GE HealthyCities Leadership Academy Partnership
GE Award Winners

Atlanta, GA – Health Promotion and Prevention of Nutrition-Related Disease

Burlington, VT – Substance Abuse Recovery & Employment

Camden, NJ – Reducing Childhood Obesity

Charlotte, NC – Resources on Tobacco, Nutrition, and Exercise

Goodyear, AZ – Land Use Planning

Lebanon, NH – Innovations in Advance Care Planning with Employers

Pasadena, TX – Food Security

Miami, FL – Diabetes Assessment and Treatment
Burlington Team- Working Recovery

BLA Partners, LLC
The Howard Center
Community Health Centers of Burlington
Turning Point Center of Chittenden County
UVM Medical Center
VT Department of Health, Burlington District Office
United Way, NWVT
Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation
Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce

ecosproject.com/chittenden-county-opioid-alliance/
Mission: Working Recovery engages and inspires the Chittenden County business community to hire and support individuals in recovery.

Vision: Our community and local economy benefit from the long term, stable, and supported employment of individuals in recovery.

Values: Support the potential of every individual; Focus through a compassionate lens; Foster strong and supportive communities; Commit to excellence and innovation; Treasure a strong and local economy
Our Goals & Strategies

**Goal #1**: Increase the number of people in recovery who feel supported in their employment.

**Strategies**: Survey and interview Chittenden County business to identify workplace supports/barriers for individuals in recovery.

**Goal #2**: Determine support services preferred by individuals in recovery in workplace environments in Chittenden County.

**Strategies**: Conduct interviews/focus groups and surveys with people who are in recovery and who have employment experience.

**Goal #3**: Educate and bring awareness to local business community regarding best practices for hiring and retaining a workforce of people in recovery.

**Strategies**: Develop a best practices curriculum, outreach to local businesses and provide community trainings.
Accomplished-to-Date

• Formed Working Recovery Team
• Met with Local Employment Specialists
• Interviewed Local Businesses Who Actively Hire People in Recovery
• Convened VT Human Resource Association professionals for discussion
• Lived Recovery Focus Group
• Literature Research
• GE Site Visit
Vermont’s Workforce Opportunity Op-Ed

“Develop, fund and proliferate the implementation of services for helping those Vermonters suffering from addiction to reenter the workforce...”
Why Companies Hire Individuals in Recovery

Deeply personal – many have been touched by addiction or witnessed its effects on family & friends

No one should be denied employment because of a mistake, especially if addiction no longer defines who an individual is now

For employers in recovery, this is an opportunity to be of service and honor and an integral part of their own 12-step work

Work is a second home, second chances should be given, and employees must be treated like family

Source: Local business interviews
Advantages

Hard working, grateful, loyal, and go the extra mile

Make fewer mistakes & learn quickly if one was made

Serve as mentors to newcomers in recovery

Make amends and financial restitution to those harmed while actively using

Translates to a reduction in criminal justice, healthcare and social service costs

Increase in tax revenue, mentoring and service to the recovery community and society as a whole

Source: Lit Review- journals, blogs
Identified Barriers

Criminal backgrounds
Incomplete or sporadic work history
Oral health issues and lack of teeth
Health issues
Housing
Scheduling difficulties for treatment and programming
Substance-free work social events
Lack of References

Source: Lit review, interviews
Successful Employment Practices

Have sober time under their belt, have a 12-step program or a significant support system (counselor, LADC, etc.)

**Clear, concise and upfront expectations**

Policies to address concerns and issues before they manifest at work

**Establish a relationship with regular and very informal check-ins**

Educate all employees on Substance Use Disorder

Accommodate needs for employee to meet with sponsor, meetings, LADC or counseling, drug testing or medication assisted treatment

Correct with kindness

If in recovery, share your story – creates sense of solidarity and togetherness

Source: Local business interviews
Next Steps

Opportunities for partnerships
Learning more from people in lived recovery
Learning more from local businesses
Sharing/Educating/Impacting
Sustainability