

HARVESTING HOPE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SEED SOWER INC.



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The Good Stuff

We invite you to learn more about our work and its impact in our shared community.

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Sowing Change. Harvesting Hope.

Welcome to Harvesting Hope

Dear Friends & Neighbors,

With the start of spring, our thoughts naturally turn to beginnings and growth. Yet this year I find myself pausing and reflecting on recovery not so much as a beginning but as an ongoing journey with its complexities, often interwoven with deep emotional challenges.

Our mission is not only to help people committed to their recovery, but to foster an understanding that navigating recovery is a formidable path. A path worthy of support and compassion.

We draw inspiration from experts like Dr. David Best, a renowned figure in recovery research, whose insights from global observations enrich our perspective and inspire our approach. His work underscores the message we're committed to sharing: recovery happens at the community level.

We are reminded of the importance of continuing to engage our neighbors in conversations around recovery. Perhaps there are moments when we can address questions about our work -- and -- share recent accomplishments that are positively impacting our community. It seems both are helpful in demonstrating that there is real hope for lasting, sustainable recovery.

Let's renew our commitment to this dialogue. Recovery is a journey worth understanding and supporting.

James (Jay) Phillips
Executive Director

The High Cost of Short-Term Thinking in Recovery Housing

By James Phillips, Executive Director, Seed Sower

Shortcomings of Incomplete Solutions

Recovery is a complex, multi-dimensional journey that demands a whole-person, strengths-based approach. This includes housing, peer support, community engagement, vocational training, and other non-clinical supports as part of a Recovery Oriented System of Care (ROSC). Safe, supportive housing serves as the anchor for these services, yet it is a difficult anchor to financially sustain as it is not currently covered by Medicaid or other insurances.



At Seed Sower Inc in West Virginia, recovery housing is top of mind every day. It's a core part of our mission. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recognizes recovery housing as an evidence-based practice when it adheres to standards set by the National Alliance of Recovery Residences (NARR). Recognizing the importance of extended housing for ongoing recovery compels us to explore financial strategies to make it feasible.

Financial Wisdom of Long-Term Support

Investment in long-term recovery housing is not just a moral duty but a sound economic strategy. Research by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) shows significant savings in criminal justice costs and healthcare, with every dollar spent on addiction treatment programs returning \$4 to \$7 in savings. While recovery housing is not considered a direct form of medical treatment, it is a critical component of broader treatment and the recovery support ecosystem.

Repeated recovery attempts cost communities more economically and socially, increasing healthcare expenses, social service burdens, criminal justice involvement, and productivity losses. Stable, drug-free housing is essential for individuals maintaining recovery, which significantly reduces relapse rates and improves employment outcomes and overall health.

West Virginia's Landscape

In West Virginia, the overdose mortality rate starkly highlights the urgent need for effective recovery solutions. Proposed federal legislation like the Safe SHORES Act aims to extend and enhance funding for recovery housing, offering hope for more sustainable support.

Mobilizing for Change

Investing in long-term recovery housing goes beyond merely providing shelter; it directly addresses the severe impacts of short-term thinking on individuals, families, and entire communities. This investment not only aids those in their most vulnerable moments but also strengthens community health and prosperity.

West Virginia stands at a critical juncture, with the potential to serve as a model for holistic, community-based recovery systems. It's time for policymakers to recognize the long-term benefits of recovery housing and support legislation that provides the necessary funding.

Read Jay's full blog at seedsowerinc.org/blog

Raising the Bottom of the Lake

People struggling with substance use disorder may find themselves hitting bottom before seeking help. The Inclusive Recovery Cities (IRC) model proposes a community-driven approach to recovery, effectively raising the lake's bottom by making recovery more visible and accessible, reducing the depth to which one must sink before finding support.



