

Winter 2008

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## Save the Date!



**FACES &  
VOICES  
OF RECOVERY**

**Recovery In Action!**

## Our Job This Year

– By Michael Dukakis

For many years, Kitty and I have been deeply involved in the effort to get our political leaders to take the use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs and the reality of recovery seriously, and I think you know why.

Kitty, like millions of young women in the 1950's, was prescribed "diet pills" because she had put on a few pounds as a freshman at Penn State. Like many of her contemporaries she got hooked on them for a long time, and while treatment in 1982 for her amphetamine addiction – because that is what the diet pills were – was successful, getting off the amphetamines seemed to trigger for the first time in her life a cycle of recurring depressions that were really brutal.

Anti-depressants never worked for her, and she would invariably resort to alcohol as her depression deepened. Finally, after seventeen years of this, electroconvulsive therapy proved to be the answer, and she has been in recovery for many years.

Needless to say, if you are the governor of a state and have experienced the struggles of the woman you love on a very personal basis, addiction is something you take seriously. And so, with Kitty's support, I launched the Governor's Alliance Against Drugs and Alcohol in Massachusetts and made early education and prevention and treatment on demand one of my top priorities. We got a lot of help from Congress and the then first lady, Nancy Reagan, and the Drug Enforcement Agency called it the best program in the country.

Unfortunately, my successors in the governor's office never seemed to have much interest in the problem. Not surprisingly, drug and alcohol use, especially among young people, is skyrocketing once again in Massachusetts. But we are not alone. It is a serious and growing problem all over America.

Yet, not a single governor addressed the issue seriously in his or her state of the state message in January. I chaired a Join Together Public Policy panel that developed a Blueprint for the States on addressing addiction prevention treatment and recovery. We're having difficulty getting traction in state capitals around the country. And, to the best of my knowledge, none of the presidential candidates has addressed the issue seriously in the many campaign debates that we have been watching over the past several months.



*Former Governor Michael Dukakis and his wife Kitty Dukakis*

*Rising! Recovery in Action* is a quarterly publication of Faces & Voices of Recovery. Letters to the Editor and your thoughts and ideas can be emailed to [info@facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](mailto:info@facesandvoicesofrecovery.org). We welcome your feedback!

We are grateful to the people in the recovery community for their support of this resource for people in recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs, their family members, friends and allies who are mobilizing to make recovery a reality for millions more Americans.

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FACES &  
VOICES  
OF RECOVERY

## News from Faces & Voices



### To Recovery Advocates Everywhere:

William (Bill) White recently interviewed me for a series appearing on our website, Profiles of Recovery Advocacy. Bill is a regular contributor to *Rising!* and an author, historian and mentor of our recovery movement. He asked if I felt that with the coming mass retirement of baby boomers whether we have the potential of a new generation of recovery advocates who will help shape the future of the movement. Also, whether others can receive the benefits I describe from volunteering to work with a local or our national advocacy organization. I told Bill that I think retiring boomers can be a huge resource for leadership and activism. Visit our site to read the interview and, regardless of your age, consider joining me in stepping up your engagement and advocacy.

I am privileged and proud to serve as chairman of the board of our vital and growing national organization. Twenty committed volunteers on our working board join me. (See Governance on [www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org)). Much of the work is done through our committees. An excellent advisory group supports us. Thirteen of the board members are also regional representatives. We function economically and efficiently through teleconferencing with excellent leadership and participation in committee and board meetings. We will soon be looking for applicants to fill vacancies left by those whose terms expire in July. Also, non-board members play an important role on board committees.

There are many opportunities to serve and be a part of our organization. Investigate and I'm sure you'll find the same is true of local organizations as well. Our e-newsletter will keep you informed and our website will provide opportunities to let us know of your interest. Volunteering and being of service anywhere and anytime will count you in as a part of a growing national recovery movement. It may give you a strong foundation for eventually running for public office, serving on a state or national advisory board and participating in our nation's civic life.

Our country will undergo in the coming months some of the most important electoral races our country has seen in many years. This issue of *Rising!* focuses on our Recovery Voices Count campaign. Our campaign is meant to get out the vote and help voters make decisions that elect our representatives through reflection and choice. Our elected officials make determinations that profoundly affect our lives. Alexander Hamilton said that America is an experiment in governing ourselves by "reflection and choice" rather than "accident and force." We want to know the candidates and influence their positions on key addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery issues – including ending insurance discrimination.

