

In January 2009, the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) launched the *Your Story Matters* campaign at www.iamrecovery.com to help raise awareness of the chronic disease of addiction; combat the stigma wrongly associated with substance use disorders and problem gambling addiction; and promote the message that prevention is proven, treatment works and recovery is real.

Time and time again, we hear only the struggle of addiction, but the *Your Story Matters* campaign shows the light at the end of the tunnel and offers insight into a battle worth the fight. It is dedicated to the individuals who are leading productive, healthy and fulfilling lives in recovery, and intended to offer hope to those still in the grips of alcoholism, chemical dependency or problem gambling.

Currently, hundreds of individuals from New York to California have shared their stories at www.iamrecovery.com, and thousands more have joined together to carry the message of hope and the promise of a new day that recovery brings. We have set a goal to post 365 stories of recovery at www.iamrecovery.com in 2010, so we are more than half way there.

The individuals who choose to share their stories at www.iamrecovery.com represent the future and the reality of the state's Recovery Movement — they are our hope, inspiration and proof that recovery is happening every day in this great state. Through these stories of courage, second chances, gratitude, and potential, New Yorkers can walk proudly in celebration of recovery in a society that welcomes their achievements.

During the next three months, we will be reaching out to our providers and the community-at-large for suggestions as we choose the next 12 campaign “spotlights” to be unveiled during Recovery Month, September 2010. The 12 campaign spotlights are an integral piece of the *Your Story Matters* campaign, offering a face and a voice to a unified, consumer-driven Recovery Movement in New York. Addiction doesn't discriminate, but the beauty is neither does recovery. And the shining faces (shown here) of the 2009-10 *Your Story Matters* campaign spotlights is proof positive that recovery is possible!

Please join us in building a bright future for New York's Recovery Movement. If you are in recovery, or are the friend or family member of an individual now living free from addiction, we encourage you to share your story at www.iamrecovery.com. After all, one person's story just might be another person's hope.

Thank you for your interest in the *Your Story Matters* campaign. Please visit www.iamrecovery.com, where you can read hundreds of inspirational stories of recovery; view heartfelt videos of the 12 campaign spotlights; obtain recovery resources; and submit your own story expressing the power and possibility of recovery. For more information, please contact the OASAS Communications Bureau at 518-457-8299 or communications@oasas.state.ny.us.

Share Your Story. Inspire Hope. It Matters.

