



SMART Recovery[®]

Self-Management and Recovery Training

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SMART Recovery Adds Key Staff Member in Ohio Documented Rise in Opioid & Alcohol Abuse Demands Quick Action

Mentor, OH, August 24, 2020—Just a few years ago, E-4 Michael Hooper of the U.S. Army National Guard was dying in the Cuban heat. Not from enemy fire, but from the raging enemy within: he was clinically depressed and abusing alcohol in a big way. Life was bleak, things were closing in.

Now, thanks to his embracing the principles and practices of SMART Recovery, he lives an entirely different life with purpose and meaning—one he plans on sharing with as many Ohioans as he can, just as he had previously done in New Jersey.

Hooper has been hired by Mentor-based SMART Recovery USA Inc. (SMART) to be Ohio's State Outreach Director. He will be working to spread the message of SMART throughout Ohio: that you have the power within you to address your substance use disorder and live a balanced, healthy, and purposeful life.

Hooper says when he discovered SMART his life began to change for the better:

I literally felt empowered. I knew I could do something about my addiction and I've been doing it ever since, and I'm proof it works. With Ohio's widely documented rise in deaths from opioid overdoses and increased alcohol abuse during COVID-19, we have to act quickly and do all we can to combat this tragic destruction of lives. We need to let people know that SMART Recovery has an established and viable program that helps individuals regain control of their lives.

Hooper's certainty about SMART's value, through his lived experience, will be used to build relationships, deliver SMART Recovery face-to-face training to new meeting facilitators, and develop a network throughout Ohio that will impact a large number of those who are trying to change negative behaviors.

As SMART's Executive Director Mark Ruth puts it:

We are thrilled to have Michael join the team. He brings his experience, ability to connect with others, and strong belief that SMART is one of the most effective pathways to recovery to this important position. He also brings his time in the military as an example of establishing a routine and disciplines to follow through on personal goals—in this case to change one's life for the better.

Hooper also points out that SMART, a secular, science-based program, offers the power of choice in a way that's different than 12-Step or other approaches. SMART offers practical tools based on cognitive-behavioral principles to bolster support for successful change.

In summary, Hooper says:

I've lived through hell, used SMART support groups and excellent tools to change, and I'm excited to help other Ohioans do the same. I am living the life that I had always envisioned and hoped for.

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Founded in 1994, SMART Recovery (Self-Management and Recovery Training) is a global, nonprofit organization that helps people overcome problematic addictive behavior through free in-person and online meetings.

SMART employs science-based techniques that have proven to be effective in helping individuals overcome addiction to substances and harmful activities.

SMART has been endorsed by the leading government and medical authorities in Australia, the UK, and U.S. Learn more: www.smartrecovery.org.