



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 29, 2019

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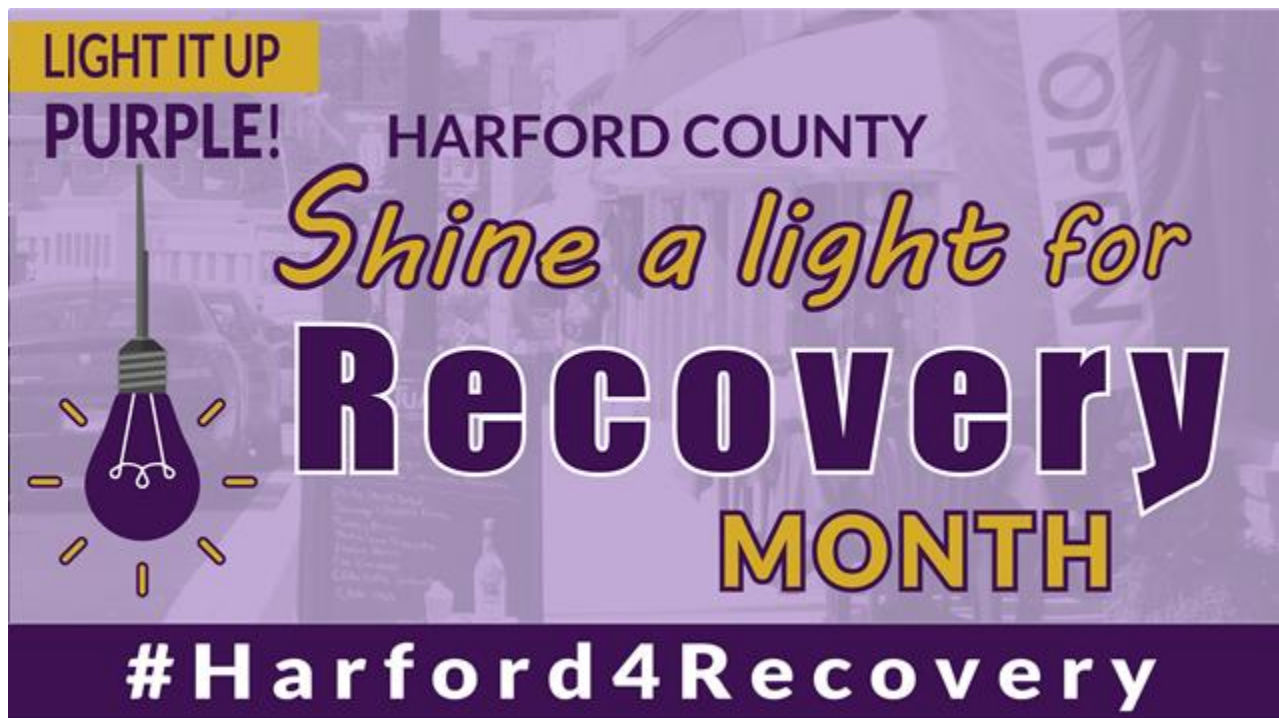
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Harford County Unites to Celebrate Recovery from Addiction



BEL AIR, Md., (Aug. 29, 2019) - National Recovery Month in September raises awareness about substance use disorders and recognizes those who have overcome addiction. This September, individuals and community partners are coming together from all corners of Harford County, and beyond, to create the biggest recovery celebration yet. Harford County government will launch the celebration on September 1 with a YouTube music video featuring national celebrities, based on recording artist Andy Grammer's inspirational hit song, "Don't Give Up on Me." Other efforts include purple lights symbolizing recovery on major buildings, purple glow sticks at school sporting events,

purple painted “Recovery Rocks!,” a host of empowering events, and a social media storm. Additional participants and ideas are welcome throughout the month.

“The opioid epidemic has brought terrible suffering to our community and our nation, but there are encouraging stories of recovery too,” County Executive Barry Glassman said. “This month we celebrate thousands of individuals who have overcome addiction in Harford County, and those who continue to fight on the frontlines. There are families and individuals living in recovery that have remarkable jobs, beautiful children, have achieved tremendous success, and lead outstanding lives full of joy and meaning. Sharing these stories reduces stigma and helps to break down barriers. Most importantly, they give hope.”

