because our fiscal sponsor is based outside of Oregon. Luckily, our sponsor pulled some strings and got an Oregon address to become a recognized Oregon charity, opening the doors for more local funding opportunities. However, some state funds remain out of our reach because our fiscal sponsor is not based here.

Grant writing also impacted the culture of our organization. As a mutual aid group with a non-hierarchical leadership structure, sometimes the process of grant writing created conditions that went against our organization's collectivist values. Feelings of scarcity, urgency, and competition all came up and, at times, challenged our ability to communicate well as a team. Handling our finances awarded me decision-making power and control that impacted our group dynamics in ways that felt uncomfortable. Ultimately, I learned the importance of transparency and consistent conversations about our values. Most of all, making time to be in community with one another was vital to the work.

Measurements of Success & Overall Project Outcome:

Funding raised and people impacted through that funding are both measures of success I tracked for this project. I initially set a goal to raise \$3,000, but through a community support initiative for underfunded harm reduction programs from Remedy Alliance, we received \$5,000 in funding in exchange for making harm reduction kits. They invited us to do the program again for another \$5,000 in July. I am also expecting to hear back from a \$5,000 grant from another funder in June. Our confirmed funding for 2026 is \$10,000, with another potential \$5,000 in grant funding.

Last year our operating costs were ~\$17,000 including the value of donated supplies, store credit, and gap funding from community partners and supply distributor programs. More than 95% of our budget goes to direct services. In 2025 we had ~1,800 interactions and supplies distributed per interaction were valued at ~\$9 based on our operating budget. In 2026 we anticipate that we will have ~3,500 interactions. Assuming the value of supplies per interaction is \$9, the \$10,000 raised this year will allow us to support ~1,100 interactions. If we receive the \$5,000 grant we applied for, we could support another ~550 interactions. Even with donations, store credit, gap funding, and supply match programs from distributors it is clear that

we need to reduce the costs associated with each interaction in order to serve the growing number of people we work with.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Over the course of this project I gained a significant amount of professional and personal growth. In addition to learning some of the practical skills around researching and writing grants, I have gained a lot of confidence in my ability to make connections and collaborate with other organizations to make the work happen. Founding and sustaining Ella's Outreach has been empowering and I continue to be shocked by my own abilities, the abundance within our community, and the success of our program.



2025-2026 Fellows

CRLA Fellows spent the first part of the program identifying campus needs related to prevention, harm reduction, and recovery support, and developing projects to address them. The remainder of the fellowship was spent turning those plans into action through advocacy, education, and leadership. The projects in this section reflect a year of learning, growth, and servant leadership. Together, they illustrate the creativity, determination, and impact that student leaders can have on their campuses and amongst their peers. Year after year, students prove that they are among the most effective leaders in advancing substance use and mental health prevention, harm reduction, and recovery initiatives.





Yet to Come at Webster University
Aida (Lovely) Mekonen

“While everything in life is a lesson or a blessing, always ask yourself, ‘Is this effective?’” –Unknown Author

Impact Project Goals:

- Share my story and be my most authentic self, giving permission for others to do so
- Practice creating and connecting with nature through art and movement

Challenges Along the Way:

Staff and students were overworked and physically unhealthy.

Measurements of Success & Overall Project Outcome:

I led a class for my Somatic Yoga course at the University. I had my class take place outside. I began the class with a haiku:

Welcome Outside
Where I Feel Most Alive
No Need to Hide

I had everyone write a haiku, but no one shared when given the opportunity. I ended the class with scrapbooking, and we all sat in a circle to share our names and our artwork. From the beginning to the end of the class, I could see everyone relax, and I received.

When reflecting back on my class, students and the professor shared that they felt happier, sillier, and more connected with themselves, especially their inner child.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Overall, I have provoked thought and challenged the status quo. I became someone who was known for “just being Lovely”. I became the most in touch with myself, and others would come to me and express their struggles. By simply being myself, I gave others the courage to be themselves. Being in recovery myself, I found the only way to heal was by removing myself from the University. I tried so hard and so many different avenues. I talked to so many people, and at the end of the day, it was just me and my “lover”, ____ (insert vice here). When I first got to Webster, I admired how the most respected and admired individuals took on many positions at the University. I thought that was normal and necessary to make an impact, but I realized that, like putting on many hats or attempting to balance, you must begin with your foundation. My foundation is my physical health. I am only human: I rise and fall with the sun; I require sustenance; I was designed to live in nature and to engage with other lifeforms. I have a period. These are basic “facts” that I keep forgetting. This is my normal. This is my nature. I tried to nurture myself into being worthy, which I see now as completely backward. I tried to silence my body in order to fit in. I was desperate for stability. I look back at my house of cards, caved in, blown by the wind. I smile now, I know. The wind will continue to blow. I now must rebuild from scratch. Stronger. Better. Lover. The most beautiful moment in life is yet to come.



Grounds for Growth at the University of Virginia
Angela Han

“Man is but a reed, the most feeble thing in nature, but he is a thinking reed.” –Blaise Pascal

Impact Project Goals:

- Creating a 1-on-1 mentorship program for students in recovery
- Bridging the gap between students and professional services at UVA, specifically related to recovery and wellness services
- Building a support program for students in recovery
- Increasing student awareness of recovery resources at UVA
- Creating an environment of companionship for students in recovery

Challenges Along the Way:

The most prominent challenge for me as I implemented this project was managing the approval process to start an official program within UVA’s Student Health and Wellness department. My initial plan for my impact project was to carry out project planning in the fall and implement the program in the spring semester. This would include mentor recruitment, mentor training, and mentee recruitment at the beginning of the spring semester. However, after speaking more with people within the Student Health Department, I found that the approval process for these programs is much longer and more detailed than I had originally imagined. This caused a shift in the timeline for my project and required me to consider many factors that I had not initially recognized. For example, I had to work on a website design based on other Student Health webpages that are currently available to students. This was not something that I had experience in, but I was able to grow through this process and learn more about what it takes to implement a university program. Although it took many adjustments to my original plan, I was able to remain flexible and learn from this experience.

Measurements of Success:

The Grounds for Growth program is set to begin in the fall semester of 2026. To measure the success of the program so far, I wanted to evaluate the planning process and assess the program before it launches. To do this, I spoke with Student Health staff, faculty members, and first-year Program Coordinators to better understand how they have previously designed similar programs. Based on their feedback, I made adjustments to the program to improve reach and fit for students. Additionally, the program will be further evaluated after it officially begins. The metrics we are using to assess the program include a feedback form for mentees within the program, in which they can give their review of the program. We will also hold a forum, where discussions will be held within a group of mentees to get further feedback on the program.

Overall Project Outcome:

The overall outcome of the project was the design and planning for the Grounds for Growth program. In this process, I built a team including staff within the Student Health Department, who helped me with creating an official program proposal. Similarly, we created a budget for the program, and I designed the website. The program will begin in the fall semester of 2026, where mentor/mentee recruitment and training will occur.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

I felt that I grew a lot in leadership through the process of creating the Grounds for Growth program. This was my first experience with creating an official program within my university, so there were many factors that I initially had not considered.

For example, I had not considered some of the legal constraints and considerations for creating such a program. The process of adjustment and learning new things helped me to become more flexible in the way I thought about the project. Additionally, my mentors within the Student Health Department really encouraged me to make this project my own, which allowed me to really take charge of the decision-making process of this project. I was able to enhance my communication skills, as I got used to reaching out to others for help or advice. Overall, this experience contributed a lot to my goal of becoming a better service leader.



Weaving Hope at the University of Oregon
Ari Wolf

"You do not have to be good." -Mary Oliver, Wild Geese

Impact Project Goals:

- Implement an event that centers the stories of queer and trans people
- Bring information about multiple recovery paths to students, staff, and faculty
- Create an event that students, staff, and faculty could each attend and learn from
- Bring together queer community with recovery community during the planning process

Challenges Along the Way:

One of my community partners pressed pause on the project only a week before it was scheduled to occur. As a result of that painful event, another partner pulled out as well. There were a few weeks when I was worried the event would not take place at all. However, I was able to pull myself together and find an alternative route to manifest this project. I appealed to a different department, one of my own academic departments, for help, and they stepped up. I also reached out to a campus partner whom I had very little experience working with, the Veterans Center, and they, too, chose to be involved with the project. Ultimately, we were able to save the project and move forward together.

Measurements of Success:

15 people attended the event, in addition to the four people on the panel itself. The commentary I received from attendees after the event was entirely positive. Additionally, several people were involved in the planning process who did not attend the actual event, so these people were impacted as well. While I did not end up having as much of an impact as I had hoped, the event itself went off without a hitch, and I could easily see that the folks present were deeply impacted.

Overall Project Outcome:

Ultimately, the project took place very much as I had envisioned. I wish we had been able to record the event, because it was a very beautiful and moving event that I personally would have liked the opportunity to review. The event was very beautiful and meaningful for me personally to participate in, and it certainly seemed as though each of the participants felt the same way. If I could have the chance to do the project again, of course I would do it very differently, but as it is, I believe this is a successful outcome of this project.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

I learned a lot through the implementation of this project. First, I learned that I cannot necessarily rely on people who smile and say one thing, but mean another. This is a very hard lesson for me to learn as a neurodivergent person, because that kind of subterfuge is so different from how my brain works. However, it's a very important lesson indeed.

Second, I learned that I have the grit and inner strength to withstand obstacles and ensure a successful outcome, even when there is very little apparent reason to hope.

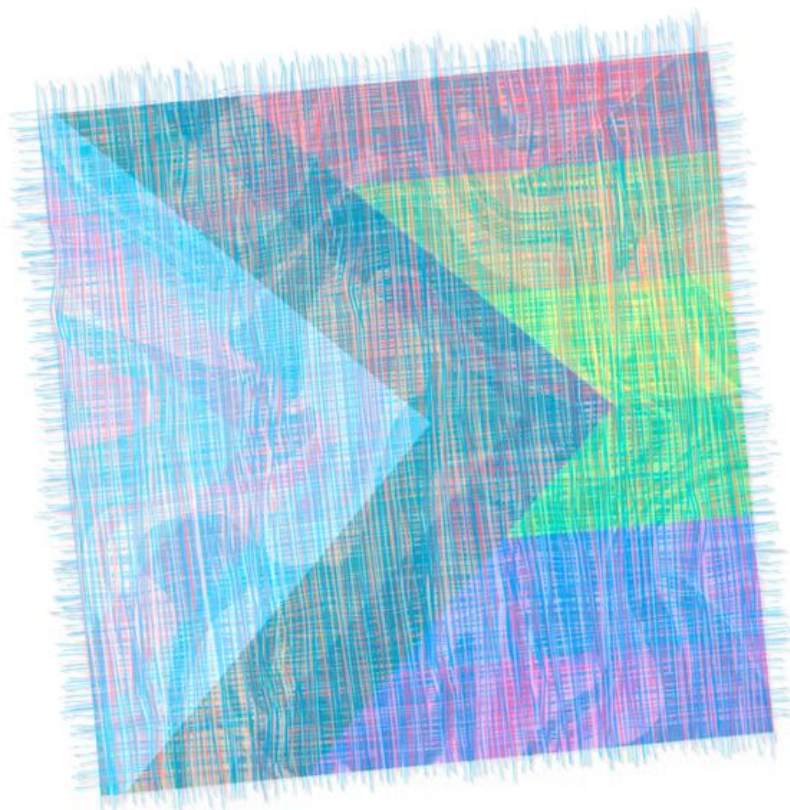
Third, I learned that I am capable of building new relationships, intentional ones, and that these relationships are vital to my success in my endeavors.

Finally, I learned that I am capable of inspiring change and meaningful action in others, even when I lose sight of my own strength and vision.

I learned there is nothing more important than holding on to my own inner strength and vision, and that if I can do that, good things will emerge.

WEAVING HOPE

QUEER & TRANS STORIES OF RECOVERY FROM SUBSTANCE MISUSE



FRIDAY, MAY 8TH
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM



EMU CEDAR/SPRUCE ROOM
FREE DINNER BUFFET

“What would our lives look like if we practiced liberation as a daily, relational discipline? Join us for an evening of storytelling, panel discussion, and community building as we explore what it means to engage with recovery as queer and trans human beings.”



Recovery is Many Things: Expanding Awareness Through Student Engagement at the University of California-Davis

Ashlyn Reed

"We are all a little broken. But last time I checked, broken crayons still color the same." –Trent Shelton

Impact Project Goals:

- Increase awareness of current campus resources
- Reduce the amount of stigma surrounding the topic of recovery
- Expand people's understanding of what recovery is

Challenges Along the Way:

One of the main challenges I experienced was navigating the pace and structure of working within a university setting. I learned quickly that planning large-scale initiatives requires significant time, coordination, consistent support, and that progress often moves more slowly than expected. Many of the conversations I initiated about collaboration and implementation did not always result in the level of follow-through or engagement needed to bring a weeklong event to life. Additionally, I experienced limited capacity and support within my Collegiate Recovery Program, which made it difficult to sustain momentum for a larger initiative.

I also encountered challenges in encouraging students to engage with recovery-related programming. Stigma around addiction and recovery remains present on campus, which makes it difficult to draw students into deeper conversations. These barriers ultimately required me to adapt my project into a more focused and realistic form of outreach that prioritized direct engagement and accessibility.

