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**September 6, 2023**

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## **Governor Shapiro, DDAP Secretary Kick Off National Recovery Month, Highlight Administration's Work to Support, Provide Services for Those in Recovery**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Today, the **Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP)** officially kicked off [National Recovery Month](#) with an afternoon full of events, and was joined by **Governor Josh Shapiro**, the **Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA)**, individuals in recovery and their families, advocacy organizations, and performance artists in the Main Capitol Rotunda for an “Arts Heal” celebration.

This annual recognition is observed throughout the month of September to highlight the gains made in the lives of individuals living in recovery from substance use disorder (SUD) and show that every day, people can and do recover. The 2023 National Recovery Month theme is “Recovery is For Everyone: Every Person, Every Family, Every Community.”

"Throughout my career, I've had the privilege to meet folks who've suffered from addiction and substance use disorder across the Commonwealth and listen to their stories – and I've always been inspired by their strength in the midst of their journeys to recovery," said **Governor Shapiro**. "My Administration is taking a multidisciplinary approach to the overdose and opioid crisis, one that embraces support for recovery and treatment services – across all our agencies and offices here in the Commonwealth. Because we all know that addiction is a disease, not a crime - and that we cannot simply arrest our way out of this crisis. I will continue to stand with all Pennsylvanians, during Recovery Month and long after."

"September is a time to celebrate the gift of recovery across the country," said **DDAP Secretary Dr. Latika Davis-Jones**. "In Pennsylvania, we put the healing power of the arts on full display as a reminder of just how meaningful music, drawing, painting, poetry and other forms of art can be in so many individuals' recovery journey."

DDAP partnered with PCA to include a digital art gallery and posters from PCA's Arts in Education residency programs with the PA Organization for Women in Early Recovery (POWER), based in Allegheny County.

"The arts open a doorway to exploration of our creative selves and serve as an invaluable resource for so many," said **Karl Blischke, PCA Executive Director**. "Regardless of the artform, creativity provides immeasurable comfort to many, and a means to build identity, better understand ourselves, and work through the uniquely personal journey that is the pathway to recovery and beyond."

In addition to the arts display, there were performances by Chas Smith, known as Colicchie, a rapper in recovery; Sarah Leavens, a poet and teaching artist at the University of Pittsburgh; and remarks by various individuals in recovery, including Jesus “Ricardo” Rodriguez, former World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) wrestler and founder of Three Legacies Wrestling, who shared how his recovery journey led him to Pennsylvania.

“Recovery is for anyone; recovery is for everyone,” said Secretary Davis-Jones. “The Shapiro Administration’s efforts reach far beyond this month, as we work every day to promote recovery, make recovery resources more equitable, and help all Pennsylvanians live happy, healthy lives. At the crux of our efforts is eliminating stigma and clearing a path for someone to take that first step on their road to recovery, and to remind them that no one is alone on that journey.”

Learn more about the Shapiro Administration’s recovery initiatives and resources at [ddap.pa.gov](https://ddap.pa.gov).

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