



CareerSource Central Florida Unites with Local Businesses Offering Workforce Solutions to Help Individuals During Opioid Recovery

ORLANDO, Fla. (August 8, 2022) – [CareerSource Central Florida](#) (CSCF), Florida’s second largest regional workforce board, announces it has teamed up with local businesses in the region to provide workforce solutions to HR professionals and employers to help support, and integrate into the local workforce, individuals recovering from opioid addiction.

The opioid epidemic has been fueled by COVID-19. According to some of the latest research by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), more than 105,000 Americans died of an overdose in the 12 months ending in October 2021 – the highest number of overdose deaths ever recorded in 12 months.

In 2020, CareerSource Central Florida received \$2.7M from the state of Florida to bring awareness to the opioid crisis and provide crucial training to businesses to aid job seekers and workers who have been impacted by opioid addiction. Utilizing funds from the grant, CareerSource Central Florida launched “Fostering Opioid Recovery through Training & Employment” (FORTE) together with Project Opioid – a four-year initiative that has to date reached more than 900 Central Florida businesses and individuals.

Today, CareerSource Central Florida along with Project Opioid, the [International Center for Addiction and Recovery Education \(ICARE\)](#), [Advanced Recovery Systems \(ARS\)](#), the [Greater Orlando Society of Human Resources Management \(GOSHRM\)](#) and others are seamlessly working to provide training, certifications and educational offerings to local employers. These efforts are equipping HR professionals with skills and tools to support current employees and potential new candidates impacted by opioid addiction along their recovery journey to return to the workplace.

“The beauty of this program is that we are convening business owners, HR executives, and companies across a five-county region to help support and create a successful career journey for these residents, and they are answering the call enthusiastically,” said President & CEO of CareerSource Central Florida Pamela Nabors. “Partnering with a range of incredible subject matter experts, together we are creating new training solutions that encourage safe dialogue in the workplace about substance abuse, and also give much-needed support so these job-seekers can once again re-enter the workforce and lead successful, productive lives.”

Some of the educational tools and training available to HR professionals and businesses include:

- Free 20-hour training with live, instructor-led virtual meetings (tuition paid through CareerSource Central Florida grant dollars)
- Ability to earn SHRM re-certification credits under risk management, free with certain levels of participation
- Earn a [Certified Facilitator in Addiction Awareness – HR credential](#) (CFAA-HR) developed by ICARE
- Community education webinar series on ways to support mental health and substance abuse concerns
- Full access to Advanced Recovery Systems University, an on-demand library and learning database
- Access to the Advanced Recovery Systems Wellness app, Nobu, that connects users to a suite of free mental health support tools and access to one-on-one mental health counseling

Upcoming training opportunities include:

- HR training - opens in August for a mid-September start
- Community training with ARS - August 9th, September 6th, and September 20th

The impact of the FORTE program is significant and has changed many lives. Among those who have benefited from FORTE is Akil Meade, a local resident who is on his recovery journey. Through FORTE at CareerSource Central Florida, Akil was able to get a job at Recovery Connections of Central Florida and is receiving “on the job training” to support individuals needing guidance during their substance recovery journey. In his role, Akil is able to use his personal experience to help individuals in recovery and help motivate them in the workforce.

“It is a blessing to have a job where I can help people through my personal experience, promoting and encouraging recovery from substance addiction,” said Akil Meade who is in recovery and the FORTE program with CareerSource Central Florida. “It’s the best job I’ve ever had, it feels good, and this is the first time I’ve felt able to support my kids and make it here in Florida.”

For more information on how businesses can engage with and benefit from FORTE, please visit <https://www.careersourcecentralflorida.com/forte/>.

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About CareerSource Central Florida

CareerSource Central Florida (CSCF) is Florida’s second largest regional workforce board that is state and federally funded with an annual operating budget of approximately \$45 million. CSCF provides comprehensive services to connect career seekers and local businesses at no cost. Services include screening and hiring talent; employee training and education; paid internships and no cost skills training and education programs. In fiscal year 2021-2022, CSCF has served more than 39,500 career seekers and 3,500 businesses. The organization has placed more than 5,600 individuals in jobs and helped advance skills for more than 2,500 career seekers across Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Lake and Sumter Counties. For more information, visit www.CareerSourceCentralFlorida.com.

About International Center for Addiction and Recovery Education (ICARE)

The International Center for Addiction & Recovery Education (ICARE) is a Center of Excellence for bringing together people and processes to overcome the unprecedented societal challenges of addiction. The culmination of 25+ years of work in the field of recovery and addiction, ICARE is deeply rooted in the principles of Resilience and Emotional Sobriety. ICARE is committed to raising the awareness of addiction in our culture and helping individuals live their best lives, free from problematic behaviors and past stigma.

ICARE was founded in 2020 during COVID 19 as a response to the surge in substance misuse occurring during this devastating time in history. The brainchild of Dr. Jean LaCour, ICARE is the parent organization to a trio of affiliated divisions including: NET Training Institute (NTI), the International Association for Professional Recovery Coaches (IAPRC), and Strategic Sobriety Workforce Solutions. Together these three entities provide credentialed training programs to solve the growing global problem of addiction in individuals, families, communities, and the workforce. For more information visit <http://www.ICARE-Aware.org>.

About GOSHRM

[The Greater Orlando Society for Human Resource Management \(GOSHRM\)](#) is a local chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), the world's largest HR organization, serving Orlando, Florida and surrounding counties. GOSHRM's mission is: Elevating people and workplaces through education, connections, and service. Founded in 1957 as the Central Florida Human Resources Association (CFHRA), GOSHRM also supports the professional development needs of more than 550 individual members and the companies they serve.

About Advanced Recovery Systems

Advanced Recovery Systems (ARS) is an integrated behavioral health care management company dedicated to the treatment of addiction, substance abuse and mental health conditions. The ARS network of treatment centers includes The Recovery Village Umatilla (Umatilla, Florida), The Recovery Village at Palmer Lake (Palmer Lake, Colorado), The Recovery Village Ridgefield (Ridgefield, Washington), The Recovery Village Columbus (Groveport, Ohio), Orlando Recovery Center (Orlando, Florida), The Recovery Village at Baptist Health (Lake Worth, Florida and Miami, Florida), The Recovery Village Cherry Hill at Cooper (Cherry Hill, New Jersey), Next Generation Village (Sebring, Florida) and The IAFF Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery (Upper Marlboro, Maryland). For more information, visit www.AdvancedRecoverySystems.com.

About Project Opioid

Launched in 2018, [Project Opioid](#) is a non-profit partnership operating in the largest Florida regions (Jacksonville, Central Florida, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Tampa) that is dedicated to using a community collaboration model that connects faith, business, and philanthropy leaders with government, criminal justice, healthcare, education, and frontline service providers to help save lives. Project Opioid is committed to providing cutting-edge research, to showcasing and implementing national "best-practice" community response models – including the widespread access to Naloxone for families and law enforcement – and to developing community-based education and advocacy initiatives. Project Opioid has recently expanded to the communities of Santa Barbara and Los Angeles, CA, and is continuing to expand throughout America this year.