Measurements of Success:

Success for my project was measured through direct engagement and conversations with students during tabling. I created materials, staffed the table, and initiated conversations by asking students what recovery means to them. Through this approach, I engaged approximately 80 students, many of whom had never heard of our Collegiate Recovery Program before. This number is significant because it represents students who were newly exposed to recovery language, resources, and perspectives. In addition to the number of students reached, success was reflected in the quality of interactions. Many students paused, reflected, and shared their own interpretations of recovery, which aligns with my goal of expanding how recovery is understood beyond substance use. The fact that I was able to introduce our program to new students and create meaningful, stigma-reducing conversations demonstrates a measurable impact.

Overall Project Outcome:

The overall outcome of my project was a shift from a large-scale event to a more focused, interpersonal approach that emphasized conversation and visibility. While the scope was smaller than originally planned, the impact was still meaningful. I was able to raise awareness for our Collegiate Recovery Program, introduce recovery as a broad and relatable concept, and create space for students to reflect on their own experiences. This approach allowed for more authentic, one-on-one engagement, which often felt more impactful than a larger event might have achieved. This project reinforced that even small-scale outreach can contribute to reducing stigma and increasing awareness on campus.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Through this project, I grew significantly in my ability to adapt, communicate, and lead within complex systems. I learned that within a university setting, meaningful change often takes time, persistence, and multiple points of engagement, and that not every idea will gain immediate traction or support. This experience taught me how to navigate slower-moving systems, manage expectations, and continue moving forward when collaboration or momentum felt limited.

I also gained a deeper understanding of how stigma operates on campus and how important it is to meet students where they are. Rather than relying on large-scale programming alone, I learned that small, intentional conversations can be just as impactful in shifting perspectives and increasing awareness. On a personal level, I developed greater flexibility and resilience, learning to redefine success not by the scale of the project but by the depth of the impact I was able to create with the resources I had available.



WHO ARE WE?
aggies for
RECOVERY

OUR GOALS

The Collegiate Recovery Program (CRP) actively supports undergraduate and graduate students in all stages of recovery from substance use and other disruptive behaviors. We strive to create a campus where recovery is visible, valued, and stigma-free. We empower students through meaningful connections, peer support, and recovery-focused resources that strengthen academic success, emotional resilience, and social belonging.

SOME DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS WE CAN NAVIGATE WITH YOU:

- Substance use including alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs
- Porn addiction
- Gambling addiction
- Self-Harm
- Exercise dependence
- Emotional eating
- Eating disorders
- Video game use
- Social media dependence
- Sex addiction

OUR PURPOSE

Whether students are curious about sobriety, practicing harm reduction, sustaining long-term abstinence-based recovery, or are an ally of someone in recovery, CRP is rooted in advocacy, inclusivity, and compassion, dedicated to serving all types and groups of recovery.



aggies4recovery



<https://discord.gg/8HKhfNmeTn>



Recovery Screening Analytics Project at Aims Community College
Audriana Gutierrez

"Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished." -Lao Tzu

Impact Project Goals:

- Learn how to collect and organize meaningful data
- Gain a better understanding of the behind-the-scenes aspects of funding and resource allocation
- Support recovery-focused efforts on my college campus
- Contribute to resources and programs that align with the CRLA mission and values
- Create a project that focuses on addiction recovery, mental health awareness, and allyship
- Explore a creative and community-centered approach to impact work
- Help gather data that could support future recovery initiatives and funding opportunities at Aims Community College

Challenges Along the Way:

Some of the challenges I experienced while planning and implementing my project were how much the project changed throughout the process. Due to scheduling issues and time sensitivity, I had to pivot from my original project idea into something that was more realistic and achievable within the timeframe.

Once I changed directions, I actually found a lot of success with the data collection project. However, one of the biggest challenges was coordinating meetings that worked with everyone's schedules. Another challenge was encouraging more students to complete our campus surveys related to drug use, alcohol use, and mental health challenges. Gathering participation and engagement was an important part of the project, so increasing survey responses took additional effort and outreach.

Measurements of Success:

My project's measurements of success were the collection of measurable data points and the implementation of new survey efforts on campus. One major indicator of success was the increase in student participation in the campus surveys, which I will attach below as supporting data.

Another important outcome was helping create momentum for future recovery and mental health initiatives on campus. Through this project, I coordinated with AiBerry and the head of Student Accessibility and Well-Being to discuss implementing a newer and more effective survey model during the next fiscal year, beginning in June. This showed that the project not only gathered current data but also contributed toward long-term improvements in how student recovery, mental health, and well-being are assessed and supported at Aims Community College.

Overall Project Outcome:

The overall outcome of my project was very positive. It gave me hands-on experience in understanding how recovery support systems and data collection work on a college campus. Through the project, I was able to see an increase in student participation in our surveys and help contribute toward future recovery initiatives at Aims Community College.

I am especially excited to see how AiBerry will perform on our campus and how its survey model may improve outreach and support for students in the future. This opportunity also taught me that projects do not always

go exactly as planned, and that being willing to adapt and pivot is an important part of creating meaningful change. Even though my original idea shifted, it opened pathways to new opportunities, partnerships, and additional ways to support students in recovery and mental health initiatives.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

This project helped me grow both personally and professionally. One of the biggest things I learned was how many opportunities there are to help others, especially in the fields of recovery, prevention, and mental health advocacy. I learned that even small efforts and projects can make a meaningful impact on people and create pathways toward larger change within a community.

Through this experience, I also learned more about my campus and the need for recovery resources, mental health support, and student engagement at Aims Community College. Seeing students participate in surveys and discussions showed me how important it is to create spaces where people feel supported and heard. Attending the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Strategies Conference also expanded my perspective on advocacy, student leadership, and recovery support systems. It allowed me to connect with professionals and students who are passionate about building healthier and more supportive campus communities, which reinforced my own passion for this work.

Personally, I learned that I have more influence and leadership ability than I originally realized. Because of my involvement and advocacy, I was chosen to become the right hand of the recovery team on our campus next semester, so I can continue supporting recovery initiatives in Greeley. This opportunity showed me that I am capable of helping create meaningful change in my community. I am hopeful that this is only the beginning of my advocacy work, and I look forward to continuing to learn, grow, and develop as a leader.

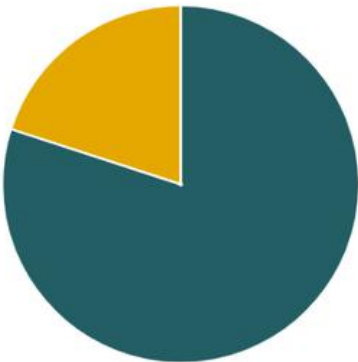


Photos from a student outreach event that provided free haircuts and giveaways to increase student engagement and participation in campus recovery and mental health surveys.

How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?

- Monthly or less (80%)
- 2 to 4 times a month (0%)
- 2 to 3 times a week (20%)
- 4 or more times a week (0%)

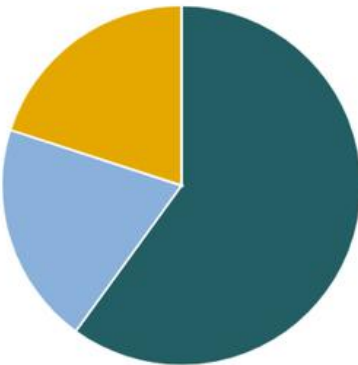
Click an answer slice to view detailed demographic information



How many standard drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?

- 1 or 2 (60%)
- 3 or 4 (20%)
- 5 or 6 (20%)
- 7 to 9 (0%)
- 10 or more (0%)

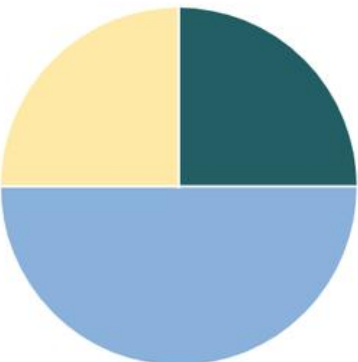
Click an answer slice to view detailed demographic information



How often during the past 6 months did you find that you were not able to stop using cannabis once you had started?

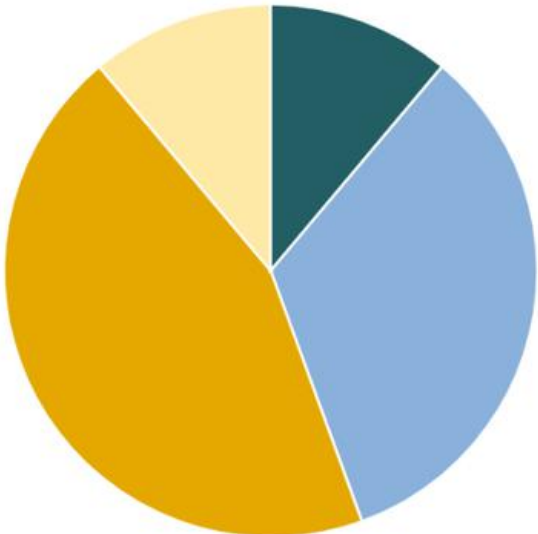
- Never (25%)
- Less than monthly (50%)
- Monthly (0%)
- Weekly (25%)
- Daily or almost daily (0%)

Click an answer slice to view detailed demographic information



Overall Risk Levels

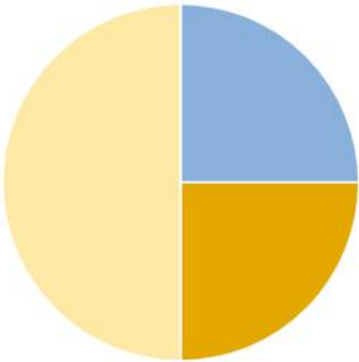
- In Recovery (11%)
- No Use (33%)
- Low Risk (44%)
- Risky Hazardous (11%)
- High Risk Harmful (0%)
- High Risk Likely Dependent (0%)



How often do you use cannabis?

- Monthly or less (0%)
- 2 to 4 times a month (25%)
- 2 to 3 times a week (25%)
- 4 or more times a week (50%)

Click an answer slice to view detailed demographic information





What We Carry: Visual Stories of Recovery, Grief, and Resilience at Southeastern Louisiana University **Ava Tomadin**

“The irony is that your light grows stronger the more you are willing to face the darkness” –Unknown

Impact Project Goals:

- Increase visibility around recovery and mental health experiences
- Create an inclusive opportunity for artists to share emotionally meaningful work
- Foster collaboration between campus and community partners

Challenges Along the Way:

Throughout implementation, I coordinated artist communication, exhibition logistics, volunteer management, promotional outreach, and installation planning. One of the primary challenges was balancing inclusivity with physical space limitations while maintaining a cohesive exhibition experience. Additional challenges included coordinating deadlines, formatting artist materials, and managing event logistics alongside graduate coursework and other responsibilities.

Measurements of Success:

The project was highly successful and resulted in a strong turnout at the opening reception, with over 100 guests attending throughout the evening and the gallery space reaching full occupancy during portions of the event. Feedback from participating artists, attendees, faculty, and gallery staff was overwhelmingly positive, and the gallery director expressed being impressed by both the turnout and the quality of the exhibition. The exhibition also attracted engagement beyond the planned reception, including additional visitors throughout the week, such as the university president. An unexpected faculty member attended the reception and requested to participate through informational tabling and outreach efforts. Additionally, a community member who attended the event agreed to donate profits from their recovery-focused books to Lion Up Recovery, and another recovery center expressed interest in sponsoring future exhibitions. Promotion for the exhibition extended beyond campus through both digital and physical outreach efforts, including posters, postcards, stickers, social media promotion, and a digital billboard displayed at a major downtown entry point. The project generated continued interest in expanding or continuing recovery-centered art programming in the future and demonstrated strong campus and community interest in healing-centered creative spaces.

Overall Project Outcome:

What We Carry: Visual Stories of Recovery, Grief, and Resilience became a meaningful community-centered exhibition that created space for reflection, emotional expression, and dialogue surrounding recovery, grief, resilience, and mental health. The project brought together more than 20 student and faculty artists and transformed the gallery into a shared space where personal experiences, identity, and healing could be explored through visual art. The exhibition fostered collaboration between students, faculty, recovery advocates, and community organizations, including Lion Up Recovery, SAFE Project, the Department of Visual Arts and Design, and Longbranch Recovery. Through both the exhibition and reception, the project encouraged connection and conversation while demonstrating the value of creative expression within recovery-centered and healing-focused spaces. The overall outcome of the project was the creation of an inclusive and emotionally impactful campus experience that highlighted the role of art in storytelling, community engagement, and healing.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Personally, this experience strengthened my confidence in leadership, project coordination, and community engagement. I learned how powerful creative spaces can be in fostering dialogue around recovery, trauma, grief, and resilience, particularly outside of traditional clinical settings. The project reinforced my interest in expressive arts, healing-centered community work, and the role of creative expression in emotional processing and connection.



YOU ARE SEEN

at **"What We Carry"**
a LION UP Recovery Art Show

April 13th-17th
Contemporary Art Gallery

Visual Stories of Recovery, Grief, and Resilience

"What We Carry" is a curated exhibition inviting students and faculty to submit visual artwork exploring experiences related to addiction, recovery, grief, resilience, and survival. Explore the impacts of substance use, loss, and healing.

Contact the Recovery Department for more info:
recovery@selu.edu

 Lion Up Recovery
SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY

 Longbranch
Recovery



YOU ARE SEEN

at "What We Carry"
a LION UP Recovery Art Show



*Visual Stories of
Recovery, Grief, and Resilience*

"What We Carry" is a curated exhibition inviting students and faculty to submit visual artwork exploring experiences related to addiction, recovery, grief, resilience, and survival. Explore the impacts of substance use, loss, and healing.

