



NEWS RELEASE

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SMART Recovery Builds Momentum in Northeast Ohio *Grant-supported outreach impacts underserved populations*

(Cleveland, OH, February 13, 2020)

Just a few months ago, the national office of SMART Recovery USA approached a local foundation for help in reaching those struggling with all kinds of addictions in Northeast Ohio. Now, thanks to aggressive outreach strategies, the work is paying off.

Mark Ruth, SMART Recovery's Executive Director, summarizes the progress so far:

When the Cleveland Foundation decided to so generously support our efforts to reach underserved populations and expand our recovery support groups for those dealing with problematic behaviors or substances in Cleveland and surrounding areas, we were hopeful we'd see results quickly. And now, through our outreach and training efforts, that's exactly what is happening.

Outreach efforts have already engaged more than 25 local organizations, many of which focus on underserved or discounted populations, e.g., courts and correctional facilities in Lake and Cuyahoga counties; veterans; juvenile treatment centers; and the LGBTQ Center.

Additional organizations that have responded positively to SMART's outreach include educational institutions such as Case Western Reserve University, Lakeland Community College, Baldwin Wallace University, and Perry and Wickliffe City Schools.

Perhaps more importantly, at least in the short-term, SMART has brought its science- and research-based approach to the attention of current treatment providers such as Crossroads, New Directions, A Place 2B recovery housing, Thrive and Ohio Guidestone—where traditional 12-Step approaches to recovery have historically been presented as the standard and only options. For Executive Director Ruth, this can be a real shortcoming that the grant award can directly address:

When it comes to those who may have tried a traditional recovery treatment and, for whatever reason, have not succeeded, knowledge of SMART Recovery can be a literal lifesaver. We're grateful that the Cleveland Foundation recognized that it is incredibly important to provide many alternatives for those with substance use disorder to turn their lives around. And that's what we're doing with this grant award.

Other progress made as a result of the grant award includes additional training for professional treatment counselors, a new training curriculum, more effective use of technology-based tools, and increased communications activities.

Along with the many presentations to individuals and organizations, three new meetings have already started in Northeast Ohio, bringing the life-changing techniques of this evidence-based, peer recovery support model to more people facing the addiction crisis. According to Lise Day, Grants Administrator for SMART:

Starting a meeting is the culmination of tremendous effort to bring together volunteers, meeting space, logistic support, and facilitator training. The grant from the Cleveland Foundation helps make it possible to gather resources and get this done.

SMART Recovery plans to continue all these efforts in the coming months, building upon the momentum achieved since the grant's inception.

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SMART Recovery USA, Inc.[®] (Self-Management and Recovery Training) is a global, nonprofit organization that helps people overcome problematic addictive behavior through free in-person and online meetings. Participants use SMART to assume responsibility for their recovery using its 4-Point Program[®]. These foundational principles are: building and maintaining motivation; coping with urges; managing thoughts, feelings and behaviors; and living a balanced life.

Founded in 1994, the organization uses science-based techniques that have proven to be effective in helping individuals overcome addiction to drugs, alcohol, and harmful activities such as gambling. SMART has been endorsed by the leading government and medical authorities in Australia, the UK, and U.S. Learn more: www.smartrecovery.org.

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