



MERC Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2021- Via Zoom

- Donna welcomed the group and asked new members to introduce themselves and the agencies they represent.
 - There were 24 members in attendance: Donna Nahlik, Stacy Nonn, Ashley Amburn, Karen Tilashalski, Brenda Schell, Brian Pollo, Chelsea Boyles, Deborah Humphrey, Greg Norkus, Janice Rushing, Jason Kelley, Jean Schram, Katie Stuart, Kristy Montgomery, Letreurna Packer, Liz McQuaid, Mira Williams, Patika Hackleman, Raechell Young, Sonja Vauters, Toy Beasley, Tisha Lancaster, Brent Cummins, Dana Rosenzweig
- MERC Processes – Donna Nahlik
 - Donna discussed the need to create an Executive Committee to support MERC. She asked for nominations from members, which can include self-nominations. The goal is to have a group of 5-7 members that can help oversee the MERC council and maintain council momentum.
 - The Strategic Plan for Years 2-3 was also discussed. The main goals were reviewed and the negative impact of COVID was also discussed. There was discussion about starting up small work groups again in the future. We are seeking to form a work group for each goal.
 - Goal: Establish a stronger recovery presence on college/university campuses
 - Goal: Maintain Council outreach and momentum
 - Goal: Decrease barriers to gainful employment for those in recovery with a criminal record
 - Goal: Increase support of individuals seeking or maintaining recovery by supporting efforts to increase number of Certified Peer Recovery Specialists
 - Donna made a follow-up request from the last meeting for finalized MOUs from partnering agencies. These are due as part of the MERC state requirements so members were asked to submit these as soon as possible.
 - Toy Beasley volunteered to reach out to try to engage re-entry groups in the two-county area. This will help engage partners to work on goal #3 as outlined above.
- Family Supports – Jean Schram
 - The Family Support Network is meeting on Wednesdays (when possible) at 10 am on zoom. They are looking for new members and Donna can provide the information by email. Their goal is to provide information and support to family members of individuals struggling with behavioral health disorders. The phone line is now available and that information will be sent out to the group. The group members are starting to contact faith based organizations to help with outreach to the community about the efforts of the family support network. They plan to reach out to members of the MERC council for help connecting with the various organizations.
- Partnership website review- Karen Tilashalski
 - Karen provided an overview of the new Partnership for Drug Free Communities website. Karen reviewed the tabs, focusing on the recovery resources available and an overview of the partnership group. MERC and the Family Support Network were also highlighted

and located so everyone can easily find them. There is also a new calendar feature that MERC can use to share meetings and activities.

- Wellness Moment – Ashley Amburn
 - Ashley discussed rich moments with the group and provided an overview of how this practice can be used with consumers. Several members shared rich moments with the group.
- Announcements/Events
 - Narcan trainings are being offered today through Chestnut on zoom. Karen provided information for attending the group.
 - Ashley discussed the Point in Time Count coming up for Madison County.
 - The 102nd Illinois General Assembly has just started. The deadlines come up quickly, so if anyone has any topics that can help the community or may need legislative changes, please reach out to Katie Stuart’s office with information.

Next meeting: February 18, 2021 from 9:00-10:00 via Zoom

Resource Library Materials Available for Loan:

Book: <i>The Language of Letting Go</i> Melody Beattie	Book: <i>More Language of Letting Go</i> by Melody Beattie
Book: <i>Codependent No More</i> Melody Beattie	Book: <i>The New Codependency</i> Melody Beattie
Book: <i>How Al-Anon Works</i>	
DVD: <i>The Anonymous People</i>	DVD: <i>Pleasure Unwoven</i> (A personal story of addiction)