April 13th-17th
Contemporary Art Gallery

Contact the Recovery Department for more info:
recovery@selu.edu

ARE YOU AN ARTIST?
Submissions are open to all visual media. Work does not need to depict addiction literally; abstract, symbolic, narrative, and conceptual interpretations are welcome.

SCAN HERE TO SUBMIT YOUR WORK:
(Submissions due by March 1st)



 Lion Up Recovery
SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY

 Department of
Visual Art + Design

 SAFEProject
Stop the Addiction Fatality Epidemic





“Connections” – Preventive Methods and Transferable Mentalities: Practicing Grounding Skills and Vulnerability in a Peer Environment at Brown University

Bryce Massey

“At its core, addiction is a disease of isolation; recovery requires connection.” –Author Unknown

Impact Project Goals:

Draw on social model recovery principles (Polcin et al., 2023), harm-reduction frameworks (Clemmons-James, 2025), and research on vulnerability and belonging (Brown, 2017) to:

- Build a culture of relational connection and shared experience that functions as a protective factor against isolation and maladaptive coping
- Create a low-barrier, peer-led space where Brown University students could practice emotional vulnerability and authentic self-expression outside of clinical or formal support settings
- Introduce and reinforce grounding techniques, such as breathwork, movement, and tactile engagement, as transferable tools for emotional regulation
- Extend recovery-supportive practices to the broader student population, including students who do not identify with traditional recovery frameworks

Challenges Along the Way:

In practice, “Connections” encountered few significant structural or programmatic obstacles. The group ran largely as intended, with consistent facilitation, reliable space access, and strong peer investment. If anything, the most meaningful “challenge” was the one the program was designed to address: the deeply internalized social norm among high-achieving students to appear composed and/or self-sufficient. Presumably, participants arrived each week having performed that composure all day elsewhere. The work of the group was in making it safe to set that performance down, and participants were the primary agents in deciding how to receive this invitation to vulnerability.

Minor logistical disruptions, such as one session being canceled for Spring Break and another peer-led session due to the group facilitator’s absence, interfered with program momentum. The April 30 rebound to 8 participants following these disruptions suggests the group had developed enough gravity to sustain itself.

Measurements of Success:

Program impact was assessed using a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative attendance tracking with qualitative pre/post written reflections:

- **Attendance & Sustained Engagement:** “How many people are showing up?” Sessions drew between 4 and 10 participants across the Spring 2026 semester, with peak attendance (10) coinciding with periods of heightened campus stress in mid-March. Following Spring Break disruptions, attendance recovered to 8 by the final session. (Figure 1)
- **Emotional Regulation Gains:** “How are people feeling before the group? How are they feeling after?” Anonymous pre/post written reflections were coded using a structured semantic-affective framework on a 0 - 2 scale (0 = dysregulated, 1 = transitional, 2 = regulated). Mean regulation scores increased from approximately 0.37 before sessions to 1.47 after, reflecting consistent movement from dysregulation to transitional regulation. (Figure 2)
- **Thematic Outcomes:** “What are the things people acknowledge they bring with them into this space?” Qualitative coding identified five recurring domains across participant responses: affective regulation, relational connection, self-awareness, validation/authenticity, and behavioral reflection. Affective regulation and connection were the most prevalent, each appearing in 8 of the analyzed responses. (Figure 3)

Overall Project Outcome:

“Connections” succeeded as a preventative, peer-led model for recovery-supportive practice. The program created the conditions for students to build emotional and relational resources before crisis: grounding themselves, naming their experiences, and finding genuine community in the process. The data affirms what participants expressed qualitatively: having a space to be honest is a protective factor. The program reached students who would not have sought out formal counseling or recovery services, yet who were nonetheless navigating stress, isolation, and/or maladaptive coping patterns.

Going forward, “Connections” offers a replicable, low-infrastructure model that can be integrated into broader campus wellness ecosystems. Its preventative orientation, peer-led structure, and grounding in vulnerability research position it as a meaningful complement to clinical services. This impact project expands the reach of recovery-informed care to the many students who exist at the margins of traditional recovery identity but who stand to benefit most from authentic community.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?:

Implementing a regular, low-stakes group on my campus felt like a daunting task initially. Beginning this process required regular communication with relevant university staff—particularly the BWell Department and Brown’s Donovan Program. I also became familiar with already existing resources, such as our UFunds platform so I could request funding. These experiences taught me how to implement and see a project come through to fruition, paying close attention to logistical details such as place and timing.

I learned a lot through the journey of this impact project. This group initially began as a non-clinical intervention space designed for students that identify as addicts but feel anxious about being in spaces that label them as such. Over time, this group organically evolved into an all-recovery meeting. This project taught me that we are all recovering from something. That is—principles of recovery such as honesty, open mindedness, and willingness can be applied to a variety of circumstances. Addiction is fundamentally isolatory—recovery begins with connection.

GRAPHS / DATA

Figure 1. Weekly attendance across sessions.

Attendance demonstrated initial variability followed by sustained engagement, with peak participation coinciding with periods of increased campus stress.

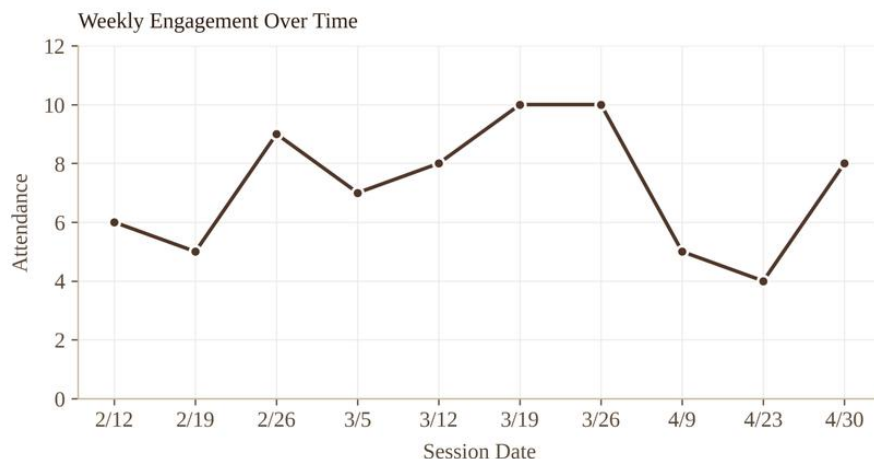


Figure 2. Mean emotional regulation scores before and after participation.

Participant responses were coded using a structured semantic-affective framework. Higher scores indicate greater emotional regulation, with post-session responses showing increased regulation relative to pre-session responses.

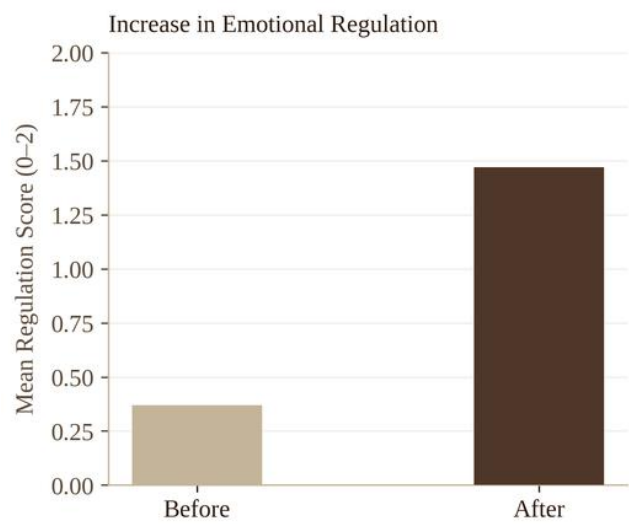
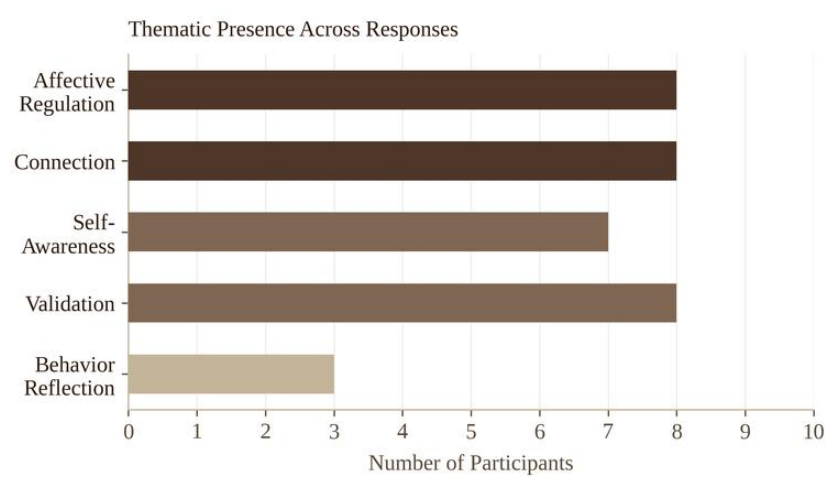


Figure 3. Frequency of thematic domains identified in participant reflections.

Qualitative responses were analyzed using hierarchical thematic coding informed by semantic-pragmatic patterns. Affective regulation and relational connection were the most frequently observed domains, indicating consistent psychosocial impact across participants.



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Safer Celebrations: Student-Led Harm Reduction & Overdose Prevention
Charlotte Combe

"I got into harm reduction to enable people who use drugs. I enable them to feel like they have someone to talk to, someone who cares, someone who respects them and their humanity. I enable them to ask for help and to help others in turn. I enable them to find drug treatment and health care, to reconnect with their families, to rebuild their lives. And I enable people who use drugs to take personal responsibility for their health and their futures. If that makes me an enabler, I'm proud to claim that term." -Daniel Raymond, Harm Reduction Coalition

Impact Project Goals:

- Distribute harm reduction materials such as fentanyl test strips and naloxone to the Colorado College student body prior to a campus-wide music festival
- Increase student awareness and knowledge about overdose prevention and substance use harm reduction on the Colorado College campus

Challenges Along the Way:

I initially planned on doing a community panel discussion with harm reduction workers from Colorado Springs in order to educate the student body on the barriers to life-saving work happening in our community. However, because of chronic understaffing and precarious labor conditions many harm reduction workers in Colorado Springs face, it was difficult to schedule a time when the multiple panelists were free at the same time. I had a panel discussion scheduled but had to cancel the event because unexpected responsibilities at work came up for multiple panelists. As a result of this, I decided to pivot my project towards being more service-oriented towards the campus community. There is an annual music festival on campus every year called Llamapalooza, and many students experiment with using drugs for the festival. Knowing this, I wanted to ensure students could enjoy their experience and be equipped with the tools and knowledge about safer drug use.

Measurements of Success:

We had roughly 40 students participate in a harm-reduction trivia tabling, with at least half taking Narcan and/or fentanyl test strips. We had multiple requests to refill harm reduction boxes with fentanyl test strips and Narcan around campus, meaning students were taking and using these supplies.

Anecdotally, I heard from friends and acquaintances that they used the supplies in the boxes. I know one person experienced an overdose, and her life was saved as a result of someone having Narcan on them from one of the harm reduction boxes I distributed.

Overall Project Outcome:

I hosted a harm reduction tabling in front of the main dining hall before lunch a few days before the campus music festival. We had trivia about harm reduction and offered each participant fentanyl test strips and Narcan. We also handed out drug info cards on a large variety of substances for students to take! I hosted a Narcan training open to the entire student body and campus community to educate participants on how to respond to an opioid overdose. I created "harm reduction boxes" with fentanyl test strips, Narcan, safer snorting kits (plastic straws, alcohol pads, plastic razors, saline solution), and grounding kits (bubblegum, fidget toys, and hard candy). These boxes were distributed to five senior houses near campus for students to

pick up harm-reduction supplies before the music festival. I organized the substance use harm reduction club I run to pack hundreds of fentanyl test strips, safer snorting and grounding kits to be available for pick up inside the music festival during the entirety of the event as well

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

This project gave me practice in rolling with the punches and learning to quickly pivot when my initial plans did not work out. Although the project I completed was different from what I envisioned, I felt proud of what I ultimately accomplished.

Organizing this project also showed me the importance of providing people with confidential and accessible ways to obtain harm-reduction supplies. When I offered people Narcan and FTS in person at tabling and trainings, people often refused to take them because they did not use drugs or have any friends who did. However, when we had boxes in discreet locations for people to pick up supplies, we had to refill them multiple times. I think this is partly due to the continual stigma of using substances and the ways drug use is criminalized and punished by institutions like the carceral system and in the context of higher education administrations.



Leading the harm reduction tabling in front of the campus dining hall.



The table I set up in preparation for my Narcan training hosted on campus the week before Llamapalooza



Some of the harm reduction boxes I created



Recovery Ready Ally Training at the University of Texas-San Antonio Crystal Holland

“Let all that you do be done in love.” -1 Corinthians 16:14

Impact Project Goals:

- Develop and implement a Recovery Ready Ally training program at The University of Texas at San Antonio
- Conduct at least one official Recovery Ready Ally training session before the end of the semester
- Increase awareness of recovery, substance use, and harm reduction on campus
- Equip students, faculty, and staff with tools to better support individuals in recovery

Challenges Along the Way:

One of the biggest challenges during my impact project was building a Recovery Ready Ally training presentation from the ground up. I had to determine what information to include, how long the training should be, and what audience it would best serve. Another challenge was time management. Although I began planning in January, I was also starting my senior design project focused on an Automated Narcan Dispenser, which caused the ally training project to take a back seat at times. As deadlines approached, I became increasingly stressed and realized that I was not clearly communicating what help I needed. In late March, my CRC director became more involved and helped redesign the presentation into a more professional and accessible training that could eventually be approved through Student Affairs. Although I was hesitant at first because it differed from my original presentation, I later recognized that the collaboration strengthened the project overall. During our first soft launch with Recovery Center students, we also learned important lessons about presentation timing, organization, and audience engagement that helped improve future trainings.

