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BJA SELECTS MODEL PEER PROGRAMS ADDRESSING OPIOID EPIDEMIC
Sites Will Mentor Emerging Criminal Justice Peer Programs Across the Nation

(Washington, DC)—The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Program (COAP) has selected four organizations to serve as the first mentors in a new initiative to foster promising approaches, best practices, and evidence-supported peer program programming to address the opioid epidemic. These programs work with first responders, law enforcement, courts, jails, prisons, and community corrections to help persons with opioid use disorders achieve and maintain recovery from addiction.

Faces and Voices of Recovery Greenville (South Carolina) serves small communities and rural areas in northwest South Carolina with innovative programming; a wide array of peer supports; and strong partnerships with law enforcement, hospitals, and treatment agencies.

Council of Southeast Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania), through its Pennsylvania Recovery Organization—Achieving Community Together (PRO-ACT) program, runs a comprehensive peer-support program. PRO-ACT was a partner and the service hub in the launch of a pre-booking diversion pilot with the Philadelphia Police Department.

RecoveryPoint (West Virginia) serves small communities and rural counties across the state of West Virginia. Part of a quick-response team formed by the City of Huntington with a BJA COAP grant, RecoveryPoint provides recovery coaches for that initiative. RecoveryPoint also has launched peer support in emergency rooms of area hospitals and is planning similar supports for individuals who are admitted to the hospital with opioid-related and other substance use disorders.

University of Alabama at Birmingham, School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry, Community Justice Programs (Alabama) is a unique model of community, clinical, and research collaboration housed within a university setting. Across time, Community Justice Programs (CJP) has thoroughly integrated peer voice in all of its behavioral health projects. CJP is particularly strong in its peer supports in the courts, providing services within several specialty courts in Jefferson County, Alabama.

These four mentor sites will support COAP grantees selected for mentorship as they develop the peer support components of their diversion, alternatives to incarceration, court, or reentry programs. The mentorship provides an opportunity for grantees to be matched with and learn from an experienced program in a structured way. Each selected site will receive consultation and support from staff members of an experienced program, culminating in a visit to the mentor site.

Programs interested in receiving mentorship are encouraged to apply now. More information is available at prss-tta.com.