Thomas Krannaw of the Claremont Institute wrote: "to make freedom and choice work requires four essentials of citizenship. We need self-assertion to defend our liberties; self-restraint to behave responsibly; self-reliance to avert dependency, and civic knowledge to participate constructively." National and local campaigns will be loud and confusing but our having civic knowledge to participate constructively and assert our rights and liberties will provide better outcomes because...our Recovery Voices Count.

Merlyn Karst  
Faces & Voices Board Chair

*Merlyn Karst, enjoying long-term recovery, is chair of the Faces & Voices board of directors. He is a founding member of Advocates for Recovery-Colorado and is active with the Betty Ford Center Children's Program-Colorado.*

## An Overview of Recovery Voices Count

- by Tom Coderre

This election season is an opportunity for those running for public office to discuss and debate many of the issues about which the recovery community cares deeply. Faces & Voices of Recovery is making sure our voices count with the launch of our newest project, **Recovery Voices Count** – a nonpartisan civic engagement campaign for the recovery community.

In New Hampshire, the campaign joined with local advocates to help organize the first-ever town hall meeting on addiction and recovery policies for presidential candidates. In South Carolina, one advocate, with the help of Recovery Voices Count, got answers from two candidates and a senator about rights for recovering people. As recovery community organizations and recovery advocates register voters, educate candidates for public office about restoring the right of people with criminal convictions to vote, insurance discrimination and other issues and turn out voters in growing numbers, we will have an even greater impact on our communities.

Hundreds of New Hampshire residents came together at the Timberlane Regional Performing Arts Center in Plaistow on December 2, 2007, to the forum and discussion. Participants represented the campaigns of Senators Joe Biden, Hillary Rodham Clinton, John Edwards, Mike Gravel, Barack Obama, and John McCain; Governors Mike Huckabee and Bill Richardson, and Congressman Dennis Kucinich. Twelve local, state and national organizations sponsored the event. (To learn more about some of the town hall organizers, see page 4 and to learn more about the event and other organizers, go to the Faces & Voices web site.) Addiction has hit New Hampshire particularly hard. In 2006, 111,000 residents needed but did not receive treatment for alcohol and drug problems.

In South Carolina, meanwhile, FAVOR-SC board member Bob Rice used Recovery Voices Count campaign tools during the primary campaign.

"I waited an hour and 15 minutes to enter the Rock Hill, South Carolina, venue, waited an hour and 15 minutes



Photo courtesy Union Leader

Allison Hennessey from the NH Taskforce on Women in Recovery discusses the importance of supporting recovery with Elizabeth Edwards, the wife of Presidential candidate John Edwards.

for [Clinton] to show, inched my way to a spot in front of her where she couldn't miss my purple T-shirt, waited through her hour-long address, caught her attention as soon as she started to take questions from the floor, and asked her my question," Rice said. Rice asked about discrimination against people who are in recovery.

Senator Clinton responded, "People who have found a way to overcome addiction deserve our encouragement and help. I know people who have done this and I think it's incredible. Who doesn't know someone who has dealt with this? It is a national health problem."

"Yes, I believe they need access to jobs. Once they've repaid their debt to society, because many of them do have legal issues related to their drug use, but once they've done that, I believe they deserve a chance at a new life."

Rice asked South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC), who was campaigning in Rock Hill on behalf of presidential hopeful McCain, another of the four questions

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# NH Advocates Combine Strengths for Town Hall Forum

Three New Hampshire residents who helped to organize a December 2 town hall presidential candidate forum on recovery and addiction (see page 3) drew on a variety of strengths to mount a successful event.

Among the most valuable: willingness to share their faces and voices; months and years of preparation, and persistent outreach to the recovery community, the public press and candidates for public office.

## Telling the Story

The openness of recovery community members formed an essential building block of the event.

Lisa Peakes, a morning host on New Hampshire Public Radio who is in long-term recovery, moderated the forum.

"I like to talk about my experience," she says. "It's a safety net for me. It's my way of building protection for myself." Peakes argues that many more stories of recovery need to be told.

"We need greater celebration" about "how good it feels to have a clear head, to be totally alive, to be able to taste new things and to feel things you couldn't feel before."

Speaking out "makes it real, destigmatizes [addiction], and opens up the avenues for people to discuss it as the medical, health care issue that it really is," says Susan McKeown. Spurred to action by the addiction and recovery of her young son, McKeown invited presidential candidates to the forum.

## Preparation Counts

In a sense, McKeown had prepared for this task for six or seven years, since she went through an advocacy training program of the New Hampshire recovery advocacy group New Futures.