Measurements of Success:

One way we measured the success of the project was through participation, survey feedback, and engagement during the Recovery Ready Ally soft launch training. A total of 10 Recovery Center students participated in the training, and 9 Student Affairs and Wellbeing staff members later attended an additional presentation at The University of Texas at San Antonio. Pre- and post-training surveys showed improvements in participants' confidence and understanding of recovery support, overdose response, communication methods, and campus recovery resources. Several participants specifically mentioned learning more about Narcan administration, supportive language, and communication strategies for supporting students in recovery.

Overall Project Outcome:

The overall outcome of this project was the successful development of a Recovery Ready Ally training program that can continue to grow and be implemented at UTSA. Through feedback collected from students and staff, the presentation is currently being revised to support future official trainings planned for Fall 2026. Future trainings will include both a shorter introductory version and a longer hour-and-a-half training that will allow more time for interactive discussions and recovery-based scenarios. Overall, the project helped create a strong foundation for sustainable recovery education efforts on campus.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Throughout this project, I grew both personally and professionally. One of the biggest things I learned was the importance of communication and asking for help when needed. I also learned that my communication style

can be very different from others. My mind works very fast and directly, which is not always at everyone else's pace. Through this project, I learned how important patience, flexibility, and collaboration are when working with a team. I also gained experience working within a university system and learned how much planning and approval processes go into creating official campus programs. At times, the changes made to the presentation were uncomfortable, especially when the overall design changed, and some of the original recovery scenarios I created had to be removed due to time limitations. However, I learned that change and collaboration can strengthen a project rather than take away from it. Although the project evolved throughout the semester, I am proud that I helped pilot the Recovery Ready Ally program and contributed to building a stronger recovery-ready campus community at The University of Texas at San Antonio. This experience reinforced my passion for recovery and supporting others through education and compassion.





CRC Spring Fling: An All-Inclusive Event Celebrating Sobriety, Community, and Opioid Overdose Prevention at California State University-Stanislaus
Danielle Salcedo

"Recovery is not just about abstaining from substances; it is about rebuilding a life worth living."
 –Author Unknown

Impact Project Goals:

- Create a safe and sober social event for students
- Promote opioid overdose prevention and harm reduction awareness
- Reduce stigma surrounding recovery and substance use
- Increase awareness of the Collegiate Recovery Community (CRC)
- Build partnerships with campus and community organizations
- Encourage students to access wellness and recovery resources

Challenges Along the Way:

One challenge was balancing event planning with school and leadership responsibilities. Coordinating with multiple campus and community partners also required strong communication and organization. Another challenge was encouraging student participation while addressing the stigma often connected to recovery and substance use. Despite these challenges, the experience strengthened my leadership and problem-solving skills.

Measurements of Success:

The project's success was measured through student attendance, campus engagement, and community collaboration. The event included partnerships with Project Rebound, Promise Scholars, Basic Needs, Campus Recreation, Counseling and Psychological Services, Well-Being Ambassadors, and community organizations such as AEGIS, Sutter Health, and Behavioral Health & Recovery Services.

The event impacted approximately 45 registered students, not including staff and community members, through outreach, education, and resource-sharing. Students responded positively to having a sober-centered event focused on wellness, recovery, and connection.

Overall Project Outcome:

The overall outcome of the project was positive and impactful. The event created a welcoming environment where students could participate in sober activities while learning about harm reduction and overdose prevention. It also strengthened partnerships across campus and increased awareness of recovery-supportive resources available to students.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

This project helped me grow personally and professionally. As a Latina, first-generation college student, and first-year sober student leader, this experience reminded me that my story can positively impact others. I learned more about prevention, harm reduction, leadership, and community collaboration. Most importantly, I gained confidence in my ability to advocate for students and help create supportive spaces.



CRC SPRING FLING

Opioid Awareness & Overdose Prevention
Join a fun, substance-free celebration focused on connection, community, and wellness!

Connect, learn life-saving skills and enjoy a safe, supportive space with your campus community!

LEARN HOW YOU CAN...

- Recognize and respond to an overdose
- Use life-saving interventions and be prepared

At Spring Fling, get ready for

- Live DJ & music
- Free food
- Games, activities and prizes
- Campus community resources

WARRIOR LAWN AND STAGE
April 23, 2026
1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Register

Persons with disabilities who need accommodations or have questions about access may contact Counseling and Psychological Services at (314) 647-4386 or campusconnect@uic.edu





UCAN at the University of Texas-Austin
Dara Kiel

"We suffer more often in imagination than in reality." -Seneca

Impact Project Goals:

- Empower people in recovery to build long-term recovery capital through pursuing higher education
- Provide workshops for community college students in recovery that guide them through the transfer application process at The University of Texas at Austin
- Connect prospective transfer students with peer mentors from UT Austin's Center for Students in Recovery to support their transfer journey
- Conduct outreach to sober living homes and other recovery-centered spaces to share how higher education can strengthen long-term recovery and personal growth

Challenges Along the Way:

One of the earliest challenges I encountered was realizing that designing and implementing both the transfer student workshop series and the mentorship program was a substantial undertaking on its own. As a result, I made the decision to temporarily place the outreach component of the project on hold in order to focus on developing the core program effectively.

Another significant challenge was reaching the target demographic of community college students in recovery who may be interested in pursuing education beyond a two-year degree. Even after connecting with potential participants, I struggled with participant retention and with helping participants stay on track with program timelines and university application deadlines. Data collection also proved difficult. I attempted to measure changes in participants' confidence in their academic abilities through pre- and post-program surveys, but participation in the surveys was very limited.

Measurements of Success:

To measure the success of the program, I focused primarily on the number of completed college applications submitted. At the time of writing, the program has supported one participant in successfully submitting a completed application, while two additional participants are continuing to work with mentors toward completing theirs.

Overall Project Outcome:

Overall, the outcomes of the project were positive. Although participants in the Fall application group did not complete the program (I theorize because of the quick turnaround from recruitment to program start), a new participant was later recruited through word of mouth at a recovery meeting and successfully completed his application with support from the program mentors. Participants in the Spring application group completed the workshop series and have continued working with mentors after the formal program ended in order to finalize their applications. Additionally, the mentors themselves reported increased self-assurance and noted that serving others strengthened their own recovery.

While I initially hoped to reach a larger number of participants, I came to recognize that this project serves a relatively small and specialized population. However, because the program can continue operating at no cost beyond the duration of the CRLA, I plan to continue developing it with several adjustments. The peer mentorship component emerged as the most impactful aspect of the initiative, so moving forward, it will

become the primary focus of the program. Rather than offering three hybrid workshops each cycle, I plan to host one comprehensive Zoom masterclass at the start of each application cycle, which will also be recorded for participants unable to attend live. Participants will then be placed into a group chat with mentors so they can independently coordinate meetings and receive continued support throughout the application process. This revised structure will also create more time for me and the mentors to begin implementing the outreach initiatives that were postponed earlier in the project.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Through the design and implementation of this project, I learned the importance of collaboration and asking for help. Initially, I felt pressure to manage every aspect of the program independently, but I discovered that seeking support is essential when building a sustainable initiative like UCAN. Asking for help was not viewed as a weakness or inconvenience; rather, the mentors were enthusiastic about contributing and genuinely invested in supporting both the project and the participants involved.



Are you in recovery from a substance use disorder and currently enrolled in, or recently graduated from, a two-year college?

Have you considered transferring to a four-year university but worry about:

- Gaps in your education?
- Past academic withdrawals?
- Periods of low academic performance tied to substance use?

We are here to show you that U CAN!

Here's what we offer:

- 01 Hands-on application Workshops
- 02 Mentorship from UT Austin students in recovery
- 03 An invite to UT Austin's Center for Students in Recovery

Workshops Series 1 (Admission to Fall 2026 Semester):
January 29th, February 12th, and February 26th 2026 from 5:30 PM-7:30 PM
Workshops Series 2 (Admission to Spring 2027 Semester):
March 12th, March 27th, and April 9th 2026 from 5:30 PM-7:30 PM
Or join us for both workshop cycles!

Each cycle consists of three workshops covering everything you need to apply to UT Austin, including personal statements and supplemental essays. Participation is free; however, participants are responsible for any application fees required by universities. UCAN will support students with financial need in identifying outside financial assistance options. Students may also apply to other four-year universities based on their individual goals. By the end of the program, you will have a completed application ready to submit.

Ready to take the next step in your educational journey? Scan the code to fill out the interest form! ➡

Questions about the program?

✉ dk32527@my.utexas.edu





Open Recovery Meeting at the University of Akron

Dean Roach

“Be the change you wish to see in this world.” –Commonly attributed to Mahatma Gandhi

Impact Project Goals:

- Find a location to hold an in-person meeting
- Set up a Teams meeting link to have a virtual option
- Meet with Student Government, Counseling Department, Dean of Students, etc.
- Create a flyer with a QR code to hang around campus, and send it to all students' emails
- Hold a meeting once per week on Tuesday evenings
- Have at least 10 total attendees by May 2026

Challenges Along the Way:

The biggest challenges I faced were how to advertise to the entire student body and how to find a way to pique their interest in attending a recovery meeting. I am grateful that everyone I interacted with was very open to me and to our mission. Advertising proved to be difficult, as were ways to connect and talk with the student body regarding recovery and collegiate recovery meetings.

Measurements of Success:

During the semester, I held 7 open recovery meetings in person with a virtual option. We had a total of 17 people attend the meetings altogether. My goal was to have 10 people attend altogether, so I feel it was a successful project and gave me some areas to grow to help reach more people.

Overall Project Outcome:

I believe my project was successful. Not only did I hit my goal for total attendees, but I also met some people who want to keep the meeting going and growing.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

As I started to go around and talk to people about the project, I realized I was able to speak openly, as this is what I am passionate about. I realized that with persistence, I could reach the right people in order to open this conversation and help a lot of people on our campus. Anything worth doing and getting started will need persistence and not giving up, and I realized that I just had to keep going, keep advertising, and the right doors would open, and they did. I learned the University of Akron is very open to the Collegiate Recovery Community and just wants to serve and help their students in prevention, recovery, or harm reduction any way they can.



**ARE YOU STRUGGLING WITH
DRUGS OR ALCOHOL?**

- Whether you're newly sober,
- long-term in recovery,
- or questioning your relationship with substances
— you belong here.

If you can't make it in person:

MICROSOFT TEAMS LINK

How to access the meeting online

OPEN RECOVERY MEETING
In-Person or Microsoft Teams
STARTING TUESDAY MARCH 3RD AT 7:30 PM.

WHEN & WHERE

Start Date: Tuesday,
March 3rd at 7:30
PM

Ongoing: Every Tuesday
at 7:30 PM

Location: University of
Akron Student Union
Lower Level – Dean
of Students Room
152.

Or Microsoft Teams

WHY COME:

You don't have to
choose between
college and
recovery.

You don't have to do this
alone.

Connection changes
everything.

For any questions you
have.

Questions: Contact Dean (330) 413-4107 OR Professor Ellis (216) 410-1861

YOU ARE NOT ALONE



The Opposite of Addiction is Community at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga

Elizabeth Haught

“True patriotism springs from a belief in the dignity of the individual, freedom and equality not only for Americans but for all people on earth.” –Eleanor Roosevelt

Impact Project Goals:

- Increase the collegiate recovery community’s (CRC) visibility on campus through tabling events
- Reduce stigma of addiction through an alternative programming social event
- Share my story with those who identify as being in early recovery to demonstrate that success is possible

Challenges Along the Way:

The two largest obstacles I faced implementing this project were allowing myself to delegate certain tasks that could be done by others and sharing my recovery story for the first time—the good, the bad, and the ugly. The alternative programming event involved planning a mocktail menu for 200 people. I had to let some of the actual purchasing be done by another student, which resulted in staying within budget but still having purchased way too much product. I am grateful that my university has an established CRC, and the Director was able to assist with some of the event planning. Still, letting go of my micromanaging behaviors was the hardest part of this project.

Measurements of Success:

Sharing my recovery story wound up being such an incredible experience. I advertised the meeting outside of a regular meeting time, on the group chat that Mocs Recovery has for its members. The amount of people who showed up was double that of our regular attendance. We usually have an average of 3-5 people attend regularly, and that day had 10. I was able to speak for 50 minutes (a personal record), and there were no follow-up questions, which tells me I kept it abstract enough not to be confusing or too detailed.

The tabling events happened sporadically throughout the semester. The largest one happened during recovery week, and there were a total of 8 programs offering information for their services, all pertaining to the recovery industry in some manner. I was able to contact 50 new students, hand out 15 t-shirts, and there was an increase of 6 new members added to the Mocs Recovery e-mail list.

