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Peter Wohl, Crisis & Counseling Centers (C&C) Director of Outpatient Services, was awarded the state's first Lisa Mojer-Torres Recovery Advocacy Award in April.

The award was presented by the Maine Alliance for Addiction Recovery (MAAR) and Maine Recovery Communities Coalition. It was made in recognition of his leadership in helping to create a Recovery Oriented System of Care in Maine and his work to promote the many pathways individuals take to heal from alcohol and other drug problems.

"Receiving this award meant a tremendous amount to me," Wohl said. "I'm touched because it's so heartfelt and has come from people in recovery and the allies of recovery, who are my peers, and it's magnified by the fact that this award is a memorial to Lisa Mojer-Torres."

Mojer-Torres was a leading national advocate for people involved in medication-assisted recovery. She passed away on April 4, 2011, just one week before the event. Deb Dettor, Coordinator at MAAR, said Mojer-Torres' dedication has helped recovering people and professionals understand the need to build an inclusive recovery movement in Maine.

"She was a national powerhouse," Dettor said, calling Mojer-Torres "a very powerful catalyst for change" and saying that "she will be missed."

Advocates like Wohl are vital for the recovery movement, according to Dettor. "They help those who need recovery see that change is possible ... They help them believe in themselves and the process." In addition, advocates help spread the word that addiction doesn't happen only to people on the fringe. "Addicts are 'normal' people like any of us," she said.

“Stigma prevents people from getting into recovery and portrays addiction as a shameful secretive issue,” Wohl agreed. “It’s only when it’s brought out into the light that we can really effectively give people the help they need to recover.”

The award luncheon in April drew more than 115 advocates, professionals, and others from throughout the state. “We are building momentum ... it brought many different people in the recovery community together and was a very inclusive event,” Dettor said, adding that she had many nominations for the award.

“I think it’s great that there were so many other wonderful choices for this award in Maine,” Wohl said. “That reflects the fact that this new recovery movement is really catching on and more and more people are coming forward, sharing their stories, and helping others on their path.”

Crisis & Counseling Centers is a private, nonprofit social service agency licensed by the State of Maine as a mental health and substance abuse treatment facility. With clinical programs operating out of eight locations, the organization is the sole provider of 24-hour mobile crisis response and stabilization in Kennebec and Somerset counties (responding to more than 1,000 calls each month).

C&C also provides outpatient medication management, substance abuse and mental health treatment to more than 1,000 individuals each year; integrated medical and behavioral healthcare in two large county jails; and family support services statewide through the G.E.A.R. Parent Network.

The mission of Crisis & Counseling Centers is to develop and deliver effective solutions to the diverse behavioral health needs of the community in a professional and respectful manner. If you or someone you know is experiencing a crisis, please call the Voice & TTY Maine Crisis Line at 1-888-568-1112. For information, visit www.crisisandcounseling.org.

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