



October 2015 Advocacy for Change Works!

From the Executive Director's Desk

2015 has passed at high speed due to the velocity uptick of advocacy across the country. Oh, my!

In 1982, John Naisbitt's book *Megatrends: 10 New Trends Transforming Our Lives* mesmerized millions including me. I was especially drawn to the idea of grassroots advocacy. Naisbitt predicted critical changes would come through grassroots efforts. This was for others; not me. Yet soon after Jim died, I stepped into the fray of change for the disease of addiction. Anger was the catalyst.



Slogging through grief, research, wrong and right turns, my focus began to gel. Joining others we wrote letters, rallied and despaired. Many dropped out. The creep of opioids became a raging flood everywhere in the country. Death tolls skyrocketed.

April 2015 I join 1500 advocates at the annual Rx Drug Abuse Summit in Atlanta. A parade of senior U.S. public health officials including President Obama say, "We hear you". Governors and Congressmen pledge their support to turn the tide from incarceration to treatment. CDC Director Friedan is asked, "Why a massive response to Ebola where one died but nothing for Substance Use Disorder?" He says, "We messed up." Impressive words but we demand action! At the grassroots level we press forward changing Good Samaritan and naloxone access laws state by state. We reach across state lines forming coalitions. Facebook becomes a powerful means of connecting, educating and advocating. Want to make change? You are no longer alone! Proof?

The historic weekend of October 3rd and 4th is the proof. Threatened by a hurricane, thousands still descend on Washington, D.C. to rally, to demand change and celebrate recovery. Saturday, October 3rd at the FED Up Rally three thousand march on the White House. The cold, wet rain is no deterrent to the demand for Federal action for the prescription drug and heroin epidemic.

UNITE to Face Addiction October 4, 2015, Washington DC

James' Place Inc joined over 700 local, state and national organizations at the Sunday, October 4, 2015 "UNITE to Face Addiction" rally, a free event on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. This coalition launched a first-of-its-kind campaign to confront America's denial about the most urgent health crisis facing our nation today - addiction to alcohol and other drugs. The rally was planned by Facing Addiction {FacingAddiction.org}, a new organization dedicated to changing the conversation around, and bring new solutions to, the addiction crisis in America.



The event featured musical performances by Joe Walsh, Steven Tyler with his Nashville-based band, Loving Mary, Sheryl Crow, Jason Isbell, The Fray, and John Rzeznik of the Goo Goo Dolls; powerful, inspirational speakers from all walks of life who have been affected by addiction; and remarks by celebrities, elected officials and other advocates who joined together to stand up to addiction.



There was strong federal government recognition of the addiction epidemic, with in person remarks by U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, Michael Botticelli, director of the White House

Office of National Drug Control Policy, members of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration {SAMHSA}, National Institute on Drug Abuse {NIDA}, and Food and Drug Administration {FDA}, along with messages from President Barack Obama and President George W. Bush.



President Obama Addresses Drug Epidemic

President Obama delivers remarks on the prescription drug abuse epidemic at the East End Family Resource Center in Charleston, WV, October 21, 2015.

Parent input worth listening to; messaging from leadership is on target. Finally we are hearing more from our President. {About 25 minutes}

[View the Video](#)

FACT SHEET: Obama Administration Announces Public and Private Sector Efforts to Address Prescription drug abuse and heroin use.

Fact Sheet from President Obama - please check out the comprehensive programs rolling out. Doubters? I respect skepticism and yet, let's pass the word along that by being bold and outspoken, together we are making change happen.

[View the Fact Sheet](#)

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James' Place Inc., a 501(C)3 nonprofit, provides financial support for those needing assistance towards long term recovery. Through our "Shatter the Stigma" initiative, we embrace the work of advocacy and education necessary for hope.



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