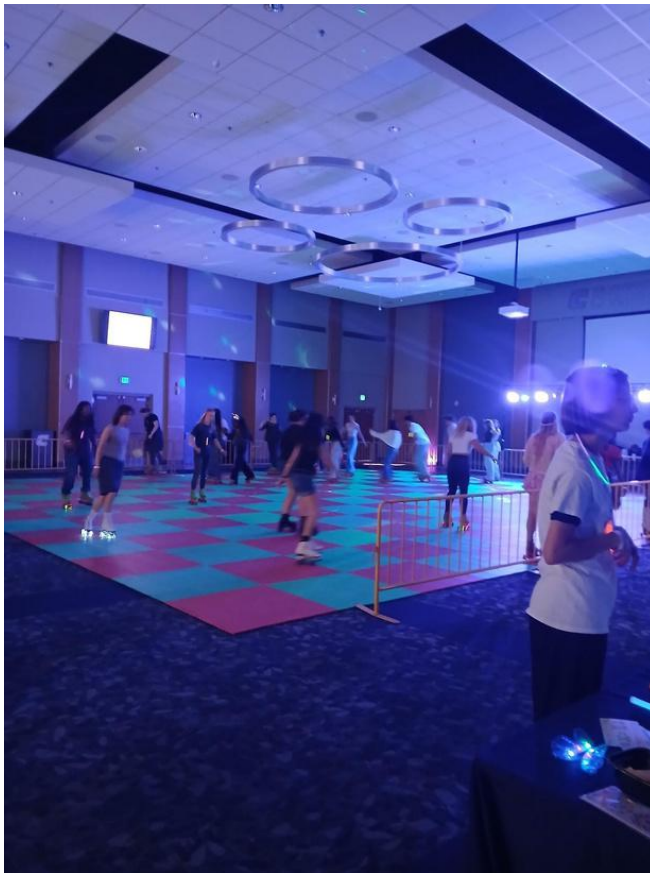
The alternative programming event probably reduced the most stigma, from my perspective, out of all the tasks I undertook for this project. A roller skating rink was set up, and students could sign up for free and skate for 45-minute sessions. I participated by making mocktails on the side of the rink and talking about recovery to anyone who was interested. I was able to do outreach for a demographic of students who all said they had never heard of Mocs Recovery. I spoke to a total of 180 students who were all now aware that there is support on campus if they feel they can benefit from it.

Overall Project Outcome:

I would say that I am satisfied with the overall outcome of my effort. My biggest goal was to show others that people in recovery aren’t lepers of sorts, and I feel this was accomplished on a campus-wide level. As for sustainability, if the fates allow, then I will be attending grad school on the same campus in the Fall. I will be happy to not only recreate these events, but possibly add onto them as time and resources allow.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

I have a career goal of working in the nonprofit recovery sector. Participating in this project has helped me to come out of my social shell, reducing my own shame of my past transgressions and harnessing those experiences as strengths rather than barriers.





Remembrance Rooted in Recovery: Creating a Collegiate Recovery Library to Navigate Grief & Loss from Substance-Related Deaths at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro

Ella Davis

“Listening is where love begins: listening to ourselves and then to our neighbors.” –Fred Rogers

Impact Project Goals:

- Create a dedicated space in our collegiate recovery program (CRP) lounge for a lending library of resources for students at UNCG who have lost someone to substance use
- Develop a meeting format for peers to lead meetings at our CRP to share experiences with one another after experiencing the death of someone due to alcohol or other drugs
- Build a collection of books, flyers for community events, infographics, educational posters, etc. to link students on UNCG’s campus to local resources so that members of our community do not have to search for help by themselves
- Integrate these resources into the existing framework of our campus’s recovery space

Challenges Along the Way:

The biggest challenge I faced when developing and implementing this project was that it changed direction several times, so the plan I started with did not come to fruition. My second project idea was to look at the existing policies on campus that would define how a student gets referred to the Spartan Recovery Program (SRP). From there, I was planning to have a conversation with administrators in Student Affairs to discuss the goal of making SRP a space based on attraction and a personal desire to seek recovery. Currently, the Spartan Recovery Program is likely to be viewed with stigma and is sometimes perceived as a place students go as a punishment or consequence. Eventually, while gathering information for that project, I was asked to pivot again to focus my time on getting approval for naloxone kits around campus and then getting them put in place. That project fell through because I was given very little guidance on my role and tasks, and I did not know where to start. In all three of these project ideas, I was essentially building something that had never been done on our campus before. I think that has largely contributed to why none of my three project plans have been fully completed.

Measurements of Success:

The success of my original “Grief Library” project was going to be measured by the number of students who entered the space and by the number of items taken by students each week. However, I did not measure data in this way. Although it could be categorized by the lack of data and metrics as “unsuccessful,” I think it is much more complex than that, and I would still consider the project successful because I started a dialogue with members of our community.

Overall Project Outcome:

The overall outcome of my project was that I gained a lot of useful knowledge, even if that does not look like measuring data in numbers. Even with the challenges and struggles that came up during this project, it still taught me impactful and important things I get to bring with me moving forward. Although my campus still does not have a resource library for grief and loss in our lounge space, I impacted my fellow SRP members by bringing up thought-provoking questions. I asked folks about their goals for Spartan Recovery and what they’d like to see in the future as supportive resources. Overall, my efforts and my project did have a meaningful impact, even though it didn’t end up looking the way I thought it would.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

During this project, I learned many things about my university's administration, UNC System policies, the effect of political division on funding for substance use resources, and more, but most of all, I learned that loving our people should come first. Our Spartan Recovery community lost our friend Kennie to the long-term effects of alcoholism on December 25, 2025, after eight years and one week of sobriety. Although I wish this project had turned out differently, I would not change it because I am so glad I spent as much time as I did with my friend and with my SRP family. Kennie was an anchor, bringing all of us back to the Spartan Recovery lounge day after day with his funny, witty, gentle way of being. I am so glad I could take a step back from this project, from when Kennie was in palliative care until after his funeral. Loving my people comes first, and if that means my plans must be changed or modified, that is okay with me.



Face Everything and Recover: Meditation and Reiki for Recovery at California State University-Los Angeles
Eric Gonzales

“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” – Socrates

Impact Project Goals:

- Work along with the California State University-Los Angeles Health Center and recovery group to promote harm reduction and wellness methods
- Host two workshops and two tabling events on addiction, substance use disorders, and harm reduction education and practices
- Distribute naloxone, amethyst gemstones, and pamphlets containing meditation practices and recovery resources

Challenges Along the Way:

Challenges that I experienced while planning my project were the lack of support from university departments to partner and promote these events. This stemmed from overwhelmed professors, staff, schedules, and university policies. While implementing my project, I partnered with the CSULA Health Center and Sober at CSULA recovery group for my two events. One event was with a physician teaching naloxone administration and education, in conjunction with my holistic practices. This event was canceled, so I pivoted by partnering with End Overdose to give the training. A week prior to the event, the Health Center decided that it would be best that I not do my portion of the event, without giving a reason for doing so. Another challenge I experienced was the health center completely canceling the second workshop. Despite these challenges, I pivoted by reaching out to the Department of Rehabilitation Services, Sober at CSULA recovery group, Counseling and Psychological Services, and the Rehabilitation Counseling Association for support in partnering with these events.

Measurements of Success:

My project's measurements of success were QR codes to obtain data of student's status, geographical location, and email address for future outreach. The attendees' and responses totaled 65 over the two workshops and tabling events. However, with the pamphlet and amethyst distribution, I estimate we impacted 75 students or more overall with these events.

Overall Project Outcome:

The overall outcome of my project was successful. I got to conduct two workshops, two tabling events, and was able to bring more awareness around addiction, substance use disorders, and, most importantly, recovery solutions to campus. Conversations at the events let me know that students were seeking help, and I was able to be of service by providing them with solutions.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

I learned throughout the implementation of this project that I need to take accountability. Despite the challenges or setbacks by others, I need to continue to take the next right action in being part of the solution in recovery. Additionally, I learned to navigate the university procedures and policies for student organizations, particularly for what it deems as acceptable events.

FACE EVERYTHING AND RECOVER

Meditation & Reiki for Recovery

Sign up Now!



WHEN:
TUESDAY
MARCH 10, 2026
12:00 PM-1:00PM
&
MARCH 17, 2026
12:00 PM-1:00PM

***FREE AMETHYST
STONE GIVEAWAY***

***LEARN RECOVERY
MEDITATION &
GEMSTONE WELLNESS
PRACTICES***



WHERE:
USU BUILDING, 3RD FLOOR
ALHAMBRA ROOM: 3/10
SAN GABRIEL ROOM: 3/17

Meditation is great for relieving stress, and is a coping strategy for dealing with challenges of life.
Reiki: rei (universal) and ki (life energy), is form of energy healing that can promote relaxation, reduce stress, support the body in its natural healing processes, and bring a sense of peace.



All students welcome, regardless of experience!
Learn about Recovery Solution on Campus!
Join us for a supportive and inclusive environment!

***Fill out a brief survey, and receive a Amethyst tumbled stone!**





Go Collegiate! Go Rio! Collegiate Recovery Program at Rio Hondo College

Eric Limas

“Begin in this day—not a future day. That’s the game.” –Author Unknown

Impact Project Goals:

- Create a Collegiate Recovery Program (CRP) at Rio Hondo College
- Build awareness around recovery and reduce stigma on campus
- Create a safe and supportive community for students in recovery or struggling with substance use
- Engage students, staff, and the Board of Trustees in conversations about recovery support
- Establish a sustainable foundation that future students can continue building upon

Challenges Along the Way:

One of the biggest challenges I faced during this project was experiencing a relapse during the semester. Instead of isolating or stepping away, I chose to remain honest and transparent with my support system, including our staff coordinator, group leaders, and fellow students. Balancing recovery, school responsibilities, work, and leadership at the same time was difficult, but it also became one of the most meaningful learning experiences throughout this project.

Another challenge was navigating the process of building support for a Collegiate Recovery Program on campus. Creating awareness, reducing stigma, and working through institutional “red tape” required patience, persistence, and teamwork.

Measurements of Success:

I began this project by creating a detailed proposal with clear action steps and goals focused on establishing a Collegiate Recovery Program at Rio Hondo College. From the very beginning, my goal was to help create a safe and welcoming space where students could find connection, support, and hope. The first step was scheduling and organizing the initial Collegiate Recovery Program meeting to bring interested students together and begin building a recovery community on campus. I then spoke before the Board of Trustees to advocate for institutional support and to emphasize the importance of recovery resources for students whose academic success and personal well-being may depend on having access to community and support services. To continue building awareness and reducing stigma, I tabled at World’s Day, where I passed out flyers, shared information, and encouraged open conversations about recovery and substance use. I also spoke at a symposium, using the opportunity as a call to action for greater support, understanding, and investment in collegiate recovery programs. Finally, one of the most meaningful outcomes of this project was establishing ongoing Wednesday meetings where students could regularly come together, support one another, and build lasting fellowship. These meetings helped ensure that the program would continue growing beyond my direct involvement and would remain a source of support for future students in recovery.

Overall Project Outcome:

The project successfully helped create momentum toward establishing a Collegiate Recovery Program at Rio Hondo College. It strengthened connections among students in recovery and demonstrated the importance of recovery support services on college campuses. The experience also helped reduce stigma by encouraging honest conversations about substance use, recovery, and mental health. Most importantly, the project created a stronger sense of community and showed that students in recovery belong on college campuses and deserve opportunities to succeed academically and personally.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Throughout this project, I learned that leadership is not about pretending to have everything figured out. I learned that vulnerability, honesty, and transparency can create stronger trust and deeper connection within a community. Experiencing a relapse during the semester taught me the importance of staying connected instead of isolating. By continuing to show up honestly, I experienced support instead of judgment, and I watched others step into leadership roles to support the group as well. This experience taught me that recovery communities thrive through fellowship, accountability, and shared purpose. I also learned the importance of building something sustainable so future students can continue expanding recovery support at Rio Hondo College long after I leave.

RÍO HONDO COLLEGE
Collegiate Recovery Program

ASK ME ABOUT MY RECOVERY

RECOVERY. EDUCATION. COMMUNITY.

We support students on their journey to wellness, purpose, and academic success.

- SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY**
A welcoming community of students in recovery supporting each other every step of the way.
- ACADEMIC SUCCESS**
Resources and guidance to help you achieve your educational goals and build a brighter future.
- PERSONAL GROWTH**
Workshops and tools to help you grow, heal, and create the life you want.
- MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS**
Build lasting friendships and connections with others who understand your journey.

You're Not Alone. WE'RE HERE FOR YOU.

RÍO HONDO COLLEGE
3600 Workman Mill Rd., Whittier, CA 90601
rhcrp@riohondo.edu
www.riohondo.edu/crp



RÍO HONDO COLLEGE
Collegiate Recovery Program

ASK ME ABOUT MY RECOVERY

YOU'RE NOT ALONE. YOU'RE WELCOME HERE.

The Collegiate Recovery Program (CRP) at Rio Hondo is a program for students in recovery from substance use, as well as those who are currently struggling with alcohol and drug use. We are a community of campus dedicated to supporting students in their recovery efforts by providing resources for recovery, health & wellness, and academic success. With these efforts, we aim to create an inclusive environment and supportive community to help students thrive at Rio Hondo and beyond.

The Collegiate recovery program at Rio Hondo is open to students in all stages of recovery, embraces a harm reduction approach, and recognizes that there are multiple pathways to recovery.

OUR SERVICES

- Certified medical experts
- Easy appointment booking
- Weekly Recovery Meetings
- Convenient location: Room SS 107 from 3 - 4 pm

ALCOHOL AWARENESS
FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENT DRINKING

- High Alcohol Use & Misuse
- High Exposure to Alcohol
- Unintentional Trauma
- Unstable Financial Situation

Out of 1,000 people, 400 are in recovery.

There's no shame in seeking help.