The New Hampshire Task Force on Women and Recovery provides training for incarcerated women in pre-release programs. Many task force trainees were in the town hall audience, and some put their questions to the candidates.

"It's amazing what the women can accomplish once they realize their voices are worth something," Niki Miller, task force director and a forum panelist, told *Rising!*

Also, "it's great to have national support on the ground and in communities," says Niki Miller, a woman in long-term recovery. "Faces & Voices gave a structure that was wonderful. In four years we'll be more than ready" to mount a town hall meeting on our own.

Another form of preparation: years of spadework to build fruitful relationships with members of the press, as the task force has done. It helps, Miller said, to have a specific niche, such as the task force's gender-specific focus, to be willing to help reporters with needed research, and to build connections across communities – such as with other human service groups – that can steer reporters to the task force.

## Outreach is Key

Personal stories can be vital to the development of powerful press accounts of recovery. Arguing that media coverage "is not proportionate to the pervasiveness of the problem of addiction," Peakes believes that more "volume" is needed.

"As focused on the solution as many of us are, I think it would help if people who are still struggling could feel free to talk about that, too. Certainly it'd be easier to disclose a challenge if it was better known that real solutions exist and have been embraced by a wide variety of people."

Organized and persistent outreach won response not just from the media, but also from the New Hampshire

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Susan McKeown, *FASTER (Families Advocating Substance Abuse Treatment, Education & Recovery)*



Niki Miller, *Executive Director, NH Taskforce on Women and Recovery*



Lisa Peakes, *New Hampshire Public Radio, moderating NH Town Hall Forum*



## Recovery and Public Service

– by Bill White

Critics of recovery mutual aid societies have argued that such societies foster cult-like isolation and thwart broader community participation. The historical record and recent scientific studies challenge such criticisms.

Recovering individuals and their families have played important roles in local and national alcohol policy debates. Recovery activists such as John Gough, John Hawkins, Dr. Henry Reynolds and Francis Murphy played leadership roles in the larger temperance movement of the nineteenth century. In the 1890s, members of the Keeley Leagues demonstrated in support of legislation to provide state funding for treatment of indigent alcoholics. That tradition of advocacy continued through the work of Marty Mann and the National Council on Alcoholism.

One could build a convincing historical case that there would be no modern system of addiction treatment without the legions of recovering people and their families who spent decades advocating for the development of such a system of care. AA co-founder Bill Wilson testified before a 1969 congressional committee in support of the landmark legislation that birthed the treatment system as we know it today. His appearance at the Capitol marked a landmark of such public service.

But what of broader levels of community involvement? In 2003, Linda Farris Kurtz and Michael Fisher published a study in *Contemporary Drug Problems* on the level of participation in community life by AA and NA members. They found a high level of community service by AA and NA members in long-term recovery. AA and NA members reported that their volunteer involvement in helping agencies, schools, civic groups, professional associations, political parties, advocacy groups, cultural groups and religious organizations was a way of giving back to their communities the gifts that had come to them through their recoveries.

Personal recovery is a catalyst for community participation and public service. Those on the front lines of the New Recovery Advocacy Movement in the United States are writing new chapters within that tradition.

*Bill White of Chestnut Health Systems is the author of Slaying the Dragon: The History of Addiction Treatment and Recovery in America. His writings can be found at [http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/resources/publications\\_white.php](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/resources/publications_white.php).*

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## NH Advocates Combine Strengths

Continued from page 4

recovery community, the public at large and the town hall panelists.

Miller's organization publicized the event through a listserv to more than 1,300 people. In addition, it helped transport task force members to the meeting.

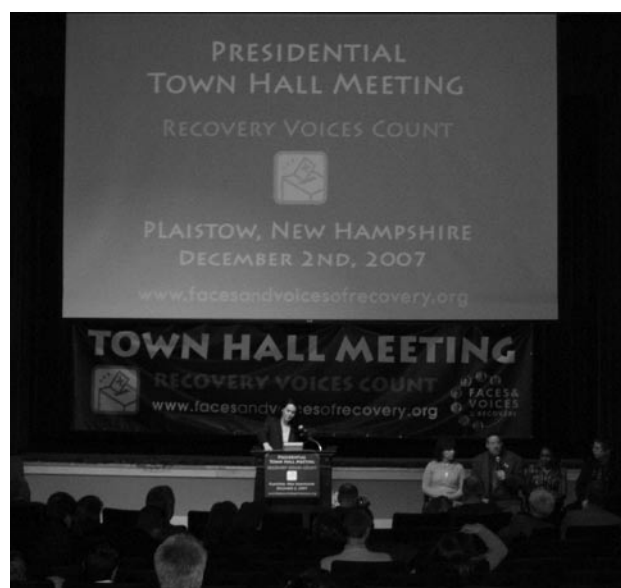
"The most key thing is that we carpool; women really will show up if they have a ride," she said.

