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National Non-Profit, Facing Addiction selects Billings, MT as Pilot Community

Project aims to address the public response to addiction through grassroots driven campaigns

Facing Addiction announced that Billings, MT has been selected as one of 15 communities to participate in the organization's pilot community project. The project, first announced by Facing Addiction (www.FacingAddiction.org) in October 2015, will work to reform the public response to the addiction crisis in Billings, MT via a grassroots-driven campaign strategy. Specifically, Facing Addiction will work with Billings, MT and 14 other communities to:

- Secure increases in localized funding to adequately address the crisis
- Train advocates on proper organizational and advocacy techniques to reform their community's response
- Invest time and resources in communication opportunities with elected officials and other policy makers
- Provide media guidance to garner press coverage to further highlight the solutions to the problem
- Develop political strategies and aid community stakeholders in the development of an overarching "campaign strategy"

"As addiction to alcohol and other drugs now impacts 1 in 3 households in America, we must urgently work to turn the tide on this health crisis. We received over 50 applications from communities across the country for this program," said Greg Williams, Facing Addiction's Co-Founder and Executive Vice President. "We are excited about the prospect of working to train, organize and mobilize citizens in Billings, MT to ensure a shift toward a public, health-centered response to those impacted by addiction."

The Transitional Recovery & Culture Project (TRAC), a project of the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council, in collaboration with Community Innovations and other community partners submitted an application for Billings, MT. "We have been coming together as a community over the past few years to identify solutions to help those dealing with substance use disorders, homelessness and behavioral health issues. We believe healing is possible through prevention, treatment and recovery support.", says Dyani Bingham, Project Director of the TRAC program, which works on building capacity in the realm of peer to peer recovery support for Native Americans.

Facing Addiction is a national non-profit organization dedicated to unifying the voices of the more than 45 million Americans and their families directly impacted by addiction.

Facing Addiction is bringing together the best resources in the field in order to reduce the human and social costs of addiction, every year, until this public health crisis is eliminated. The organization was launched in historic fashion on October 4th, 2015, in front of tens of thousands on the National Mall at the UNITE to Face Addiction rally and concert, and recently was co-sponsor of the launch of the U.S. Surgeon General's seminal report on the addiction crisis in America, in Los Angeles on November 17, 2016.

In addition to Billings, MT, the following communities have been selected to participate in Facing Addiction's Pilot Community Project:

Annapolis, MD - Baton Rouge, LA - Boise, ID - Chicago, IL - Cumming, GA - Fitchburg, MA - Martinsburg & Berkeley Springs, WV - New Canaan, CT - Rochester, NY - Safford, AZ - San Diego, CA - Springfield, MO - West Bend, WI - West Linn, OR

Since 2014, Community Innovations, a collaborative effort of the Downtown Billings Alliance, City of Billings, Rimrock Foundation, Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council and other community partners has come together to address the issues of substance misuse, behavioral health and transiency affecting the city, and in particular, downtown Billings. The group learns from national best practices, is data-driven and solution-oriented, and has seen measurable, positive impacts.

The Billings' Community Innovations Team, drawing on leadership from the business community, the social service sector, city government and officials, tribal leaders, law enforcement, and the faith community, continues to drive change through creation of 5 working task forces, implementation of comprehensive, downtown community policing program, and a continuum of care where the cornerstone is cultural awareness and sensitivity in counseling and treatment, while intersecting vulnerable populations with resources and alternatives to cyclical, addictive, or negative behavior.

Questions on the project can go to Facing Addiction's National Director of Outreach & Engagement, Michael King, who can be reached at mking@facingaddiction.org.

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