WHO OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS.
ALL STAGES. ALL PATHS. ALL WELCOME.

Support. Community. Health. Wellness. Academic Success.
LET'S THRIVE TOGETHER.

FIND US
Room SS 107

WHEN
3 - 4 PM
WEEKLY MEETINGS





From Inside to Impact: A Reentry Simulation Experience at Grand Canyon University
George Nolan

"Your history is not a sentence. It is a starting line." –Author Unknown

Impact Project Goals:

- Recreate the friction of reentry inside a controlled simulation so participants experience the system rather than read about it
- Build empathy and systems literacy among students, employers, and community partners
- Pair the simulation with lived experience testimonials to humanize the data and disrupt stigma

Challenges Along the Way:

Calibrating real pressure within a short window took multiple revisions. Logistics ran in parallel: volunteer station leads, space, Narcan training, and protecting the dignity of the lived experience panelists. Several participants were also processing personal connections to incarceration in real time, which required attention to both program quality and human care.

Measurements of Success:

Twelve participants completed the post-simulation reflection survey. One hundred percent reported a meaningful emotional or cognitive shift in how they understand reentry. More than 100 Narcan kits were distributed on site with hands-on instruction. Most students had never seen Narcan deployed and did not know how to use it, which made the training one of the most measurable harm reduction outcomes of the event.

Overall Project Outcome:

The simulation produced the disruption it was designed to create. One participant wrote that they preferred to stay in jail rather than continue. Another wrote that the experience made them feel like a failure and not even human. That is the exact weight returning citizens carry into housing offices, hiring conversations, and probation check-ins. The lived experience panel was repeatedly named as the most impactful component, reinforcing that authentic voice drives change faster than data alone.

Two nonprofits co-delivered the simulation and leadership panel alongside New Freedom: Arizona Peer and Family Career Academy (AZPFCA) and Inside Out Network (insideoutnetwork.net). Their participation expanded the credibility and lens of the panel beyond a single organization.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

This work deepened my conviction that proximity changes policy. People can read recidivism statistics for years and stay neutral. Twenty minutes of friction inside a simulation moves them. As a formerly incarcerated facilitator, after seventeen years across three sentences, I was reminded that this is not a marketing exercise. It is a relationship with a community that is still inside, still coming home, and still waiting for a credible welcome.

Selected Participant Reflections

RESPONDENT	REFLECTION
1	“The jail had become like a safe space. I can only imagine how harmful that is in real life.”
9	“I was unaware of the frustration, fear, and stress of navigating the system without being informed. I felt like a failure and not even human.”



Reentry simulation in progress



Leadership panel and Narcan training



Recovery Lounge at the University of Utah

Harold Mendoza

“Just because someone stumbles and loses their path, doesn’t mean they’re lost forever”
–Professor Charles Xavier

Impact Project Goals:

- Create a safe and welcoming space where students in recovery can build community, form meaningful friendships, feel connected, and know they are not alone in their journey
- Reduce the stigma around addiction by fostering a culture of understanding, compassion, and support across the University of Utah campus
- Raise awareness that recovery support exists on campus through a Collegiate Recovery Program where students can find connection, support, and resources to help them navigate recovery while succeeding academically and personally

Challenges Along the Way:

Creating a Recovery Lounge for students in recovery was a meaningful and rewarding project, but it also came with several challenges throughout the planning and implementation process:

- **Finding the Right Space:** One of the biggest challenges was finding a space large enough to function both as a recovery lounge and as a place to host support groups. We wanted the location to feel welcoming, accessible, and central so students, staff, faculty, and community members could easily attend meetings and build connection.
- **Parking Barriers:** Parking at the University of Utah can be expensive and difficult to navigate. A major part of this project involved coordinating with different departments to help create parking accommodations during recovery meeting hours so students in recovery would not be discouraged from attending meetings because of parking costs or restrictions. We wanted to remove as many barriers to recovery support as possible.
- **Navigating Bureaucracy:** Getting the project started involved navigating a complicated administrative process. It was difficult at times to identify the right contacts, receive timely responses, and schedule meetings with decision-makers. In several cases, communication stalled after meetings took place. Because of this, we eventually decided to reach out directly to the Student Union management team, which ultimately helped us secure a space for the Recovery Lounge.
- **Budget Proposal Delays:** Due to the delays involved in securing a space and navigating the approval process, it was challenging to submit a fully accurate budget proposal to SAFE Project before the original deadline. Fortunately, SAFE Project was understanding and willing to work with us as we continued moving through the university’s administrative and planning process.

Measurements of Success:

These were some of the main indicators of growth and success throughout the year:

- In Fall 2025, students in recovery started an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting on campus. The meeting began with approximately 4 attendees and has continued growing to an average of around 10 participants weekly. This became the foundation of a growing recovery community at the University of Utah.
- Around the same time, students in recovery were supported in creating a student-led Sober Club, helping students build connection and community outside of support meetings. The Sober Club has continued to host activities every other Friday, with an average attendance of at least 10 students per event.

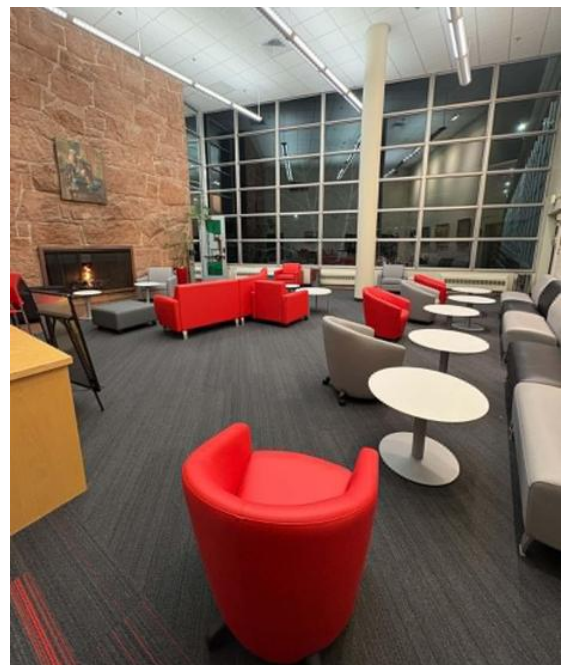
- In Spring 2026, students expanded recovery support on campus by starting two additional fellowships: Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Sexaholics Anonymous (SA), increasing the number of recovery support groups available on campus to three.
- The NA meeting began with approximately 10 participants and has continued growing to an average weekly attendance of around 20 individuals.
- The SA meeting started with approximately 8 participants and has consistently maintained an average attendance of 8-10 individuals weekly.
- During Spring 2026, connections were established with SMART Recovery, and two members of the recovery community completed facilitator training to help expand recovery support options for students.
- A student council made up of students in recovery was organized to ensure student voices remained central to the development and direction of the Collegiate Recovery Program.
- Throughout the year, the recovery community continued to grow as more students, staff, faculty, and community members began attending meetings, participating in events, and engaging with Recovery at the U.

Overall Project Outcome:

We were able to secure a dedicated space for the Recovery Lounge, which will serve as a place where students can attend recovery meetings, build community, socialize, and support one another in their recovery journeys. Although the space has been secured, additional work still needs to be done with SAFE Project to finalize funding and furnish the lounge. Because of the amount of time it took to navigate the process of securing a space, we were unable to fully complete the project within the original timeline.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

- Working on this project helped me better understand how to navigate bureaucratic processes within higher education and how important it is to connect with the right people in order to move a project forward.
- I learned how important it is to use available resources and relationships effectively. Building meaningful connections with managers, supervisors, co-workers, students, and outside organizations played a major role in making this project possible, and each person contributed in valuable ways throughout the process.
- The most meaningful part of this experience was that, as a student in recovery myself, this project gave me the opportunity to connect and work with other students who are passionate about recovery and creating community on campus. It reminded me how powerful connection and shared experiences can be in helping people feel supported and less alone.





Expanding Hoyas for Recovery Presence to Plant Seeds of Recovery at Georgetown University Jacob Lignell

“The tree that grows to heaven must send its roots to hell.” –Nietzsche

Impact Project Goals:

- Expand partnerships with school departments
- Grow our numbers
- Do three events
- Reduce stigma
- Make Hoyas for Recovery more visible to the student population

Challenges Along the Way:

This whole project boils down to improvise, adapt, and overcome, as I faced tremendous barriers. The biggest challenge I faced was a lack of interest among the student body and the administration in my project, rooted in stigma. I go to a private school with heavy traditions. Any form of change is not viewed positively. I found major issues with getting administrative backing for our events or with my original idea of recovery housing. This is unfortunate because we did get backing from our campus police and Counseling and Psychological Services, and we have strong ties to the Addiction Policy and Practice program. However, the student government and the administration would not promote our events, even though we went through the proper channels.

Another major issue I faced was student stigma. The students here have all worked so hard and are “so bright” that they do not think they match the idea of someone with a substance use disorder. For example, when we handed out Narcan (naloxone), the most common response was: “I don’t do heroin.” This is especially concerning since heroin is rare now; fentanyl is the most prevalent. Another time, we had a pizza event, and not a single student came. We did not make it recovery-focused; it was a hangout and a meet-the-group event. Personally, I also struggled with the time commitment. I work full-time as the director of operations, where I am planning national events on July 11th and September 26th (walkforlives.org), and I am a full-time student; I was so busy. However, the suggestion of setting aside 2-3 hours a week really helped, as did leaning on my group members for support when I felt overwhelmed.

Measurements of Success:

Facing barriers and getting no attendance really required me to take a step back and say, “Okay, this isn’t working. How can we actually make a real impact?” It is not about giving up; sometimes, you just genuinely have to look at something from a different perspective. I decided that if we can not get people into recovery, we can provide them with the tools to save someone’s life. I partnered with the DC Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission, and they gave us Narcan (naloxone) to hand out. Previously, my group tried to distribute Narcan, but we may have handed out 1 case (12 doses) total. To aid in this, we partnered with Binge Bar to serve mocktails as we handed out Narcan to spark interest. Overall, it was a success. I was expecting to hand out 20-30 doses. We ended up handing out 96! That is 96 potential overdoses that we could influence and not only save students’ lives but also promote them to carry it around the city. If one of these doses saves one life, that would be a tremendous success.

Overall Project Outcome:

Overall, we did expand our presence on campus. We distributed life-saving tools, built strong campus partnerships, and increased visibility for Hoyas For Recovery. My project did not go according to plan, but I think that is a testament to how recovery actually works. You never know how something is going to turn out, so you just have to take a leap of faith and keep adapting. We did not fill a room with new members, but we did get Narcan into students' hands and engage in great conversations. This is what collegiate recovery is about. You plant the seeds in someone's head, knowing that they may never act on them. However, now these students know that Hoyas For Recovery is here to support them when they are ready. I am proud of how much Narcan we handed out and thankful to have made some impact.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

The most important thing I learned from this project is to ask for help. With my own history of addiction and childhood, I really struggle with trusting people. However, for this project, I was forced to rely on others. I came to understand that asking for help does not mean that you are weak; it means you are human. I also really learned what it means to “meet people where they are”. Our original plan was not working, so I had to problem-solve and be flexible to find ways to meet students where they would really be. Having a Binge Bar really helped bring people in, and we set up in the most visible part of campus. I am grateful for this project and SAFE Project as a whole. Thank you for all that you do.





Improving Substance Use Education at Michigan State University

Kayla Dobrzyn

“Change brings opportunity.” –Author Unknown

Impact Project Goals:

- Integrate substance use recovery resources into already established campus workshops that educate incoming freshman students on sexual assault and relationship violence
- Implement measurable questions into pre-test and post-test questionnaires in order to understand the differences and impacts of the integrated information
- Create a safe and supportive environment where students can openly ask questions and learn how to support those who may be struggling with substance use
- Increase awareness and understanding of substance use disorders while reducing the stigma aligned

Challenges Along the Way:

A major challenge I experienced throughout this project was navigating the long-term implementation process. Due to the fact that this project involves integrating recovery resources into established campus workshop scripts, it has required multiple rounds of approval from board members and supervisors before any changes could be made. The process has also required a frequent need for collaboration, flexibility, and revision of ideas to align with the existing structure of the program. Another challenge has been maintaining consistency while contributing to an established program on campus. Since the integration process will continue throughout the summer and will not be implemented until the upcoming school year this fall, I will need to maintain persistence in order to ensure improvement.

Measurements of Success:

I felt successful through the continuous collaboration with others and the opportunity to simply share educational resources for substance use advocacy within a campus setting. Being able to have open conversations about recovery, harm reduction, and how to improve our educational system has made me feel very hopeful about the potential for change and increased awareness among students. Additionally, I consider the project to be successful because of its efficiency in reaching a vast number of students through an organization that already has a strong presence on campus. A goal that would represent success within this project is the further approval to add recovery-specific questions to the mandatory pre-test and post-test questionnaires to better measure whether students are retaining the information and whether the resources are making a meaningful impact.

Overall Project Outcome:

Although the project is still in progress, significant steps have been made toward integrating recovery education and resources into informative workshops. Throughout this experience, I have been able to do extensive research and gain a deeper understanding of various recovery resources, harm reduction methods, and overall substance use education. In relation, I have been discovering the importance of presenting information in a way that is supportive, meaningful, and genuinely impactful for students. This project has encouraged me to engage in more conversations about the importance of substance use advocacy while also working towards increasing awareness. Overall, the experience has been extremely rewarding and has solidified the need for prevention education in order to create safe environments for students.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Throughout the implementation of this project, I grew both personally and professionally while advocating for a concern that I am deeply passionate about. Through my personal research, I was able to learn more about how a majority of individuals perceive those who are experiencing substance use disorders, as well as how it impacts the individuals themselves. One of the most meaningful parts of this experience has been the opportunity to openly talk about recovery and addiction, helping me receive the reality from personal experiences. This project has made me more excited to further develop my own knowledge and learn how to impactfully advocate for my community.



