

# NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH



**Join The Voices For Recovery:  
Strengthen Families and Communities**

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On Wednesday, September 12, APAA will receive a the Mayors Proclamation for Recovery Month at the City Council Meeting.

We need your help to support recovery and promote wellness on North Texas Giving Day!

<https://northtexasgivingday.org/npo/apaa>

## Upcoming Rally



*Bringing  
Community,  
Collegiate and the  
Church together*

## DALLAS RALLY FOR RECOVERY

**Saturday, September 16, 2017**

**10 am – 2 pm**

**University of North Texas at Dallas**

7300 University Hills Blvd ~ Dallas, Texas 75241

**4,000 Attended the Big Texas Rally for Recovery in Dallas in 2016**

*Music \* Food \* Family Fun \* Recovery Stories*

### Speakers Include:

- ~ Dallas County Commissioner John Wiley Price ~
- ~ Kelvin Bass, Press Secretary for State Senator Royce West ~
- ~ Joe Powell, President/CEO, Association of Persons Affected by Addiction ~
- ~ Dr. Betty Stewart Provost and Executive Vice-President for Academic Affairs, University of North Texas at Dallas ~
- ~ Dr. Constance Lacy, Dean, School of Human Services, University of North Texas at Dallas ~

Vendor tables are available (minimum \$25). Call 214-634-2722 x-1004

**WELCOME HOUSTONIANS**

Learn more at: [www.apaarecovery.org](http://www.apaarecovery.org)

## Calendar:

**September 17:** Dallas Recovery Month Rally

**October 7:** Big Texas Rally for Recovery - Galveston, TX

**October 14:** North Texas Rally for Recovery

# APAA Stories: Elia Hamilton

I am family recovery coach here at APAA. Which means that I help those going through recovery or are seeking recovery for themselves or their family. Recovery is a process of change, and taking it upon yourself to turn your life around. Allowing someone else to help you with that. For me that was my recovery coach my mentor. It meant taking directions from someone other than myself.

As a recovery coach, I motivate and serve to inspire others seeking recovery and help them to set goals and to establish goals and not tell them how to live, but give them suggestions and resources where they can get the help that they need. This is a peer driven process. Peers are in control of what recovery looks like to them.

I myself am in long term recovery, what that means to me is that I have been clean for 5 years now. My story begins at the age of 12 I also face some mental health challenges, but today I am able to say that I know how to take care of myself. I was using alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, I used them to become a part of something to feel like I belonged somewhere, that I was somebody.

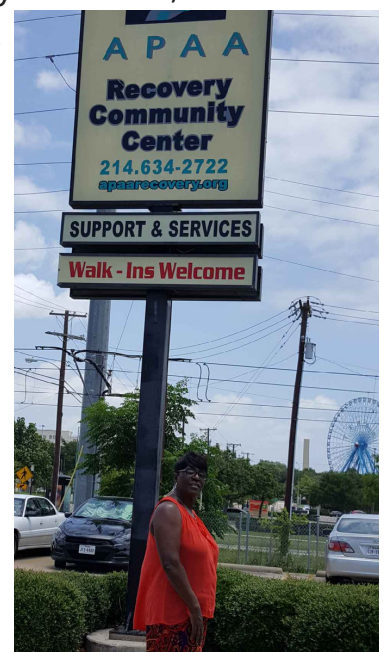
I had 6 other siblings at home but you know we weren't close, so I felt like I was an outsider. If I smoked or got high that made me feel like a part of something. I came from parents that loved me, that cared for me but I didn't feel like I got what I needed. The attention I never got the attention, everyone was always working no one would ever listen you know. However, if I got with people who were doing those things they would listen to me. In the process of using drugs I became a mother at the age of 13, by the grace of god I had my parents there to support me. As a younger person though it really took away from me and that's when I really started getting off into drugs. A young person at that point in time having a child you know it was like a sore eye. So it just led me from one stage to the other. It made me feel like I was someone at the time. Then things started to get worse and worse. Through this process I found out when I was maybe 40 years old that I was dealing with some mental health challenges.

That led me to realize why I was dealing with some of the things that I was going through you know I would get jobs and not be able to hold them, I would go to school and I wouldn't stay. After I had my child my mom would tell me that I was an adult now she would say you're an adult. Having to go to school, having to go to work and having to take care of my child it all just became too overwhelming for me so I was still sneaking around and doing drugs. After a while I got married, which is around the time I started using crack, I thought I could do this you know have a job, take care of the home, get my son back but it was all too much for me. I didn't know how to be a wife, I didn't know how to be a mother. I didn't know how to take on these responsibilities and be tactful. My mind was just racing all of the time I couldn't do anything.