McKeown's outreach task: visiting the campaigns.

"Because of the primaries, the candidates all have their offices and are very accessible here in Manchester so you can walk into the offices and talk with people," she said.

In mounting the forum, Miller, McKeown and Peakes showed the value of persistence and consistency. Their work demonstrates the joys and challenges of recovery, and showed that making links with other individuals and organizations is what fuels recovery advocacy.

As Miller believes, "so much happens because we connect with one another."



*NH Town Hall meeting at the Timberlane Regional Performing Arts Center, Plaistow, NH*



## FIVE QUESTIONS TO ASK CANDIDATES

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- 1) Untreated addiction is the cause of other problems and illnesses like heart disease, lower work productivity, overcrowded jails and broken families. Yet millions of Americans can't access the treatment and recovery services they need. ***If elected, will you support an increase in funding to ensure that treatment and recovery services are available to all who need them?***
- 2) Many in long-term recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs, myself included, have experienced insurance discrimination, which means we have been denied life-saving treatments. ***Will you vote for a bill to end insurance discrimination by offering the same coverage – parity – for addiction services as for other health issues?***
- 3) The war on drugs has proven that despite spending \$40 billion a year to fight it, drug use has not decreased. America's mayors, along with local law enforcement officials, are pushing for a new approach that puts an emphasis on treatment and alternatives to jail. ***Do you agree or disagree with this new direction and why?***
- 4) Millions of Americans are in recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs, yet many still find it difficult to get an education, a good job, or health insurance due to discriminatory policies and laws. ***Do you support the repeal of these laws, which basically prevent people who have paid their debt to society from contributing to their families and communities in a positive way?***
- 5) Recovery support services have been critical to helping people sustain their recovery from addiction for the long term. The President has eliminated funding for recovery community organizations providing these services from his 2009 budget. ***Do you support restoring this funding and extending the Recovery Community Services Program which has proven to be successful in communities across the country?***

## CANDIDATE PLEDGE

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Recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs is a real achievement for millions of Americans. There is hope for families affected by addiction, and for healthier and safer communities – if we treat addiction as the health crisis that it is.

Our failure to provide help to the over 21 million Americans who need it is costly to our nation and causes a host of other problems and illnesses – heart disease, lower work productivity, overcrowded jails and broken families. Access to recovery and support services should be readily available to all Americans who want it.

***If elected, I pledge to:***

- 1) Ensure coverage for equitable and effective addiction prevention, treatment and recovery care in all public and private health care plans
- 2) Fund addiction prevention, early intervention and research as an investment in America's future
- 3) Implement policies that promote long-term recovery from addiction as integral to overall health and end the criminalization of addiction
- 4) Prohibit discrimination against people in long-term recovery who seek a brighter future for themselves and their families through education, gainful employment, safe housing and health insurance.

For more information on what you can do to get involved, go to  
[www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org)  
or email [info@facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](mailto:info@facesandvoicesofrecovery.org)

## An Overview of Recovery Voices Count

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in the Faces & Voices Civic Engagement Guide about ending insurance discrimination and parity. Graham responded, "Addiction is a disease like any other disease. I will work hard to pass a parity bill."