Spring Fling Tabling Event at Tufts University

Lauren DeGaugh

“My challenge is to be authentic. To accept my weaknesses and strengths.” –Nic Sheff

Impact Project Goals:

- Distribute harm reduction supplies to students at a school event where new and heavy substance use is common
- Promote educational materials regarding Narcan (naloxone), fentanyl test strips, and general alcohol safety information for students

Challenges Along the Way:

Throughout this year, I struggled to find a project that would best serve my community. I wanted my messaging to be inclusive and non-judgmental so that students would regularly consider harm reduction practices whenever a substance is used. For example, simple initiatives like eating before drinking or swapping every other drink with water are common practices my college community would benefit from. At first, I attempted to implement drink covers in our tabling event, but I was met with some resistance from administration. In addition, it was difficult at times to get supply donations from stores; luckily, I sent out requests early in the semester, so this didn't throw off my tabling event. My event eventually received enough funding and support to make my project proposal a reality.

Measurements of Success:

I measured the project's success by the connections we made with students at the tabling event. Our event had supplies like Narcan and fentanyl test strips that students were encouraged to take. While not all students chose to take these supplies, conversations regarding personal experience with harm reduction occurred. In addition, education surrounding Narcan and fentanyl test strips was common. When students asked questions regarding Narcan use, for example, I was able to explain the steps to use this life-saving measure effectively. I was also able to gain valuable insights into students' substance use that could be used to further develop harm reduction initiatives. In terms of metrics, 48 doses of Narcan and ~80 fentanyl test strips were taken by students throughout the three-hour event. I would estimate about ~150 students were impacted by this project on my campus.

Overall Project Outcome:

I believe my project was a success due to the valuable conversations and educational resources the tabling event provided for students. Nearly all of the supplies we bought were taken.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

This event definitely required strong organizational and interpersonal skills. The tabling event pushed me out of my comfort zone because I had to approach people and start conversations about topics they might not feel comfortable discussing. It also changed my perspective on harm reduction after a member of Tufts' administration explained to me that harm reduction is no different from wearing a seatbelt or sunscreen—it is simply a way to reduce risk. Because of this, I was able to frame the project around everyday harm reduction supplies such as sunscreen, fans, earplugs, Narcan, and fentanyl test strips. By providing Narcan and test strips alongside more familiar day-to-day items, I believe we helped normalize the idea that harm reduction practices should be incorporated whenever substances are used.



MAPP YOUR DAY

Some people who choose to drink use the "MAPP" strategy to keep drinking safer, maximize euphoric/ "buzzed" effects, and avoid feeling sick.

M **MEASURE**

Measure drinks. Know what & how much you're consuming.

A **ALTERNATE**

Alternate alcoholic & non-alcoholic beverages.

P **PACE**

Consider pace – no more than 1 standard drink per hour.

P **PLAN**

Plan ahead. How much do you plan to drink, and when will you stop?

BE PRESENT. STAY IN CONTROL. ENJOY THE MOMENT.

Zara Larsson

ZARA LARSSON SAYS:

HAVE FUN. STAY SAFE.

★ YOUR SPRING FLING CHECKLIST ★

HAVE THE BEST DAY. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND EACH OTHER. ♥

☐ **START YOUR DAY RIGHT**

All students are welcome to come to Carmichael Dining Center for breakfast starting at 7AM—no meal plan required!

☐ **FUEL UP!**

The Office for Campus Life will be hosting a free Spring Fling BBQ on the lawn at 80 Professors Row from 10AM–1PM.

☐ **CHILL, SNACK & REFUEL**

Swing by the Chill Zone and Pizza Tent for free pizza, snacks, and water—hang out and refuel before diving back into the music!

take breaks. hydrate. you got this.

USE YOUR GOODIE BAG!

- ☐ **SUNSCREEN** Protect your skin!
- ☐ **FANS** Stay cool!
- ☐ **EARPLUGS** Protect your hearing!

These little items make a big difference!

★ HARM REDUCTION REMINDERS ★

- ☐ **KNOW YOUR LIMITS**
- ☐ **NEVER LEAVE YOUR DRINK UNATTENDED**
- ☐ **STICK WITH FRIENDS / USE THE BUDDY SYSTEM**
- ☐ **AVOID MIXING SUBSTANCES**
- ☐ **LOOK OUT FOR OTHERS**

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

- ☐ Check in with your friends
- ☐ Plan a safe way home

THANK YOU FOR LOOKING OUT FOR YOURSELF AND EACH OTHER. MAKE MEMORIES, NOT REGRETS.

be kind. be safe. have fun!

Zara Larsson



Collegiate Recovery Presentation on Party Culture at the University of California-Davis
Mia Fisher

*“Let everything happen to you
 Beauty and terror
 Just keep going
 No feeling is final”
 –Rainer Maria Rilke*

Impact Project Goals:

- To debunk stigmas surrounding party and drinking culture at UC Davis
- To highlight the dangers of partying without proper education
- To provide students with resources on drinking responsibly
- To educate students on proper naloxone administration and handling

Challenges Along the Way:

I spent a lot of time searching through UC Davis and SAMHSA compendiums to collect recent undergraduate data, which ultimately became a large part of my project. For this reason, I did not manage my time as well as I had hoped, so my oral presentation was weaker than I would have liked. Additionally, it is relatively difficult to get student attendance through flyering and Instagram, so the number of attendees was not as high as I had hoped.

Measurements of Success:

At the end of my presentation, I shared a survey with all attendees. In this survey, I asked about the extent to which each attendee felt educated on certain topics, including party and hookup culture, naloxone administration, and campus resources related to substance use, mental health, and/or support services. The form measured the level of education before and after attending the presentation. Additionally, the form asked respondents to share the extent to which they felt pressured to participate in drinking, drugs, and/or hookups. It ended with a free-response question where attendees could describe the parts of the presentation they found most helpful and informative.

Overall Project Outcome:

Ten people attended the presentation. 7 out of 10 people in attendance were trained in naloxone administration, while three others had previously received training. Throughout the presentation, attendees participated in cross-talk where they shared their own experiences with party culture and social pressures on the UC Davis campus. Through the post-presentation survey, I gauged where my presentation needed room for improvement. Overall, I feel that I successfully fulfilled my impact project goals and relayed them to my audience in a fashion that was accommodating and digestible.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

I became more flexible the longer I worked on my project, as I had to segue many times for my project to better fit the environment. I also learned a lot more about the inner workings of my school and its policies. Through my project, I also gained a better sense of what conflicts are most relevant to our school and how best to reach students in a meaningful way.

RSVP FOR PIZZA AND RAFFLE

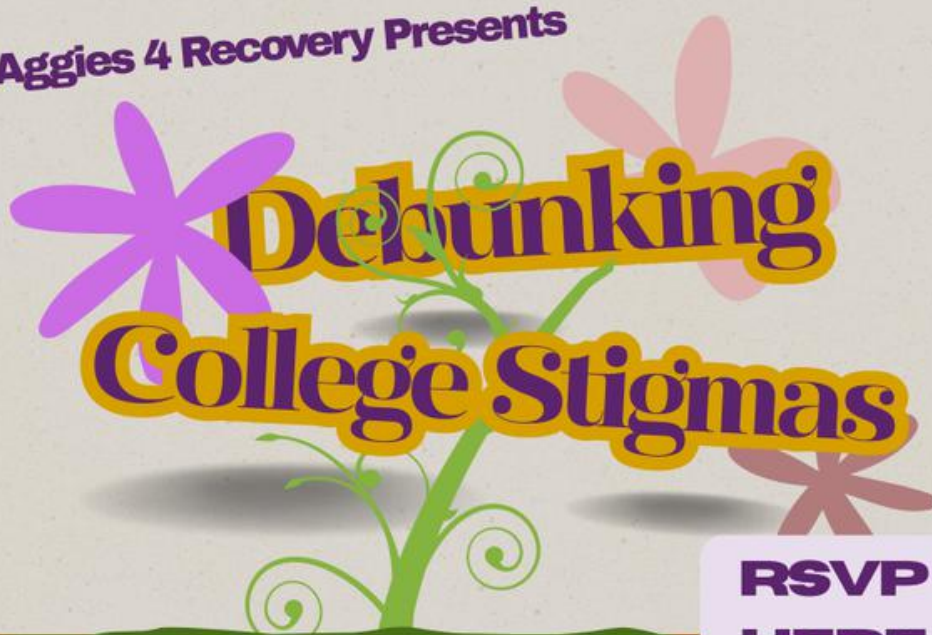
Aggies 4 Recovery Presents

**Debunking
College Stigmas**

**RSVP
HERE**

**A presentation on party culture
and mindful living at UC Davis**

**Wednesday 04/22
6:00-7:30 @Cowell Building**





Recovery Allyship Training: Changing Campus Narratives at Tulane University
Nickolus B. Harrison

“Recovery begins with connection.” –Author Unknown

Impact Project Goals:

- Reduce stigma surrounding problematic relationships with substances and recovery on Tulane’s campus while promoting a more recovery-supportive and inclusive university environment
- Develop a Recovery Allyship Training for Resident Advisors (RAs), student organizations, and department leaders to increase understanding of students experiencing problematic relationships with substances and students engaging in recovery within a collegiate setting
- Normalize sobriety as a valid and respected choice within a campus culture where alcohol/substance use is normalized
- Increase awareness of recovery resources available through Tulane’s collegiate recovery program, Tulane Recovery Community (TRC), while promoting recovery-supportive engagement practices across campus
- Develop a specialized Recovery Allyship Training for Tulane Emergency Medical Services (TEMS) providers focused on first-response situations involving intoxication, overdose, and students experiencing substance-related crises

Challenges Along the Way:

Doing this project involved navigating the structure and timeline of a university system. The original Recovery Allyship Training was designed for RAs, student organizations, and department leaders in the Spring 2026 semester. However, due to the timing of university training cycles and organizational planning processes, the training could not formally be integrated into RA and student organizational structures until the following academic year, i.e., Fall 2026. As the project developed, TEMS reached out after learning about the Recovery Allyship initiative and requested specialized training tailored specifically for TEMS providers. This required the development of a second presentation focused on crisis response, overdose, intoxication, stigma in emergency care, and recovery-informed engagement practices. Adapting the training for a medical-response audience required significant revision and collaboration. The TEMS Recovery Allyship Training was successful and well-received in the Spring of 2026.

Measurements of Success:

I collected data through quantitative and qualitative post-training evaluation survey questions accessed via a QR code linked to a Qualtrics survey displayed during the PowerPoint presentation. Survey findings suggested strong positive outcomes across all measured domains. In relation to stigma and bias awareness, 72% strongly agreed that the training increased awareness of their own assumptions and biases surrounding addiction and recovery. Participants also reported increased confidence in responding empathetically to students experiencing substance-related concerns, with 79% strongly agreeing that they felt more prepared to engage compassionately and without judgment. One of the most significant findings was that 93% of participants reported this was their first Recovery Allyship Training, suggesting the project filled an important educational gap within the university community. However, only 66% strongly agreed that they understood how to connect students to recovery resources, such as the TRC, indicating a need for greater emphasis on referral pathways and resource education in future TEMS provider training.

Qualitative responses emphasized the importance of empathy, non-stigmatizing language, and meeting students where they are in recovery. Participants also recommended incorporating more TEMS-specific scenarios, practical response strategies, and shorter educational sections to improve engagement and applicability. Another measure of success was the project's sustainability. An undergraduate student affiliated with Wave of Support collaborated on the training and will continue the project next semester, helping ensure the initiative continues to expand within the campus community. Nevertheless, because the evaluation used a post-training-only survey design without a pre-training assessment, the findings cannot definitively measure the degree of change produced by the intervention.

Overall Project Outcome: The overall outcome of this project was the successful development and implementation of two Recovery Allyship Trainings that increased awareness of recovery, reduced stigma, and promoted understanding of recovery-supportive resources and practices on campus.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Personal growth obtained through this project included a deeper understanding of the relationship between individual recovery and systemic change. While completing my undergraduate degree in Addictive Behaviors Counseling and Prevention at Southern University at New Orleans, I developed the perspective that, for micro-level recovery to be sustained, macro-level recovery must also begin. This perspective ultimately influenced my decision to pursue a Master of Social Work degree at Tulane. My experience with the (TRC) and this project has validated that belief. It has been an honor to be part of TRC and the broader national recovery movement.

I have conducted extensive research throughout this project and discovered valuable information that is often underemphasized in traditional academic settings, where discussions frequently focus on acute care and treatment rather than long-term recovery sustainability and recovery capital. This experience taught me that sustainable recovery-oriented change requires collaboration, participation, community engagement, and shifts in social narratives. Most importantly, this experience reinforced my belief that recovery advocacy is not only about helping individuals survive addiction, but also about helping communities create environments where recovery can thrive. It is a true honor to be a part of the Recovery Movement fostered by SAFE Project's CRLA. I look forward to using this experience to increase my effectiveness in serving students at TRC throughout my MSW internship.