Image - modification from *The Allegory of the Lake*, a position paper by Dr. David Best, Centre for Addiction Recovery Research

The Power of Community Visibility

Central to this model is the celebration of recovery through public events and community engagement, challenging stigma and highlighting specific pathways to recovery. Developed by Dr. David Best and colleagues, this approach has inspired the creation of Inclusive Recovery Cities worldwide, fostering environments where recovery is not only possible but celebrated.

The Impact of Recovery Support Services

Traditional treatment models often focus on symptom management, providing temporary relief without addressing underlying issues. In contrast, this model prioritizes recovery support services, particularly peer-led and community-based efforts, to stop the cycle of relapse, and promote sustained well-being.

The Community's Role in Raising the Bottom of the Lake

This shift from a treatment-focused to a recovery-oriented mindset underlines the importance of community in the recovery process. By enhancing community recovery capital, cities aim to make the concept of recovery more appealing and attainable, thereby raising the bottom of the lake and encouraging individuals to seek help sooner.

Changing Lives

Quantifiable
Impact =
Changed Lives

In the first quarter of 2024, Seed Sower has provided the following:



1,870

safe, **substance free** housing nights (cumulatively) for women in our program



100,000

Miles driven in **direct support** of recovery including work, training, health, and service.



50

Active participants in **The Well (RCO)**.



Andy, Board Member

An Inspiring Road Trip

I spent some time with Jay Phillips, Seed Sower’s executive director, on a road trip.

Listening and Learning

It was inspiring to hear about the scope of "long-term" assistance the organization was providing to the women in recovery.

Digging In

When Jay reached out to me to join the board, it was a quick "yes!" I knew it was something I wanted to be involved in. I really like how Seed Sower provides end-to-end assistance in the recovery process and how we continue to look to get more resources from the community involved in the process as well.

Raising our Voices

One thing I want people to know is that there absolutely is hope. And you are not alone in recovery. We’re here to help.

Be An Andy

Learn about volunteering: [Seedsowerinc.org/support](https://seedsowerinc.org/support)

Building Community

What’s Possible

Three Ways to Support

We are reaching out to those who share believe in recovery from substance use disorder, especially in empowering women to transform their lives. Make an immediate by lending your support to:



Fresh Start Fund covers initial housing and programming fees. Your donation of \$200 allows one woman a little breathing space and the opportunity to get started living a healthier life.



Practical Needs Fund covers necessities such as food, toiletries, cleaning supplies, and gas for transportation services. Your donation of \$25, \$50 or \$100 helps to defray our significant monthly costs.



One Hour Ambassadors spend just one hour sharing or posting information on Seed Sower programs, upcoming events, or how we are helping improve our shared community.



Donate, volunteer or learn more today: seedsowerinc.org/support

We are also happy to take your call: 304.392.5464

Staff Spotlight: Justin Rogers



Congratulations are in order as we wish Justin Rogers a Happy Anniversary!

Justin is **celebrating one year** as the Beckley Program Director and Director of The Well - A Recovery Community Organization operated by Seed Sower in Beckley, West Virginia.

As a person in long-term recovery, Justin is uniquely positioned to lead in our community. He is a certified Peer Recovery Support Specialist and has been working and advocating in the recovery field since 2017.

Justin brings energy and warmth to all he meets and has a passion to help those afflicted by substance use disorder. Justin is also an avid gym goer with a passion for fitness and helping the youth.

Congratulations to Seed Sower's Newest Graduate



When we asked **Jessica Nichols**, pictured with Jay Phillips, Seed Sower executive director, what **five words** come to mind as she reflects on her experiences as a graduate of the program, she added...

“When I think about the program and the staff, the five words that come to mind include - inspiring, safe, encouraging, hope and sincere. But I would also add loyalty and going beyond what is expected!”



Five Seeds

Five is a powerful number.

Once five years of sobriety is achieved, chance of relapse drops to less than 15% according to Psychology Today.

This is a big benchmark because anyone randomly selected in the US faces a 15% risk of addiction.

Five years sobriety levels the playing field.

At Seed Sower, our goal is to provide housing and support to those we serve for five years.



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Get in Touch

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