



Date: September 3, 2025

Dear friends and community members,

We're proud to announce the official launch of Recovery Lives Here, a 36-month storytelling campaign from Sauk Valley Voices of Recovery (SVVOR) and the Ogle/DeKalb, and Lee/Whiteside ROSC Councils. Over the next three years, we will be introducing you to real people from our community who are living in long-term recovery. These are our neighbors, parents, workers, and friends. They are also people who once struggled with substance use and are now thriving.

The goal is simple but powerful: reduce the stigma of addiction by sharing real stories of hope, healing, and transformation.

Why This Campaign Matters

Stigma remains one of the most damaging barriers to recovery. It shows up in subtle and not-so-subtle ways from the judgment someone receives when they admit they have a problem, to discriminatory policies that treat substance use as a moral failing instead of a health condition. Stigma isolates people and discourages them from seeking help out of fear of being labeled or shamed. It fuels silence, secrecy, and suffering.

This campaign aims to disrupt those harmful patterns. By spotlighting real people who are thriving in recovery, we can challenge outdated perceptions and shift the public narrative from one of judgment to one of understanding, from fear to hope.

Our campaign will invite individuals in our community who have lived experience with substance use disorder and mental health challenges to tell their stories publicly and with pride. In recovery circles, this is known as "recovering out loud", a deeply personal and often courageous act of reclaiming one's story, not as something to hide, but as something to honor. When people recover out loud, they help dismantle shame, inspire others to seek help, and show that recovery is not just possible, it's powerful, present, and happening right here.

What does it mean to "Recover Out Loud"?

Recovery Out Loud means to stop hiding. It means claiming your story without shame. It means showing others what recovery actually looks like, not just the pain of addiction, but the beauty of healing.

Each story we share will be a testament to what's possible. Whether it's a person in recovery for 1 year or 30, their courage to speak openly can inspire someone else to take the first step.

What to Expect

Starting in October with the annual Recover-Con conference in DeKalb, SVVOR will release monthly newsletters, social media posts, billboards, podcasts, and radio features showcasing these brave voices. You will learn about their challenges, victories, and the lessons they've learned along the way.

How You Can Support This Movement

- Read the stories and share them with others.
- Challenge stigma when you hear it.
- Support those in recovery with compassion, not judgment.
- Let us know if you or someone you know might want to be featured in the future.

SVVOR is a recovery community organization dedicated to creating a world where the power of hope and healing of recovery from substance use disorder is thoroughly understood, embraced, and supported. The Ogle/DeKalb, and Lee/Whiteside Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care (ROSC) Councils are groups of local stakeholders that meet monthly to collaborate on strategies to combat substance use disorders and mental health challenges in our community.

Together, we can create a culture where recovery is celebrated not hidden.

With gratitude,

The SVVOR Team
The Ogle/DeKalb, and Lee/Whiteside ROSC Councils

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