

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 22, 2016

**ADVISORY: “Champions of Change” for Advancing Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On Friday, April 29, the White House will recognize ten individuals from across the country as “White House Champions of Change for Advancing Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery.”

These individuals were selected by the White House for their leadership and tireless work to prevent prescription drug abuse and heroin use, improve access to treatment and support recovery.

Prescription drug abuse and heroin use have taken a heartbreaking toll on too many Americans and their families, while straining resources of law enforcement and treatment programs. More Americans now die every year from drug overdoses than they do in motor vehicle crashes. The President has made clear that addressing the opioid overdose epidemic is a priority for his Administration and has highlighted tools that are effective in reducing drug use and overdose, like evidence-based prevention programs, prescription drug monitoring, prescription drug take-back events, medication-assisted treatment and the overdose reversal drug naloxone.

The event will feature remarks by White House Senior Advisor Valerie Jarrett, Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, and Director of National Drug Control Policy Michael Botticelli. The event will also feature members of the cast and production team of the Warner Bros. Television-produced CBS comedy series Mom.

The Champions of Change program was created as an opportunity for the White House to feature individuals doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire members of their communities. The event will be open press and streamed live on [www.whitehouse.gov/live](http://www.whitehouse.gov/live). To learn more about the White House Champions of Change program, visit [www.whitehouse.gov/champions](http://www.whitehouse.gov/champions). Follow the conversation at #WHchamps.

**WHEN:** Friday, April 29, 2016 at 1:00 PM ET

**WHERE:** Eisenhower Executive Office Building, South Court Auditorium

**MEDIA REGISTRATION:** This event will be open press, but space is limited. Members of the media who wish to cover this event must RSVP via the

**following link by 12:00PM ET, Thursday, April 28:**

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/webform/media-rsvp-champions-change-advancing-prevention-treatment-and-recovery-0>

**Press not holding White House hard passes must also fill out the following form by the deadline for access to the White House complex:**

<https://events.whitehouse.gov/form?rid=4W43FMDGWK>

**\*\*\*RSVPs do not guarantee access. If we are able to accommodate your request for credentials, you will receive a confirmation after the deadline to RSVP has passed with further instructions and logistical details.**

### **Anita Bradley - Cleveland, Ohio**

Anita Bradley is the founder and Executive Director of the Northern Ohio Recovery Association. She has been in recovery from a substance abuse disorder for over 25 years and understands the importance and magnitude of blending personal and professional knowledge to promote the power and possibility of recovery. Anita built a Peer to Peer training program offered at a local Community College and opened the Next Step Recovery House, a residential recovery housing facility on Cleveland's near west side. Anita also recently launched a Statewide Network for Addiction to respond to the opioid crisis and insure that the voice for recovery from substance use disorders is included in planning and policy efforts in Ohio. Anita was named winner of the 2015 Women Who Excel Entrepreneur Award, by Smart Business Magazine and is a recipient of the Joel Hernandez Community Recovery Award.

### **Leonard Campanello - Gloucester, Massachusetts**

Leonard Campanello is the Chief of Police in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Chief Campanello has worked to end the stigma of addiction by adding law enforcement's voice to those suffering with substance use disorders. In May of 2015, in response to the growing epidemic of opioid use disorders, he announced policy change that those with substance use disorders could ask for help and treatment resources from the Gloucester Police Department by walking into the station, with or without drugs, and without being charged with a crime. The policy also provided free naloxone (an opioid overdose antidote) for anyone in need. In the 10 months since it began, the Gloucester Program has brought 425 people directly to treatment with no criminal penalty and no solicitation of information, and has reduced crime and costs associated with addiction in Gloucester and rebuilt trust between the police and the community. The policy's success led to the creation of the Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative, which facilitates the proliferation of the Gloucester Program to over 100 communities in 22 states and partnerships with 250 treatment centers and growing.

### **Leslie Hayes - Española, New Mexico**

Leslie Hayes, MD, works for El Centro Family Health in Espanola, NM, as a family practitioner. El Centro Family Health is a community health center with clinics located throughout northern New Mexico, a rural, underserved area. While Dr. Hayes enjoys all aspects of family medicine, her particular passion is taking care of people with opioid use disorders. She works with pregnant women and new mothers who have substance use disorders to make sure that they and their babies receive compassionate and appropriate medical care. Leslie received much of her training in substance use disorders through Project ECHO, a program that uses telecommunication to link specialists with primary care providers. Leslie considers herself extremely fortunate to have been able to give back to Project ECHO, and she now provides training for other providers around the state of New Mexico in substance use disorder and use of the medication assisted treatment buprenorphine.

### **Tom Hedrick - New York, New York**

Tom Hedrick is one of the founding members of the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids (the Partnership). Since its founding, the Partnership has focused on delivering evidence-based prevention communication messages through the media, becoming the largest single-issue public service communications program in America during a period of dramatic reductions in substance use among adolescents. Tom helped expand the program to include evidenced-based resources and support for parents and caregivers in prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery through a web-based platform and a toll-free Helpline. With Tom's help, the Partnership is piloting a peer support program to recruit and train experienced parents and caregivers to coach other parents and caregivers who have discovered that their kids have a substance use disorder. The coaching has been integrated with the online resources and the Helpline into a national Parent Support Network.

