**MOBILIZE RECOVERY**

**JULY 2020 – Las Vegas, NV**

**Summary**

Addiction is a crisis of epidemic proportions and shows no sign of slowing down. It affects people of every race, class, social group, religion, and gender. It does not discriminate. Currently, 23 million Americans are in sustained recovery from substance use disorder. Another 22 million are suffering from this highly preventable, treatable illness. One in every three households includes a person with substance use disorder; beyond the home, the prevalence of addiction affects almost everyone. From healthcare systems overloaded with people desperate for help, to criminal justice courts crammed with people who need treatment instead of jail time, our society is burdened by the stigma of addiction.

Without civic engagement, organization, and recovery advocacy, millions of people will never access the life-saving support they need. Currently, less than 10 percent of people will ever seek medical help of any kind for their addiction. Hundreds of people lose their lives daily, leaving behind family members, friends, loved ones, children, and community members. Yet, when the recovery community organizes, reform is possible. Activists have successfully accessed funding for recovery supports, effective and ethical standards for treatment, and changes to employment processes. When recovery speaks, people listen. Yet, finding solutions is delayed by lack of access to other community groups and difficulty connecting with like-minded people. We follow in the footsteps of social justice movements such as the Civil Rights movement, ACT UP, and the fight for LGBTQ rights. What we’ve learned is that policy change is crucial to keeping the hard-won gains of grassroots activists who took to the front lines in the fight for equality. With more people engaged, we make more progress. As a mobilized, civically engaged constituency of consequence, we can turn the tide of the epidemic and create sustainable change at every level that doesn’t end with a single march or fundraiser.

Our Mobilize Recovery project was launched by the Facebook Community Leadership Program in 2019 and will continue to build capacity for organized civic advocacy around the country. We will identify, train, connect, and work with recovery advocates in all 50 states. Each of these selected community organizers will have lived experience with substance use disorders. By sharing resources, coordinating our agenda, and taking action as a powerful, confident constituency, we will create change that affects millions of people in a positive way.

**Call to Action**

Coming out of the conference, we will have successfully identified the issues impacting local and regional communities specific to addiction; given the attendees the tools to combat those issue via messaging training, legislative training, media training, and other means; connected the leaders with like-minded changemakers in their regions to collaborate with, and created a network of emerging leaders dedicated to being the boots on the ground in their communities to create change and end the addiction crisis.