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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

Lt. Governor Molly Gray Holds “Seat at the Table” on Recovery, Reentry, and Second Chance Hiring

Montpelier, Vt. — This afternoon, Vermont Lieutenant Governor Molly Gray moderated a panel discussion on substance use disorder recovery, reentry for Vermonters returning to their communities and families, and the important role second chance hiring serves in building stability in personal and community spaces. The discussion was part of the “Seat at the Table” virtual meeting series and coincides with the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs and the National Reentry Resource Center’s [National Second Chance Month](#).

The discussion, titled “Recovery, Reentry, and Second Chance Hiring”, featured representatives from Jenna’s Promise, North Central Vermont Recovery Center Executive Director Shannon Carchidi, Recovery Coach Jason Seigel, and Working Fields Founder Mickey Wiles. As Vermont had [a record number](#) of fatal opioid overdoses in 2021, the panel discussion focused on how second chance hiring and employment opportunities for people in recovery can aid prevention and reduce stigmas associated with substance use disorder.

“Vermonters in recovery deserve every opportunity to succeed in recovery. Employment gives individuals the needed structure to help build stability in their own lives and in their communities,” Lt. Governor Gray said “Reconnecting individuals to their communities not only supports prevention, but also helps to end the harmful stigma surrounding substance use disorder.”

“Workforce Development for people in recovery is a key pillar of the services provided by Jenna’s Promise and our partners at North Central Vermont Recovery Center. Reentry and second-chance hiring is an essential piece of the recovery movement, and is too often overlooked as a tool to help unravel the unemployment crisis that affects all levels of our nation’s economy. By helping to further integrate people in recovery into the community by providing them with jobs, we all help them rebuild bridges and reduce the stigma of substance use disorder by showcasing their skills and stories of hope,” Gregory Tatro, Jenna’s Promise Co-Founder said “This holds the promise of igniting possibility in the heart of each person in recovery, in the businesses in which they work, and in helping to re-invigorate the local economies in which they will participate. We applaud the Lt. Gov. Gray’s efforts to bring a spotlight to this critical issue, and are thankful for the opportunity to speak to this issue.”

“The North Central Vermont Recovery Center (NCVRC) strives to meet people where they are every day on their recovery journey. Our hope is that through a variety of programming, meetings and a diverse peer run work force that we are able to inspire hope for those walking through our doors. Core programming you can find at NCVRC includes Peer Recovery Coaching, Parents in Recovery, Health and Wellness, Recovery Coaches in the Emergency Department. Our meetings and offerings are plentiful and we thrive on our recovery community growth,” said Shannon Carchidi, Executive Director of NCVRC.

"Employment plays a major role in maintaining a self-sustainable lifestyle. At Working Fields, we connect individuals with job opportunities and peer support, which helps them overcome challenges in their lives and become independent. This structure is incredibly impactful for individuals in recovery. It also develops our local workforce, giving employers a greater pool of potential employees. We have seen that the more we increase access to employment, the more we strengthen our communities," said Mickey Wiles, Working Fields CEO and Founder.

The tri-weekly series hosted every third Monday from 12:00pm – 1:00pm features community, non-profit, and business leaders from across Vermont. Launched by Lt. Gov. Gray in 2021, each “Seat at the Table” will be open to the public, lawmakers and press and will highlight topical issues facing Vermont communities. Recordings of the panel discussions can be viewed [here](#).



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