### **Andre Johnson - Detroit, Michigan**

Andre Johnson is the founder, President and CEO of the Detroit Recovery Project (DRP), a recovery community organization, providing peer-led, peer-run, and peer-driven services in Detroit. Andre has been in long-term recovery from a substance use disorder for nearly 28 years. Over the past ten years, Andre has secured over \$15 million dollars in federal, county, state, and local grants for DRP to provide quality prevention, treatment, and recovery services. Andre was appointed by the US Secretary of Health & Human Services to serve on the Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration/Center for Substance Abuse Treatment National Advisory Council. He also sits on the board of the College for Behavioral Health Leadership.

### **Shawn Lang - Hartford, Connecticut**

Shawn M. Lang is the Deputy Director of AIDS Connecticut (ACT). Shawn has been with ACT since 1991, where she coordinates HIV/AIDS public policy activities on the state and federal levels, including chairing the AIDS LIFE Campaign, Connecticut's

AIDS policy group. Shawn also oversees ACT's care and treatment programs, prevention programs, member services, and provides a variety of trainings and presentations. She is on the board of the National AIDS Housing Coalition, the Community Advisory Board of the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS, and was recently appointed to the Connecticut Alcohol and Drug Policy Council. Since 2013, Shawn has chaired Connecticut's Statewide Opiate Overdose Prevention Workgroup, which has engaged in an extensive advocacy campaign to increase awareness about and access to Naloxone, a lifesaving medication that reverses opioid overdoses. She has been a longstanding activist on issues impacting battered women, LGBT communities, homelessness and HIV/AIDS. She lives in Hartford with her 18 year old son.

### **Julio Medina - Bronx, New York**

Julio Medina is the founder and Executive Director of Exodus Transitional Community, a reentry program in East Harlem, Newburgh, Poughkeepsie and Albany, New York. Julio spent twelve years in prison on drugs charges in the 1980s and 90s. As the Founder and Executive Director of Exodus Transitional Community, Julio addresses the widespread struggle of substance use disorders, often linked to incarceration and recidivism. Under Julio's leadership, Exodus Transitional Community employs a holistic approach to substance use disorders with the aim of tackling all of the stages of addiction, including prevention, treatment, recovery and relapse. Julio also works to promote effective local, state and federal policies aimed at substance use disorders, while increasing access to services that support men, women and their families. Most recently, Julio was appointed by New York Governor Cuomo to serve on the Community Reentry and Reintegration Council, and by New York City Mayor De Blasio to serve on the Alternatives to Incarceration Council.

### **Justin Phillips - Indianapolis, Indiana**

Justin Phillips, MA is the Founder and Executive Director of Overdose Lifeline, Inc., an Indiana non-profit dedicated to reducing the stigma of addiction and preventing deaths resulting from opioid overdose. Justin started the nonprofit in 2014, following the loss of her 20-year old son Aaron to a heroin overdose. Overdose Lifeline established a support network for families impacted by opioid use disorders and helps to purchase naloxone, an opioid reversal drug, for first-responders in the Indianapolis area. Justin also worked with Indiana legislators on a bill known as Aaron's Law to expand access to naloxone prescriptions for others beyond first responders. Justin's advocacy efforts were realized with the enactment of Aaron's Law in April of 2015, making it legal for naloxone to be made available in pharmacies across Indiana without a physician's prescription. Overdose Lifeline has distributed over 300 naloxone overdose reversal kits to families and individuals and developed a one of a kind prevention education program for the state of Indiana.

**Justin Luke Riley - Denver, Colorado**

Justin Luke Riley serves as president and CEO of Young People in Recovery (YPR), a national grassroots organization focused on peer-to-peer services for young people in, or seeking, recovery from substance use disorder. Riley is 28 years-old and has been in long-term recovery from a substance use disorder since 2007. Under Justin's leadership, YPR aims to improve access to treatment educational resources, employment opportunities and housing that sustains young people in their recovery. With over 100 chapters nationwide, YPR empowers young people to get involved in their communities by providing them with the tools and support that will allow them to take charge of their futures. Justin graduated cum laude from the Honors & Leadership Program at the University of Colorado at Denver in 2013 and is currently seeking his Executive MBA at the University Colorado. He is a former organizational development consultant and a youth and community engagement pastor in Denver; former secretary of the board of Faces & Voices of Recovery in Washington, DC; and past president of the board of Advocates for Recovery in Denver.

**Barbara Theodosiou - Davie, Florida**

Barbara Theodosiou, upon learning that two of her sons had substance use disorders, founded The Addict's Mom, a forum for mothers who were suffering the adversities that accompany addiction in a loved one. The Addict's Mom offers both online and in-person support, education, resources and the opportunity for members to "Share Without Shame" their triumphs and tragedies as they hope that their loved one achieve recovery. Under Barbara's leadership, The Addict's Mom has reached 70,000 members who educate, advocate, and collaborate with lawmakers, community leaders and experts in the field.

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