

September, 2021

VOICES



Recovery Month Edition

Community Events

Walk a Mile

Join Community Mental Health Authority (CEI) and the Community Mental Health Association of Michigan (CMHAM) for the Walk a Mile Rally.



DATE: Wednesday, September 29th **LOCATION:** State Capital Building
WHO: Anyone is able to participate in the walk

DETAILS: Why We Walk:

- To enhance public awareness and remind legislators that Mental Health Matters.
- To end the stigma related to mental illness & developmental disabilities.
- To encourage equality between mental health & physical health care coverage.
- To promote whole health wellness, and show that our voices can make a difference.

TIMELINE:

- 12:30pm to 1:00pm: Advocacy Walk around the Capital Building
- 12:30pm to 1:30pm: Check-In Tent and pick up giveaways
- 1:30pm to 3:00pm: Rally Begins, includes speakers and statements

For more information:

- For information and to view the WAM packet, please visit: <https://cmham.org/education-events/walk-a-mile-rally/>
- For additional questions, please call Customer Services at 517-346-8244.

More Events

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Out of the Darkness Walk: September 26th from 1pm to 3pm in Adado Park, Lansing
Link: <https://supporting.afsp.org>
- NamiWalks Your Way Grand Rapids: October 2nd from 8am to 12pm at Davenport University - 6191 Kraft Ave. Grand Rapids.
Link: www.namiwalks.org

Need Help?



Do you have any questions or need help accessing any part of this newsletter? Contact Customer Service at 517-346-8244 or customerservice@ceicmh.org

Writing Submissions



We are still taking submissions for our Writer Spotlight! Do you have a story that you think could be shared in a future issue of this newsletter?

Make submissions to Customer Service at 517-346-8244 or customerservice@ceicmh.org

For news and information from CMHA-CEI, visit our website at www.ceicmh.org and Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CEICMH.

Highlighting Recovery Stories during Recovery Month: Dane's Story

"When I was not using, I was a successful person. When I was not pleasing my friends on the streets, I would stay away from the drugs. There was a lot of peer pressure that led me to fall back into old habits because I would go back to my old friends who were users", explained Dane. The look of exhaustion and optimism pass over his facial expressions as he explains his life story. Dane is in his fourth day at the House of Commons (HOC).

HOC is a 40 bed, 90-day residential treatment program, located at 706 Curtis St, Mason, MI. The HOC primarily handles men that have a history of substance use disorders and is referred to HOC by the court system. In some cases, HOC is the last chance for many individuals who are looking to avoid a long-term jail sentence due to lengthy criminal offenses that were obtained while under the influence of substances.

HOC acts as a one stop shop for many that are looking to start a new life, change old habits, and to overcome their SUD addictions. HOC addresses the behavioral, environmental, emotional, mental, social, and medical aspects of individuals who have to start over and rebuild themselves piece by piece. With the help of HOC, many individuals can successfully rebuild themselves into the versions that they have dreamed of becoming. HOC offers many services for individuals who may need counseling, Medicated Assistant Treatment, life-skill building, detox, medical treatment, and outpatient services.

"I want to commit my life to HOC because there is a lot that I can learn and gain here. I have to change who I am. I have to learn new morals, values, and learn how to do different things that are not addictive", states Dane. When asked about the first time he tried drugs, Dane took us back to when he was in High School.

"It started when I was in high school. I was really good at sports. In high school, I loved to play track, baseball and football. I was chosen as a recruit in track to attend Eastern High School. After running track at Eastern, I changed schools to go to Sexton High School. Sexton is where I graduated from, but it is also the place where a lot of my addictions started. I hung around a lot of guys that smoked marijuana, so I started smoking a lot of marijuana and drinking wine. I thought that I could smoke week every day before school and still be really good at sports". Little did Dane know, these first couple years would be the catalyst for Dane's addiction and a downward spiral towards harder drugs and in and out of the criminal justice system.

After graduating high school, Dane enlisted in the military. There, he found himself building relationships with individuals who experimented with harder drugs. In 1992, his addiction started with coke, and eventually led to him graduating to crack cocaine. In 1994, Dane found himself facing a 10-year prison sentence due to an armed robbery conviction.



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Recovery Month Stories: Dane Did Not Recognize or Liked Who He Became

"There were a lot of things that happened in prison for me that caused some trauma, but at the same time I had some of the greatest time of my life. I met my second wife in prison, I expanded the Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous program for inmates, so that everyone could have access to recovery resources. I started an education system as a superintendent in the chapel for men that wanted an education. I taught others how to do different trade and skill building jobs".

In 2004, Dane was released from prison. After maintaining several successful jobs, Dane found himself addicted to the party scene, which led to Dane falling into the peer pressures of new friends, who would drink. While continuing to drink, Dane went back to college and received his Bachelor's in Finance. Dane was able to pick up his life and start fresh multiple times, until he would fall into the peer pressures of others, which would ultimately define his future for the worse.

"I spent about \$400.00 a day, but at my worst I would spend up to \$1,000 a day on crack cocaine. I would rob people and steal things and then sell them to make up for my \$1,000 daily cocaine habit. My behavior caused me to lose my career, my friends, and my family. I was homeless and a daily user. I did not like who I was and who I was becoming as a person. That was not me", explained Dane.

Dane was in the county jail for armed robbery and was released a couple days before being committed to the HOC 90-day treatment program. After being released, Dane wanted to test his limits and devotion to sobriety. "When I got out of county jail, I took a bus pass to go to the park, which was my old area where I used to use. This is where all of my old friends were at when I arrived. I stopped and spoke to them and was offered drugs. I said no several times, to a point where my other friends were speaking up for me and were supportive of having a positive lifestyle. I felt that after saying no to drugs, I was able to see things from a new point of view. When I walked away, I knew that I was walking away from something that I would never do again. It took me a minute to identify who I was before, and who I want to become".

After being asked if that was the turning point in his life to get sober, Dane explained, "I had to go back to that spot. It was good that I did because it gave me the confidence and the strength to say no and to move forward. I want a good life. I want to commit myself to this community. I believe that my story will be able to help others. I believe that I can help people to avoid destructive behaviors".

Dane hopes to accomplish a sense of self dignity, gain new tools for his recovery, and hopes to sustain a sober life. If Dane does not accomplish the programs at HOC, Dane will go to prison. Completion is pass or fail. These are just some of the hard truths that individuals have to face and to overcome.

Luckily, Dane feels hopeful and optimistic for the 90-day program. Dane explained that he loves his schedule as it pertains to adopting healthy habits, structure, and learning new skills. There are different appointments that Dane will be set up with, including an optometrist appointment to receive new glasses, healthcare appointments, and more.

Only in his fourth day of the program, Dane feels as though he is part of a community. "I am like a dad here. I am 17 to 18 years older than most of these guys in here. I am able to relate and to understand most of these guys because we all have the same lived experiences. There is a good team of facilitators here and they are willing to help".

Recovery Month Stories: Dane Finds Hope at House of Commons

We wish Dane the best during his journey in recovery and we will touch base with him to provide an update after a couple of months into the program.

Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties will be featuring four stories during Recovery Month in September. To learn more about Community Mental Health Authority and the House of Commons, please visit www.ceicmh.org to learn more.

If you or someone you know is suffering from a Substance Use Disorder or a behavioral health crisis, please give us a call at 517-346-8460 to access our crisis services. To learn more about our programs and services, please give us a call at 517-346-8318.