

September 24, 2024, LC ROSC Meeting Minutes

Meeting Time: 10:30 am

Dr. Mary Roberson opened the meeting welcoming everyone. Each attendee introduced themselves and their respective organizations. A total of 45 attendees were at this meeting.

She then began to share the still surfacing excitement from the 2024 National Recovery Meeting co-hosted by CCRC and NIRCO, September 21, 2024.

The National Recover Rally Review with highlights:

- With NIRCO being in existence for four years (two months shy of 5 years) they along with CRCC were selected to host the National Recovery Rally.
- A proclamation from President Joe Biden was received.
- There were many out of state attendees at the National Recovery Rally.
- Patty McCarthy, M.S. – Chief Executive Officer, Faces & Voices of Recovery
- Tom Coderre – Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, SAMHSA
- Peter Gaumond – Senior Policy Analyst, Chief Recovery Branch, Office of National Drug Control Policy
- Michael Askew – Deputy Director, Office of Recovery, SAMHSA
- David Awadalla – Public Health Advisor, Office of Recovery, SAMHSA
- Jesse Heffernan – Region 5 Behavioral Health Advisor, SAMHSA
- Illinois State Senator Adriane Johnson, 30th District

Ben Rudolph shared his experience at the rally.

PLE's Presentation:

Carson Justice-

Bio: 17 year old, from Louisa, KY

Shared her story of recovery. She thought it was impossible to recover. Kicked out of her home and went to live with her biological father, who was active in his addiction. Wondered why those who were supposed to love her didn't love her enough to choose her.

Her process for recovery:

She started in AA meeting, wrote long hateful messages/letters to her mom. Healing and understanding were received through this process.

Her mother is now in recovery and together they share their stories. She is also a panel moderator even though it is sometimes difficult and uncomfortable.

Carson has spoken on panel discussions regarding housing, and prison after care. She is passionate about social justice, writes a Recover Blog.

Now she's an active advocate for Criminal Justice Reform, Harm Reduction and Youth Prevention,

Alfrederick Armstrong-

Al shared his recovery journey by attending the 12 Step Program and Celebrate Recovery meetings. He faithfully attends the Celebrate Recovery meetings held Wednesdays, hosted by NIRCO at Jesus Name Apostolic Church.

He described his childhood as hard, an admitted 'tough guy', a former member of the Gangster Disciples, (devil's disciples), breaking every commandment, etc.

His drug use began at the age of 11, and at age 16 he was in the county jail facing a murder charge, serving a 15-year prison sentence. He cried out early to God for an intervention because he really wanted to do right.

Al humbly states, "Despite myself, God knew my heart', He saved my life in prison." He is now enrolled in classes to receive a Bachelor of Science and wants to share his story.

Al's transparency during the meeting was so heartwarming and touched so many.

Questions asked of Al:

Q1. Elizabeth T.-"Your story is remarkable. Have you ever spoken?"

A. "No, but I want to share my story."

Q2. K Varnell- "When did you make your pivot?"

A. I cried out early to God but wanted to do what I wanted to do. Despite myself, God knew my heart and He saved me. I've got to tell what Jesus did for me.

Al's testimony clearly demonstrates Romans 7:17-20:

17-20 But I need something more! For if I know the law but still can't keep it, and if the power of sin within me keeps sabotaging my best intentions, I obviously need help! I realize that I don't have what it takes. I can will it, but I can't do it. I decide to do good, but I don't really do it; I decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway. My decisions, such as they are, don't result in actions. Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time.

21-23 It happens so regularly that it's predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. I truly delight in God's commands, but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. Parts of me covertly rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge.

24 I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn't that the real question?

25 The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does. He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different. MSG Version

Amanda Douglas- NIRCO Outreach

Amanda shared her impassioned story of recovery. Experiencing sexual abuse from ages 6 through 12, she turned to softball, and it got her through.

After relocating, this outlet was no longer available, bullying began because of her weight and since substance abuse was in her family it became a bond.

Amanda had no communication or life skills. From the age of 19-32 she was in and out of recovery programs. NA and AA didn't sit well with her. "I tried to do the program," she admitted.

Therapy and psychiatric treatment work for her. She stresses that there are multiple pathways to recovery.

"At anytime I can change up, try different one and go back to what I know."

Amanda has been employed with NIRCO since April 17, 2021, she has fought with IDCFS and has custody of her children.

Additional comments from our PLE's stories:

Ben Rudolph- To Al, "Your story was PHD level." He encouraged him to continue his education.

Johnathon P- "I appreciate you all sharing your stories. They were so different but so many things connected them. You touched me." He reminded them to continue to share their stories.

Debra Bobo- To Amanda, "I've seen you, but I didn't know you like that. You are a great Mom with such a powerful message."

Devin- "Your stories had PHD level strength." He stated the stories warmed his heart.

Marie W- To Amanda, "You are like a flower in the sun. I appreciate you. You are part of the glue that keeps us together. Thank you."

Dr. Mary Roberson followed up the discussion reminding us of the multiple pathways to recovery.

This LC ROSC meeting has been the most emotional and heart warming this year.

It is the epitome of what the ROSC Councils are all about!

Johanna Gonzales shared with us the increase of ROSC councils and that they are "On the map" and here to stay!

The meeting was opened:

Devin Steiber- Question: How do we recognize trauma?

Answers: Be accountable to yourself and God. Give kindness to recovery in others and be careful to give kindness to our own recovery. (Kindness and love.)

Sgt. Mallory Baker, a 28-year veteran of the Waukegan Police Department, is overseeing the new Community Outreach Division. The Community Outreach Division puts police officers and social workers together to respond to appropriate situations.

He shared the division's work with pan handlers and those in active addiction. He discussed their conduit services. The division includes three social workers and three police officers.

NIRCO has met with Mr. Baker to discuss partnering with the team. (The planning is still at the beginning stage.)

K. Varnell- Shared that while he was not a part of active addiction personally, meetings such as the LC ROSC Council helps the keep him balanced. He thanked his colleagues (the LC ROSC members) for our hard work.

Shelly Reimann- "This was such an emotional meeting."

Elizabeth Scharer announced that a Detox Center is coming! The Detox Center is residential level. They prefer that people call ahead. She also noted that those with cocaine and meth use may not qualify for detox level consultation but recommendations will be provided.

The meeting ended at 12:00.