**Find Recovery at SCU: Improving Accessibility to Harm Reduction & Recovery Resources
at Santa Clara University
Siya Aggarwal**

“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.” –Desmond Tutu

Impact Project Goals:

- Improve accessibility and visibility of substance use, harm reduction, and recovery resources at Santa Clara University
- Reduce fragmentation across existing Wellness, Recovery, and BeWell resource pages
- Create a centralized, student-centered “Find Recovery at SCU” resource hub
- Normalize conversations around recovery and harm reduction on campus
- Increase upstream awareness of support resources before students reach a point of crisis
- Improve navigation to overdose prevention, Narcan (naloxone) access, recovery meetings, and substance-free housing resources

Challenges Along the Way:

- Coordinating across existing university systems and webpages that already contained overlapping information
- Balancing accessibility, clarity, and simplicity while avoiding duplication of existing resources
- Learning how institutional implementation processes function, particularly regarding website restructuring and approvals
- Ensuring the project remained student-centered while also fitting within administrative and technical constraints
- Managing project development alongside a full academic workload and graduation-related responsibilities

Measurements of Success:

- Developed a full restructuring proposal for a centralized recovery and harm reduction website
- Conducted multiple feedback and revision meetings with Wellness leadership
- Created detailed mock-ups for landing pages, navigation structure, and resource tiles
- Designed a “Start Here: I’m Not Sure What I Need” decision-tree concept to improve student navigation
- Received conceptual approval for the project direction from Wellness leadership
- Advanced the proposal toward implementation discussions with the university web team

Overall Project Outcome:

The project resulted in a comprehensive proposal to redesign and centralize Santa Clara University’s harm reduction and recovery resources into a more accessible and student-friendly format. The work helped initiate broader conversations around visibility, navigation, and upstream access to support resources on campus. The proposal is currently moving toward implementation discussions with the university web team.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Through this project, I learned how systems-level recovery advocacy often involves both relationship-building and infrastructure-building. The CRLA helped me think more intentionally about leadership, implementation, and the importance of creating environments where support is visible and accessible before students actively seek help. I also learned how meaningful institutional change requires collaboration, patience, revision, and strong communication across multiple stakeholders. Most importantly, the experience reinforced my commitment to pursuing recovery and harm reduction work as part of my long-term career in behavioral health and public health equity.



Connection, Allyship, and Outreach: Expanding Recovery Programming at Stanford University

Soo Yeon (Jean) Chun

“Just Do It.” –Nike

Impact Project Goals:

- Connection – To lead weekly, structured all-recovery meetings for Stanford students
- Allyship & Anti-Stigma – To expand our existing recovery allyship training to include information on the biology of addiction, emphasizing that addiction is a disease and not a moral or personal failing
- Outreach – To promote Cardinal Recovery’s programs by publishing an article about it in The Flourish, Stanford’s mental well-being newsletter, and adding its information to our Health Center’s mental health resources web page

Challenges Along the Way:

One of the biggest challenges I faced was getting busy Stanford students to attend Cardinal Recovery events. I designed and distributed flyers for our all-recovery meetings across campus, hosted an open all-recovery meeting with free boba to encourage student attendance, and tabled with other Cardinal Recovery staff in public spaces. While attendance at our weekly all-recovery meetings was limited, several students came to multiple consecutive meetings, which I believe testifies to our meetings’ value and effectiveness.

Expanding our allyship training to include the biological basis of addiction was a challenging process as well. I had to think critically about which scientific concepts to include, and revised my slides for our second training session to focus more on the main message—that addiction is a disease, and not a moral failing—without overexplaining neurobiology. I believe my finalized presentation strikes an adequate balance between scientific depth and accessibility while conveying a strong anti-stigma message.

Measurements of Success:

Our weekly all-recovery meetings typically consisted of 3 Cardinal Recovery staff and 1-3 student attendees. While a larger group would have been ideal, the small group size allowed for more individualized attention, active participation, and intimacy. Our recovery allyship training sessions had around 10 attendees on average. Our tabling and other promotional events had a much larger attendance (estimated ~10-30 students). The article I wrote for The Flourish is online and can be viewed by any student. I also worked with the Health Center to include information about Cardinal Recovery on their mental health resources web page. Thus, I believe my project had both individualized and campus-wide impact.

The most important measure of impact, I believe, is peer feedback. In the post-allyship training survey, 5 out of 6 respondents said that the training “change[d] [their] view on substance use, recovery, or allyship.” One student shared: “I’m now aware that so much counts as allyship. It’s not just about talking about recovery with people, but generally just being a positive influence and friend for people to rely on. This way, people in recovery do not have to go through their struggles, or their life, alone.” Another student said: “The training made me understand the stigma behind seeking help for substance use disorders.” When asked about their main takeaways, students shared things such as “actively decreasing stigma,” “be[ing] empathetic,” and “how to best use non-stigmatizing language.” One student excellently summarized the fundamental message of our training: “The biggest helper overall for helping people in recovery is to be there for them...Human connection is truly such a powerful resource that can help with mental health issues and overall well-being.”

The all-recovery meetings, which I lead every week, led to positive feedback as well. Attendees would often share which exercises they enjoyed and found helpful in the past week. One popular exercise was “Personify and Disarm”, where you give a persona and name to your addictive behavior. The open meeting was also met with great feedback. One attendee’s main takeaway was “that it’s validating to speak about our feelings to each other sometimes.” Another person stated, “We’re all connected. So helpful to be in community with others and getting real.”

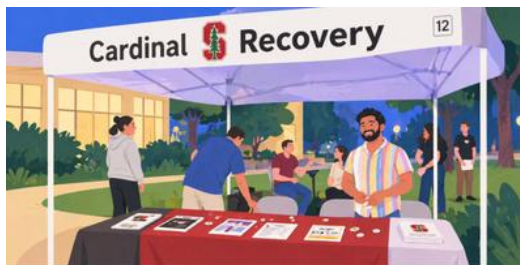
Overall Project Outcome:

Overall, I believe my project was able to achieve the goals of fostering peer support and connection, combating stigma through scientific knowledge, and promoting awareness of Cardinal Recovery’s programs on campus. I am particularly proud of the recovery allyship training, which has expanded into a collaborative effort between Cardinal Recovery, Stanford’s PEER health educators, and The Well House staff, Stanford’s substance-free dorm.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

I learned a lot about the neurobiology of addiction while researching and creating the slides for the recovery allyship training. The research process also reinforced my belief that the first step to combating stigma is recognizing the biological basis of addiction. I also learned how to design concise, visually appealing slides and diagrams.

Most importantly, I grew in my confidence as an advocate for individuals struggling with substance use disorder and behavioral addictions. As an aspiring psychiatrist, I hope to continue supporting people in recovery to lead self-directed, meaningful lives.

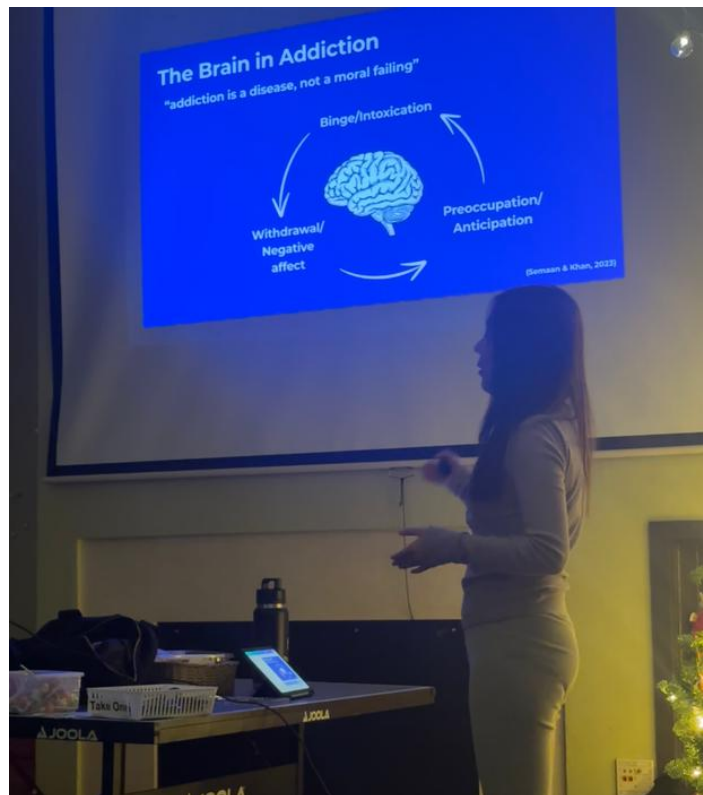


Special Feature

Cardinal Recovery

Cardinal Recovery is a peer-led support program for students navigating addiction and mental health challenges. We host sober social events, recovery allyship trainings, and weekly all-recovery meetings—private spaces to discuss your experiences with peers and build tools for mental well-being. If you’re struggling, please reach out—you’re not alone.

[Read more about Cardinal Recovery](#)





Collegiate Recovery Awareness Project at Mt. San Antonio College Sunshine Norris

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” –Philippians 4:13

Impact Project Goals:

- To bring awareness about addiction and recovery on campus
- To help students know they are not alone
- To reduce shame and stigma around substance use and recovery
- To connect students with recovery resources and support
- To create conversations about addiction, mental health, healing, and prevention
- To encourage students to ask for help when needed

Challenges Along the Way:

There were a lot of challenges I experienced while planning and implementing this project. This was all new to me, so at first I really did not understand how to put everything together. At times, I felt overwhelmed because I was trying to balance school, internship hours, my children, my weekend job, and my regular life responsibilities all at once. There were moments where I honestly felt like giving up on the project, not because I did not care about it, but because I felt like I did not have enough time or experience.

Another challenge was learning how to organize and plan an event. I had to learn about funding, arrangements, posters, communication, and working together with others. We met on Tuesdays and Thursdays to plan everything out and make sure the event came together correctly. Thankfully, I received help and support from another student friend and other students on campus who had previously completed CRLA Impact Projects. Their guidance helped me understand the process better and made me feel less lost.

I was also able to connect with the Health Center to help put the project together, which taught me how important teamwork and campus resources are. One of the hardest parts for me was that I was unable to physically be there the day of the event because I had internship responsibilities I could not miss. That part was disappointing to me because I worked hard on the project and wanted to see everything come together in person. Even though I could not attend, I heard the event went well, and students still benefited from the information and awareness that was shared.

Measurements of Success:

Even though I was unable to attend the event in person due to my internship responsibilities, I still believe the project was successful based on the feedback I received afterward. From what I heard, there was a good turnout, and students stopped by the table to ask questions, take information, and learn more about recovery and support resources. The event helped create conversations about addiction, mental health, and recovery on campus, which was one of the main goals of the project. I was told that students were engaged and interested in the materials and information provided. Knowing that the event was still able to come together successfully made me feel proud because I had worked hard behind the scenes to help plan it. I may not know the exact number of students impacted, but I believe even reaching a few people in a positive way can make a difference. To me, success was helping spread awareness, support, and hope to students who may be silently struggling or who know someone going through addiction or mental health challenges.

Overall Project Outcome:

The overall outcome of my project was positive. It helped bring awareness to recovery, prevention, and support for students. It also helped me see how important it is for colleges to have safe spaces and resources for students going through hard times. I feel the project helped create understanding and showed students that recovery is possible and people deserve support, not judgment.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

Throughout this project, I learned a lot about myself. I learned that my story and my recovery journey can actually help other people. Before, I used to feel ashamed about my past, but now I see that my experiences can bring hope and understanding to others who may be struggling. I also learned more about prevention, harm reduction, and the importance of community support. This project helped me grow in confidence, communication, leadership, and empathy. It reminded me why I want to continue working in the recovery and counseling field. Seeing people listen, connect, and feel supported made me realize that even small actions can make a difference.



Telling Their Stories at Trinity University
Vikram Kollipara

*"It is not the critic who counts...The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena."
 –Theodore Roosevelt*

Impact Project Goals:

- Increase empathy and awareness for people battling addiction, and get rid of stigma
- Show my school that everyone who has fought addiction has an important story to tell

Challenges Along the Way:

The challenge I experienced while doing my project was actually getting more people to speak about their stories. For my project, I was only able to get one volunteer who would be interviewed, but for the rest of the school year, the other people I had lined up could not make it. This was really unfortunate because so many more people could have heard people's stories with their struggles of addiction and what led to recovery, which would have increased overall awareness and empathy.

Measurements of Success:

To measure the project's overall success, I set up Google Forms with questions before and after the interview. This allowed me to collect overall data on how people's opinions changed regarding addiction and how they would help the cause moving forward. Based on the results, many people's opinions about aspects of addiction changed after the interview, which I view as an overall success.

Overall Project Outcome:

For the one interview I was able to successfully do, I had a lot of good responses that showed a change in people's perceptions of addiction. I will say, however, that if I were able to interview more people in front of the Trinity student body, it would have been a more successful outcome.

How did you grow and what did you learn throughout the implementation of your project?

I feel like I have grown a lot throughout my project because it allowed me to be more involved with the topic of addiction and harm reduction. I have personally volunteered a lot more with people in recovery and people battling addiction. I have volunteered more at Corazon Clinic and BAHRC, a local syringe drive, in order to help these communities. I have realized that even though my project did not go the way I wanted, I was able to learn from the people I spoke to and increase my involvement with the community.

Thank you!

The Collegiate Recovery Leadership Academy is made possible by the generosity of our sponsors and donors. Thank you for investing in student leaders and the future of substance use prevention, harm reduction, and recovery on college campuses.

A special thank you to Walmart for its sponsorship and support over the past 7 years.



If you would like to support the Collegiate Recovery Leadership Academy, please visit our website: safeproject.us