We welcome you to the first WV Collegiate Recovery Conference!

Collegiate Recovery Communities/Programs align with and complement the values espoused by higher education yet a small percentage of IHEs have engaged with the recovery community. Research about students who engage in recovery supports on campus state that these students have a higher GPA, higher retention rates and higher graduation rates, but investment in these programs is still low. The WV Higher Education Policy Commission’s Master Plan “Leading the Way: Access. Success. Impact.” highlights the importance of our institutions in contributing to the state’s economic, cultural and social vitality. Implementing and strengthening collegiate recovery programs presents an opportunity for institutions of higher education to have a great impact on the current and future health of our state’s population. By supporting students who might not have believed attaining higher education possible, colleges contribute directly to the vitality of our communities. Providing access to support services and the opportunity to establish a recovery supportive environment on campus leads to successful outcomes resulting in long lasting impact not only on current students but future generations.

The opening keynote will feature state thought leaders and national experts who will:

- Review current trends of substance use in the college population including WV data
- Provide information about the level of support that has been provided by the WV DHHR Office of Drug Control Policy and the Bureau for Behavioral Health State Opioid Response (SOR) grant
- Share information about the history of collegiate recovery and the relevance during COVID-19
- Demonstrate the need for recovery support services in higher education and the return on investment from various perspectives including workforce and economic outlook
- Discuss the importance of recovery support from the frame of equity and inclusion

Moderator: Susie Mullens, WVCRN

12:15-12:45 Saving Lives & Creating Lifesavers: Medication Safety and Naloxone on Campus

Mike Holmes & Susan Bissett

Saving lives on campus is critical and part of a recovery inclusive, trauma informed educational experience.

This session will highlight the efforts to equip students, staff & faculty with accurate information about naloxone including innovations during COVID-19 and virtual naloxone training. We will share resources regarding training opportunities, obtaining naloxone, and engaging community/campus partners.

The West Virginia Drug Intervention Institute will discuss best practices in training and educating college students about both naloxone and safe medication use on and off campus. Participants will learn more about the Institute’s SmartRxU Programming scheduled to launch this fall.

Moderator: Carla Blankenbuehler, BridgeValley CTC
1:00 - 2:15  Building Blocks: Considerations for Establishing and Growing Collegiate Recovery

Kristen Harper & Ariel Britt

What is the secret in the collegiate recovery program sauce? Is it funding? Student engagement? A supportive institution? Quite honestly, we do not know why some programs seem to flourish for decades while others seem to struggle. Researchers are catching up to practice, but we do have emergent evidence of the effectiveness of the inclusion of certain aspects. Join Ariel Britt and Kristen Harper for a fun, dynamic discussion, as they review the basic building blocks that seem to create an optimal climate for collegiate recovery program success, no matter the size of the campus or culture of the students.

Moderator: Kellie Toledo, West Virginia State University

2:30 - 3:45  Voices of Collegiate Recovery: Perspectives from Students, Alumni, Staff & Allies

Olivia Dale Pape, Cathy Yura, Drew O’Connell, Andrew Caryl, Jamie Menshouse Lukmanova & Annette Johnson

How do we know the true value of collegiate recovery programs? How do these programs help students in recovery? Why should we invest in support services? Who better to answer these questions than those who have firsthand experience with collegiate recovery? Current students, alumni, staff, and allies from across the state will share their experience and answer questions from the audience. Student & alumni panelists will discuss the impact collegiate recovery has had on their recovery path as they navigate higher education. Staff and ally panelists will discuss the challenges and successes of championing change while being passionate pioneers.

Moderator: Olivia Dale Pape, West Virginia University

4:00 - 4:30  Digital Support for Recovery

Rob Shearon & Bridget Crumley

It is likely you have heard the quote from Johann Hari, “The opposite of addiction isn’t sobriety – it’s connection” and this session will acquaint you with two powerful apps.

The first is RECONNECTED, a networking social app for students and alumni in recovery to create and maintain recovery and professional connections. Developed by Rob Shearon, University of Colorado, Boulder & the SAFE Project, the app is designed specifically for students, alumni & staff of collegiate recovery programs to help facilitate and maintain connection.

The second is supported by the State of West Virginia through a partnership with CHESS Health. “Connections” is a free smartphone app that is scientifically proven to support patients in recovery by reducing relapse and promoting pro-social engagement. Connections is the only available app that is backed by years of research to support its provider-care management functionality, predictive relapse indicators, and analytics to reduce relapse.

Moderator: Carolyn Canini, WV HEPC

4:30-4:40 Award Presentation, Giveaway Drawing & Closing Remarks

We will conclude with brief closing remarks, presentation of awards, drawings for 2 gift cards & ARHE fleece jackets.