

SPOTLIGHT: Mankato, MN Affiliate Offers Arts Programs for Recovery



Southern Minnesota Recovery Connection partnered with Fountain Centers (Jenine Koziolk and Erin Champlin), Adolescent Treatment Center of Winnebago (Naomi Ochsendorf), as well as local faith communities to implement *Recovery's Got Talent*.

The purpose of *Recovery's Got Talent* is to showcase the talents of people in recovery from alcohol and drug addiction, to promote positive self-image and self-expression, to build alliances and unity within the recovery community across southern Minnesota, to counter negative stigmas of addiction, and to host positive and sober social events.

The finale of *Recovery's Got Talent* took place September 20 at Daybreak Community Church in Owatonna, MN.

The contestants had advanced to the finale by showcasing their talents at qualifying rounds in Mankato and Albert Lea, and other towns in southern Minnesota.

Anna Melby-Kelly took first place with her original spoken word piece. Judging was based on stage presence, technical ability, creative expression/originality, and entertainment. Participation and entry to the shows were free. Some contestants were very new to recovery while others have lived for several years in long-term recovery from drug and alcohol addiction. The spirit that developed among contestants, judges, emcees, and volunteers was touching, and it was obvious to all that the competition became secondary to the camaraderie and participation. The finalists have been asked



to entertain the crowd at the Co-occurring Disorders Symposium in January.

The partnerships of the **Southern Minnesota Recovery Connection**, Fountain Centers, Adolescent Treatment Center of Winnebago, and local faith communities will directly benefit those

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in recovery by increasing the communication networks and sharing of resources. Planning is already happening for next year, and we hope the event spreads to more locations.

Another way SMRC is using the arts to help people get in touch with their recovery is by facilitating a recovery-based creative writing workshop. The workshop, called *Uncover, Discover, Recover*, is free and meets one evening a week for six weeks. Because writing is a form of thinking that helps us make sense of who we are, workshop members learn to craft good, polished writing that increases understanding of our past and present. The workshop culminates in The Art of Recovery, a public reading that includes workshop participants as well as seasoned writers from the recovery community. This public reading also features an art showing of visual projects created by those in recovery.

The core mission of Southern Minnesota Recovery Connection is to mobilize resources within and outside the recovery community to increase long-term recovery from alcohol and drug addictions. The recovery community includes people in recovery, their families and friends, allies and organizations whose members reflect religious, spiritual and secular pathways to recovery. Our goals are to increase the quality and quantity of support for those dealing with addiction and recovery.

For more information about the events, contact Kevin Langton at Klangton@smnrc.org.

For more information about NCADD's Affiliate, Southern Minnesota Recovery Connection, please visit www.smnrc.org or visit our facebook page at www.facebook.com/smnrc.