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Three winners in Medication-Assisted Recovery Essay Contest

People using variety of medications tell their recovery stories

KANSAS CITY, MO, December 15, 2011 – The Addiction Technology Transfer Center (ATTC) National Office, in partnership with Faces & Voices of Recovery and the National Alliance for Medication-Assisted Recovery (NAMA Recovery), announced the top three winners of the 4th annual “In My Own Words...” essay contest focusing on recovery from addiction using medication. The winners were: Darlene DeMore (Pennsylvania) first place; Louis Buchhold (California) second place; and Ian Christensen (Minnesota) third place. A record-breaking 128 individuals from across the US and the United Kingdom submitted essays.

In recognition of Recovery Month 2011, this year’s essay contest invited individuals who have been supported in their recovery by medications, including methadone or buprenorphine for opioid addiction and acamprosate or naltrexone for alcohol addiction, to share their stories. There are many paths to recovery from addiction. For many people, effective professional treatment services are used and may include the use of medications. Scientific studies indicate that when medication treatment is combined with other supportive services, patients are often able to stop using alcohol or other drugs and build healthy, productive lives.

Contestants described, in their own words, how medication-assisted treatment supported their recovery from addiction and why they continue to be committed to recovery. All participants will receive a special certificate and appreciation gift for their willingness to share these very inspiring stories

“As someone whose recovery is assisted by methadone and has spent most of the last two decades fighting for the acceptance of medications as pathways to recovery, reading these essays was almost overwhelming. Words like unique and courageous seem inadequate. Yes, this year’s essay contest was unique in that the essay writers are all people whose long-term recovery was assisted by medications. However, it is the first time, in my recollection, we have been asked to address not just our recovery, but also our medication-assisted recovery,” said Walter Ginter, Medication Assisted Recovery Services (MARS) Project Director. Individuals whose recovery has been assisted with medication have a unique perspective to share, and their essays highlight addiction as treatable, offering hope to those who are looking for new purpose and stability in their own lives.

The ATTC National Office, Faces & Voices and NAMA Recovery are grateful to each of the individuals who shared their very personal experiences. “We hope these stories will inspire readers and motivate others on their own recovery paths,” said Pat Taylor, Executive Director of Faces & Voices of Recovery. The top 20 essays will be compiled in a commemorative booklet and is available on the ATTC Network (www.ATTCnetwork.org/MAEssaycontest.asp), Faces & Voices (www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org), and NAMA Recovery (www.methadone.org) websites.

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