Shining a Light on Recovery

Buildings throughout Harford County will be illuminated in purple during September, including: the county buildings at 220 S. Main Street in Bel Air and 2220 Ady Rd in Forest Hill; volunteer fire companies in Level, Bel Air and Norrisville, and the Susquehanna Hose Company in Havre de Grace; the Bel Air Armory; Bel Air Town Hall; Bel Air Library Branch; Saxon’s Jeweler buildings in Bel Air and Aberdeen, and the Harford Mutual Insurance Company. In addition, lights on Main Street in Havre de Grace will shine purple in September, as will lighting at both the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health campuses in Bel Air and Havre de Grace. Billboard signage on MD Route 1 for The Klein Family Harford Crisis Center will also be lit in purple. The Harford County Health Department is also providing strings of purple lights to businesses on Main Street in Bel Air. Purple glow sticks will be given out at select Harford County Public Schools sports events.

Recovery Rocks!

Citizens should also keep an eye out for purple Recovery Rocks. Hundreds of rocks, generously donated by Jerry Preston Hauling of Jarrettsville, were hand-painted with inspirational messages by individuals in recovery or attending recovery events, and will be placed along trails and sidewalks. Everyone is encouraged to post pictures of the rocks they find on social media with the hashtag, #Harford4Recovery.

Music Video

A grassroots music video featuring hundreds of citizens, agencies, and organizations is also in production. The video, which includes groups singing along to Andy Grammer’s hit single, “Don’t Give Up on Me,” will premiere on YouTube September 1 at <https://www.youtube.com/user/HarfordCountyMD>. The compilation was developed by the Harford County Office of Drug Control Policy to raise awareness, celebrate substance-free living; and to demonstrate to other communities how they can recognize recovery month with meaningful campaigns. Harford County mediation coordinator Natasha Jackson, who also coordinates the Harford County Recovery Choir, performs the song. The video includes cameo appearances by Cal Ripken Jr., former NFL wide receiver Qadry Ismail, and “Tonight Show” comedian Dion Flynn. Permission to perform the song was granted to Harford County government by S- Curve Records.

Social Media Support Storm

Harford County government, Harford County Health Department, Harford County Public Schools, Harford County Sheriff's Office, Harford County CORE Services Agency, Healthy Harford/Healthy Cecil, Harford Community College, Harford County Public Library, the town of Bel Air and University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health have also partnered on a social media campaign that will run the month of September. Daily Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram posts will share moving stories of recovery, treatment resources and recovery events.

Empowering Events

Events focused on recovery, treatment and prevention are also planned in the next 30 days including:

September 6 - Rage Against Addiction crab feast at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church (6 - 9 p.m.)

September 12 - Homecoming Project gala at Water's Edge Events Center (6 – 10 p.m.)

September 13 – Embracing Recovery and Wellness Summit Mountain Christian Church Abingdon Campus (8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.)

September 14 - Char Hope Harbor of Strength Memorial Race at Tydings Park (8 - 11 a.m.)

September 19 - Discussion with Dr. Leonard Sax, author of "Boys Adrift"; "Girls on the Edge"; and "Why Gender Matters"; at Bel Air High School (6:30 – 8:00 p.m.)

September 20 - Harford County Kinship Conference - Relative's Matter at the EpiCenter in Edgewood (8 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.)

September 20 – Meet Jarrett J. Krosoczka, children's author/illustrator of "Hey Kiddo" at the Havre de Grace Library (3 – 4 p.m.)

September 24 & 26 – Discussion with Mark Mero, professional wrestler and motivational speaker at Edgewood HS on 9/24 and Patterson Mill HS on 9/26 (7:00 – 8:30 p.m.)

September 26 – The Harford County Second Chance Job and Resource Fair at the EpiCenter in Edgewood (9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

On Wednesday, September 25, County Executive Barry Glassman is encouraging everyone to wear purple for Recovery Awareness Day in Harford County to honor family members, friends and neighbors who have overcome addiction.

Tom Lantieri is a husband, father, grandfather, and an advocate for recovery who recently celebrated 25 years of sobriety. Tom believes that Harford County's Recovery Month efforts are especially meaningful to individuals who have recently started on their journey to recovery.

"Whether it is a building illuminated in purple light, a recovery rock, or an inspiring story on Instagram, those little touches can give individuals hope and strength to continue on especially when they are just starting on their path to recovery," Tom said. "Everyone's story and circumstances are different. You don't know which effort is going to make an impact. I hope they all work. But if one rock or one string of lights helps just one person persevere.... It's worth it. Further, all of these initiatives send an important message to families – you are not alone."

For additional event details and other Recovery Month activities, or to join in any of the above, please visit www.harfordcountymd.gov/ODCP or contact the Harford County Office of Drug Control Policy at 410-638-3333. If you or someone you love is struggling with addiction, please call for help at 800.639.8783.

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