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### **Third Annual Recovery Advocacy Day a Success**

HARRISBURG – In recognition of National Recovery Month, nearly 300 members of Pennsylvania’s recovery community took to the Capitol on Tuesday to celebrate the third annual Recovery Advocacy Day.

“We are here to raise awareness of substance use conditions, celebrate individuals in recovery, and acknowledge the work of prevention, treatment, and recovery support services,” said Judy Rosser, event emcee and executive director of the Blair Drug and Alcohol Partnerships.

Participants spent the late morning and early afternoon meeting with their elected officials to share their story and convey a message of hope that people can and do recover. In addition, more than a dozen recovery organizations were on hand to provide information on recovery to the general public.

The day concluded with a media event in the Main Rotunda with several speakers in recovery sharing their story. Laurie Besden, Esq., executive director, Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers, stated, “It is an honor and a privilege to have a sea of recovery behind me,” motioning to the rotunda steps filled with recovery advocates. Speaking of her own personal experience, Dr. Jennifer Zampogna noted, “The worst things that happen in our lives can put us on a path to the best things in our lives. It is all about a change in perspective.”

Several members of the general assembly also were in attendance and had an opportunity to share their remarks. “Events like this, Recovery Advocacy Day, is one more way to get the community involved,” said Senator Gene Yaw. Representative Ed Gainey stated, “The strongest people I have met in my life are those brought back from addiction.”

This event was held in conjunction with Pennsylvania’s Recovery Month Kick-Off Event which occurred on September 6. Jennifer Smith, acting secretary of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, provided a statewide update and encouraged anyone with a drug or alcohol problem to call the toll-free statewide helpline at 1-800-662-HELP.

In addition to these speakers, the event included remarks from Senator Camera Bartolotta, Representative Gene DiGirolamo, Representative Doyle Heffley, Representative Aaron Kaufer, and Representative Thomas Murt. Other speakers included Mike Krafick, CRS supervisor, Armstrong/Indiana/Clarion Drug and Alcohol Commission; Katie Kramer, member of the recovery community; Lauryn Wicks, parent and family advocate; Carl Antisell, member of the recovery community; and Ashley Potts, social worker, Allegheny Health Network.

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Contact: Michele Denk, Executive Director, PACDAA, (717) 736-4704