After a while I got away from the marriage, from the house, I took my son back to my mom's house. I wanted to live my own life I didn't want to have to deal with a marriage, a house, a son I just wanted to deal with me. At that time, I realized that I didn't even know how to deal with me. I started to try and run away from it, trying to find another way and every time I would try and run from it I would end up using again.

Until one day I decided today I had enough! This was my second marriage I have been in this second marriage for 20 years and even in this second marriage I didn't know how to be a wife. I tried though, because I always thought that you know I can do this I can do this. I finally decided to change I decided to change something, I'm tired of using this drug I'm tired of being depressed and feeling like an outcast. Like I can't do this like I can't do that. I was tired of waking up and seeing how I looked when I was on this drug. I wanted to feel like I could do things like I can get a house, I can get jobs I could keep them and I didn't understand why, I would wake up and feel a certain way and then in the blink of an eye I would be another person and not understand why. I finally decided to get help. I went to my husband and told him that I really wanted to get some help. I put myself in Nexxus and I finally started being able to deal with things that were being said to me about me, and started going to metro care and taking my meds, keeping my doctor appointments and coming into recovery. Then I was finally able to get involved in recovery, then things started to turn around I was able to come into APAA and come into a group to listen to some of the stories being shared and hear about myself and my addiction. I used to feel like I was the only one who felt that way and I found out that I didn't have to go at it alone. I decided I wanted what they had here at APAA, but I had to make a decision. One day I was sitting in a group and I was just on edge because you know I wasn't being honest with myself, I was still trying to use the drug, be in recovery. I was still trying to figure out how to beat the system how to cheat and con. Then one day a young woman started sharing and I just couldn't do it, I got up and left and when I left I was crying because I didn't realize until that moment that it was more than just this group that I needed, because I was coming by force and not because I needed it. That day I realized I needed something much greater, my recovery path is faith based and that day I decided to find something that was greater than myself and that day I found it, I was able to come into my recovery honestly and it was extremely humbling.

I would suggest then that peers make that decision that recovery is what they want to do, you have to be ready to change. That is the whole deal, you have to be ready to change. See I put myself in a position where I was forced to change but I wasn't ready. It wasn't until I was ready to stop just existing and start living that I was able to change. One of my goals is to get my certification to become a counselor and I would like to have my own home where my grandchildren and my son can visit. Our home would be something that my husband and I accomplished together.



# Hurricane Harvey Relief & Recovery Support

Message from APAA Peer Leader :  
Joe Powell LCDC, PRSS | President/CEO APAA

As we all know, Hurricane Harvey has truly devastated the coast and surrounding cities of Texas causing devastating and unimaginable damage. Those affected by Hurricane Harvey have lost their homes, cars, and irreplaceable valuables and are unable to support their families in this time of depredation. The Association of Persons Affected by Addiction, located in Dallas, TX, is providing First Responder Recovery Support Services to all affected of this natural disaster. If you have already evacuated to Dallas, TX or you are planning to evacuate, we are offering support groups, recovery coaching, emergency assistance and other resources. We are here for you in your time of need! APAA was a First Responder Recovery Community Organization called for the 25,000 who came from New Orleans and devastated by Hurricane Katrina. APAA worked with other mental health providers at the convention center to prevent relapse, sustain recovery and provide support services for many who experienced trauma and loss.

**APAA:** We can prevent substance use to medicate the trauma, mental health challenge and loss with substance use due to Hurricane Harvey. We have open our doors to provide First Responder recovery support services for early intervention, prevent relapse, sustain recovery and provide trauma informed care services.

**Need:** for Treatment Beds anywhere in the U.S., Peer Supporters and Coaches, Counselors who can relocate to Dallas to provide behavioral health. Peers and family members need Transportation, housing, food, clothing, etc.

**Dallas MegaShelter (Convention Center):** APAA is providing peer support groups, recovery coaching, informational (multiple paths of recovery), affiliation, instrumental (housing, childcare, food, clothing, etc.) and emotional, Healing Arts & Entertainment, trauma informed, transportation, strength based, cultural congruent support services.

I have received phone calls from Bill White, Phil Valentine, Michael Askew, Maryanne Frangulas and others. We will connect with the larger recovery advocate organizations for more strength based resource approach. We will keep you informed and let you know how you can help.

**For more information, need any services or would like to help, please contact me, Joe Powell at (214) 476-6066 or email me at [joepowell@apaarecovery.org](mailto:joepowell@apaarecovery.org).**