

## Westside ROSC Council

Lead Agency: Chicago Recovering Communities Coalition

Friday, February 27, 2026

10am – 12pm

[Zoom Meeting Information](#)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/695761637?pwd=eVVOUzJ1N3VUcXl6WFJzSnVNOVJXdz09>

Meeting ID: 695 761 637 | Password: 038839

### Meeting Minutes

**Welcome Extended by; Venessa Moreno:** The meeting began with Venessa welcoming attendees and providing an attendance link for ROSC Council meetings and events. She confirmed audio and video functionality for participants, including Loretta Omale, who joined later. Venessa emphasized the importance of filling out the attendance form for staying connected and updated on future meetings and events and continued support, also mentioned that ROSC will offer CEU's.

**Participant Introductions:** Sarah K Choy, Individual; Niya Sutherland, NAMI Metro Suburban; Angela Violante, Individual; Katie Boynton, University of Illinois Extension; Linda Sharp, Individual; Michael Ferguson, Family Guidance Center; Ruthie Williams, Faith Way Men's independent; Flora Crew, Individual; Quinella Penermon, TASC; Moses Akintunde, Oran steps of hope; Mary Dowling, WSHOTF; Niktoria Julian, Tomorrow's Light; Maria Gonzalez, Campaign For A Drug Free Westside Inc.; John J Reed, Individual; Candyce Banford, CRCC; Carlos Freytes, Rincon Family Services; Wateka Kleinpeter, Independent Contractor; Debra Laws, Renewed Hope Community Services; Jessica Kelly, Individual - Just One; Jocelyn Beckham, Adrian's Purpose Sober Living; Tom Johnson, CRCC; DeCarla Musa, GEO Reentry Services; Philip Fairweather, Entrepreneurs Academy; Derrick Brewer, CRCC; Venessa Moreno, CRCC; Belinda Farr, Prevent Child Abuse Illinois; Francisco Celis Yanez, Bethel New Life Inc.; Mimi Tsang, MAHA; Carolyn Hartfield, Hartfield Consultants; Yulanda A Thomas, CRCC; Regina White, Trilogy Mental Well-being; Borris Powell, Malcolm X College; Ruthie Williams, Faith Way Men's independent; Kenneth Bell, Statewide ROSC; Dora Dantzler-Wright, CRCC; Geri Cooper-Clark, Geri Cooper-Clark ;

**ROSC Goals and Objectives; Candyce B:** A Recovery Oriented Systems of Care (ROSC) is a coordinated network of community-based services and supports that is person centered and builds on the strengths and resilience of individuals, families, and communities to experience recovery and improved health, wellness, and quality of life for those with or at risk of substance use and/or co-occurring conditions. The central focus of a ROSC is to create an infrastructure, or "systems of care", with the resources to effectively address the full range of substance use and/or co-occurring disorders within communities. The Objectives: 1. Create communities of recovery that encourage and integrate resources for the recovering individual, families and friends. 2. Develop supportive recovery communities that foster growth, respect and understanding of those who have identified problems in the areas of substance use and mental health. 3. Implement effective communication that will allow for inclusion of PLEs (persons with lived experience) voices to be heard.

**MOU's & Linkage Agreements; Venessa M.:** Reminded the attendees that an MOU and linkage agreement between CRCC/ROSC and all partners should be signed. He noted that the MOU and linkage agreement defines the working relationships between agencies, defines collaborative roles and responsibilities of the two agencies with respect to improving the local infrastructure supporting the establishment of a ROSC council. She noted that a link to the MOU was placed in the chat.



# Westside ROSC Council

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Supporting a Diverse Chicago West Side Community

## **ROSC Council's Integrated Recovery System**

The meeting focused on the ROSC Council's goals and objectives, particularly advocating for the development of an integrated system of recovery. The council aims to create communities of recovery, develop supportive recovery communities, and implement effective communication. The panelists shared their experiences and their roles in providing support to individuals and families in the area of recovery.

## **Topic Discussion: Entrepreneurs Academy**

**ROSC Council Presenters:** Philip Fairweather, MBA

## **Summary**

### **Westside Recovery Council Goals Discussion**

The Westside ROS Council meeting began with introductions from various attendees, including representatives from NAMI Metro Suburban, Westside Heroin Opioid Task Force, Entrepreneurs Academy, and other community organizations. The meeting focused on discussing goals and objectives for the ROS Council, with Candace reading a prepared statement outlining their mission to support recovery-oriented systems and provide resources for individuals in recovery. The group also discussed upcoming events and opportunities for collaboration, including a presentation from Entrepreneurs Academy and the possibility of hiring CADCs at Rincon Family Services.

### **ROSC Goals and Community Initiatives**

The meeting discussed the Recovery Oriented System of Care (ROSC) goals and objectives, focusing on creating communities of recovery, developing supportive recovery communities, and implementing effective communication. Candyce was tasked with monitoring chat messages to facilitate MOU setups for organizations interested in collaborating with the ROSC. Philip Fairweather shared his experience with the Entrepreneurs Academy, highlighting its work in supporting entrepreneurs from vulnerable communities through financial, physical, and mental health perspectives. The program includes initiatives like urban farming and mental health support, with a new hydroponics center under development at Bethel New Life.