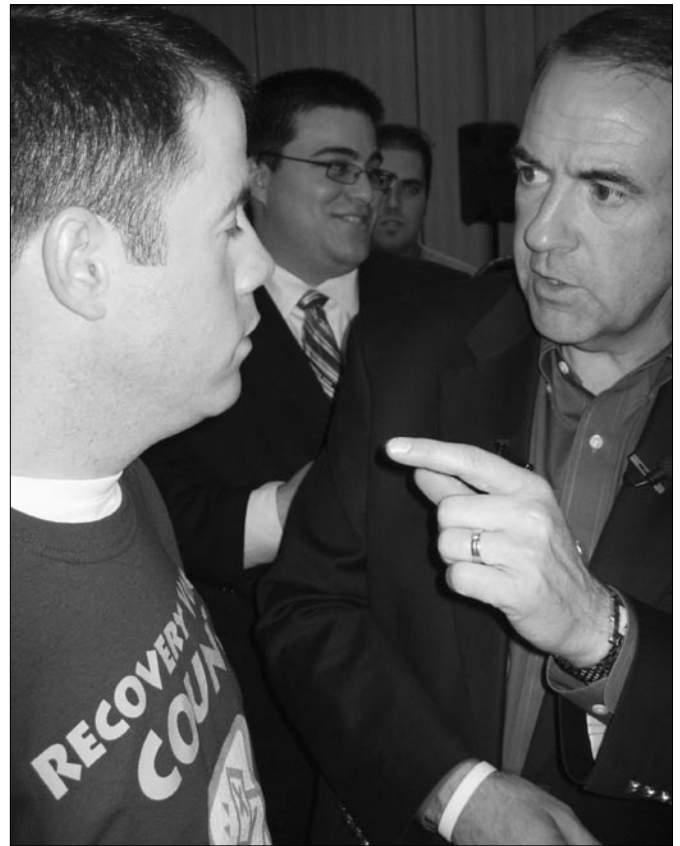
And at a town hall meeting at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, Obama told Rice, "I believe criminal justice, that is the states that have drug courts, offers one way for first time offenders to get their lives back together. But we've got to stop sending these people to jail and start providing treatment. Educating our young people toward prevention is important. Also, I believe in parity for addiction and mental health. This is a national health issue."

Recovery Voices Count assists advocates in promoting voter education activities. Which policy issue is important to you and your community? Recovery Voices Count is a great tool to bring that issue to the forefront. Attend an event where candidates are speaking or host a town hall meeting for the candidates for public office from your community and ask them the tough questions of how they would solve your concerns. In the process, you'll be educating the candidates running for office and the community at large. You'll also be getting the information you need to make an educated decision about who to support when you go to vote.

Join us in reaching out and organizing the recovery community to participate in our electoral process. Visit our website, [www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org) and click on the Recovery Voices Count! button to learn more about the campaign, download a copy of Recovery Voices Count, A Non-Partisan Guide to Civic Engagement, listen to our January Recovery Voices Count teleconference and order T-shirts, buttons and bumper stickers.

Join us in making Recovery Voices Count!

*Tom Coderre is a person in long-term recovery and Faces & Voices National Field Director.*



*Faces & Voices' National Field Director Tom Coderre speaking with Governor Mike Huckabee in New Hampshire.*

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## Our Job this Year

Continued from page 1

That's why efforts like Recovery Voices Count, which will educate candidates for public office and the public about needed policy changes are so important. We are losing some of our best young people every day to the ravages of alcohol and other drugs while too many political leaders on both sides of the aisle are doing little or nothing about it.

Our job between now and the first Tuesday in November is to make sure they do.

*Michael S. Dukakis, J.D., is the former Governor of Massachusetts and Democratic Nominee for President of the U.S. He has been a professor of Political Science at Northeastern University since 1991 and a visiting professor of public policy at the School of Public Affairs at UCLA since 1995. He has chaired Join Together's Blueprint for the States Policy Panel.*

## Join! Membership Supports Faces & Voices

**Faces & Voices of Recovery** relies upon the tax-deductible charitable donations of others to effectively advocate for and with the recovery community. We would like to thank the following organizational members for their support.

A New PATH  
A Safe Haven  
Advocates for Recovery  
Association of Halfway House Alcoholism Programs of North America  
Alcohol & Drug Abuse Council of Chemung County  
Alcohol & Drug Abuse Council of Delaware County  
Alcohol & Drug Abuse Treatment Centers, Inc.  
Art of Recovery Expo, LLC  
Association of Persons Affected by Addiction (APAA)  
Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems (BSAS), Inc.  
The Betty Ford Center  
Brighton Hospital  
Center for Brief Therapy  
Center for Dependency, Addiction and Rehabilitation (CeDAR)  
Central Illinois Recovery Coalition (CIRC)  
Central Kansas Foundation  
Chautauqua Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Council  
Common Strength  
Community Addiction Recovery Association  
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Compass Corporation for Recovery Services  
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Pennsylvania Recovery Org Alliance (PRO-A)  
People Advocating Recovery (PAR)  
Phoenix House, Inc.  
Project Vox- Macomb County  
The RASE Project  
RECOVER Project/WMTC  
The Recovery Center  
Recovery Consultants of Atlanta, Inc.  
Ridgeview Institute  
SAARA of Virginia  
San Francisco AIDS Foundation  
Second Chance  
The Shoulder  
Sober Living Network, Inc.  
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St. Christopher's Inn, Inc.  
Women in New Recovery

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