### **Entrepreneurs Academy's Entrepreneurial Training**

Philip discussed the work of Entrepreneurs Academy, which provides entrepreneurial training and support to individuals in underserved communities. The program addresses various aspects of entrepreneurship, including food security, mental health, and access to technology. Philip highlighted their drone program, which offers training in pilot skills and various applications, as well as their use of 3D printing and hydroponics. The academy is expanding its offerings to include an online entrepreneurial program starting next Tuesday, incorporating AI tools to help participants develop skills for self-employment.

### **Hydroponics and Entrepreneurship Academy**

Philip explained the concepts of hydroponics and aquaponics, highlighting their efficiency in growing food in confined spaces without soil. He discussed the importance of these systems in addressing food deserts and improving community health. Philip also shared details about the Entrepreneur Academy, including its 12-week entrepreneurship course, free legal assistance, and partnerships with CIBC Bank for financial support. The program offers lifetime one-on-one coaching and mentorship opportunities, aiming to empower individuals with business skills and resources.

### **Drone and Urban Farming Programs**

Philip explained the drone program, which includes three classes: an Introduction to Drones course, a Part 107 certification for regulations, and editing skills. He detailed the urban farming and entrepreneurship programs, offering various formats from workshops to semester-long courses. Mary inquired about the service areas, and Philip listed specific neighborhoods on the West and South sides of Chicago, as well as some South suburbs.

## **Drone Program Success Stories**

The meeting focused on the success of a drone program and its potential to help re-entry clients. Philip shared inspiring stories of former inmates who started successful businesses after participating in the program, emphasizing its role in economic development and second chances. The group discussed promoting the program to social service organizations, with Philip offering to provide promotional materials. Dora highlighted the need for alternative job opportunities for re-entry clients, particularly those interested in entrepreneurship. The conversation ended with a discussion about capturing and sharing success stories to advocate for legislative changes benefiting re-entry individuals.

## **Empowering Through Entrepreneurial Journey**

Philip shared his personal journey and entrepreneurial experience, including his invention of weighted thigh pants for athletes and his subsequent career in Chicago. He emphasized his commitment to empowering others and offering support to those facing challenges, particularly related to trauma and healing. Philip expressed interest in collaborating with others to provide alternative resources for individuals seeking to improve their lives.

## **Life's Quarters: Strategic Decision-Making**

Philip discussed his upcoming autobiography on Success TV, which is currently in post-production. He shared his life story and used a football analogy to explain life's quarters, emphasizing the importance of situational awareness and making strategic decisions at different stages of life. Philip also mentioned his efforts to secure a TED talk and his work with formerly incarcerated individuals, highlighting the concept of turning life's "turnovers" into opportunities for growth and improvement.

## **Online Entrepreneurship Program Launch**

Philip introduced an online entrepreneurship program, including a 12-week course starting next Tuesday and one-on-one coaching, which Carolyn expressed interest in joining. Philip explained the program's features, such as a Shark Tank session, and directed Carolyn to register online. Dora emphasized the importance of the program for community members, highlighting its value in providing resources and networking opportunities for entrepreneurs and executive directors.

## **Journey to Recovery and Advocacy**

Philip shared his life story, highlighting his journey from a troubled past to becoming a successful entrepreneur and advocate for recovery. He emphasized the importance of embracing life beyond recovery, pursuing personal interests, and using past experiences to guide future decisions. Participants discussed the relevance of Philip's story to their work, particularly in supporting individuals with diverse backgrounds and challenges. Jessica inquired about Philip's website and potential collaboration for a new foundation, leading to an agreement to explore further conversations. The conversation ended with plans for future engagement, including a Narcan training and follow-up communication to distribute Philip's contact information and resources.

**Closing by; Venessa M.:** Thanked the membership for sharing openly and respectfully and we will see everyone next month. Next Westside ROSC Council meeting will be hosted by Zoom on March 27, 2026. The conversation ended with a reminder to fill out the attendance form for those who wanted to receive CEUs.

## **Next Steps:**

- Candyce: Monitor the chat for organizations interested in setting up an MOU/linkage with the ROS Council, and follow up directly with those who provide their name, organization, and email to coordinate MOU setup.
- Philip Fairweather (via Evelyn, Director of Operations): Send flyers and program information to interested meeting participants/organizations (to be coordinated after receiving list from Vanessa).

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## Supporting a Diverse Chicago West Side Community

- Venessa: Send out a group email to all meeting attendees (using the attendance list) on Monday, including Philip's contact information, so he can reply to distribute flyers and program details.
- Philip Fairweather: Upon receipt of email from Vanessa, reply to the group email to send flyers and information to all interested parties.
- Meeting participants interested in Entrepreneurs Academy programs (e.g., Carolyn, others): Register for the 12-week online course and/or one-on-one coaching via the Entrepreneurs Academy website, and follow up as needed for Shark Tank session scheduling.
- Jessica: Reach out to Philip Fairweather via email to discuss potential collaboration for diversionary programming and support for justice-involved individuals in her area.
- Philip Fairweather: Upon email from Jessica, have a follow-up conversation to explore collaboration opportunities.
- Philip Fairweather: Upon request in chat, provide contact information for the creator of the bankruptcy app (Cordera) to interested parties via email.

**Please Join Us in Building a Sustainable Westside ROSC Council**

Funded in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services,  
Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery.