

The logo for the MI Peers Conference 2026. It features a blue silhouette of the state of Michigan above the text "MI Peers" in a dark blue, bold, sans-serif font. Below "MI Peers" is the word "Conference" in a lighter blue, spaced-out, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the year "2026" is written in a dark blue, bold, sans-serif font, flanked by two horizontal lines: a green line on the left and a blue line on the right.

**MI Peers**  
Conference  
**2026**

Conference Information and Agenda

**April 28 - 29, 2026**

*Vibe Credit Union Showplace*  
*(Formerly known as Suburban Showplace)*

46100 Grand River Ave.

Novi, Michigan

## Conference Overview Agenda

Early Registration <b>Monday</b> April 27, 2026	Day 1 <b>Tuesday</b> April 28, 2026	Day 2 <b>Wednesday</b> April 29, 2026
<b>Registration Opens</b> 5 - 8:00 p.m.	<b>Registration Opens</b> 7:30 a.m.	<b>Registration Opens</b> 7:30 a.m.
	<b>Breakfast &amp; Networking</b> 7:30 a.m. — 8:45 a.m.	<b>Breakfast &amp; Networking</b> 7:30 a.m. — 8:45 a.m.
	<b>Welcome, Opening, and Keynote</b> 9 — 10:15 a.m.	<b>Welcome, Opening, and Keynote</b> 9 — 10:15 a.m.
	<b>Break</b> 10:15 a.m. — 10:30 a.m.	<b>Break</b> 10:15 a.m. — 10:30 a.m.
	<b>Workshop: Session 1</b> 10:30 a.m. — Noon	<b>Workshop: Session 4</b> 10:30 a.m. — Noon
	<b>Lunch and Awards</b> Noon — 1:15 p.m.	<b>Lunch and Networking</b> Noon p.m. — 1:15 p.m.
	<b>Workshop: Session 2</b> 1:15 p.m. — 2:45 p.m.	<b>Workshop: Session 5</b> 1:15 p.m. — 2:45 p.m.
	<b>Break</b> 2:45 p.m. — 3 p.m.	<b>Break</b> 2:45 p.m. — 3 p.m.
	<b>Workshop: Session 3</b> 3 — 4:30 p.m.	<b>Workshop: Session 6</b> 3 — 4:30 p.m.
	<b>Karaoke</b> 6:30 p.m. — 9 p.m.	<b>Conference Adjourns</b> 4:30 p.m.

### **Continuing Education:**

All sessions offered this year qualify for Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Peer Services Area Continuing Education credits (CEs). After picking up your name badge at the registration desk, please ensure your email is correct. Your certificate of completion will be sent to the email on the back of your badge. If you need a correction, please see the help desk so they can assist you.

For each session offering CEs, conference staff will be in the classroom and will scan the barcode on the back of your name badge to check you in for the workshop. Once the session is over, staff will be able to automatically sign you out. If you need to leave during the session, you must scan out and scan back in. If you do not scan back in, you will not receive credit. You may not miss more than 10 minutes of a session to receive credit.

Once a workshop has begun, switching to another will result in no credit for that session.

Certificates of completion will be sent out no later than four weeks after the conference.

### **Dress and Attire:**

The conference is casual attire. Comfortable shoes are strongly encouraged as the Vibe Credit Union Showplace is a large venue. We suggest carrying a sweater throughout the day as some of the conference room temperatures may fluctuate.

**Fragrance Free Event** - For the safety and comfort of those with chemical and environmental sensitivities, please refrain from wearing perfumes, colognes, or using scented products. Thank you!

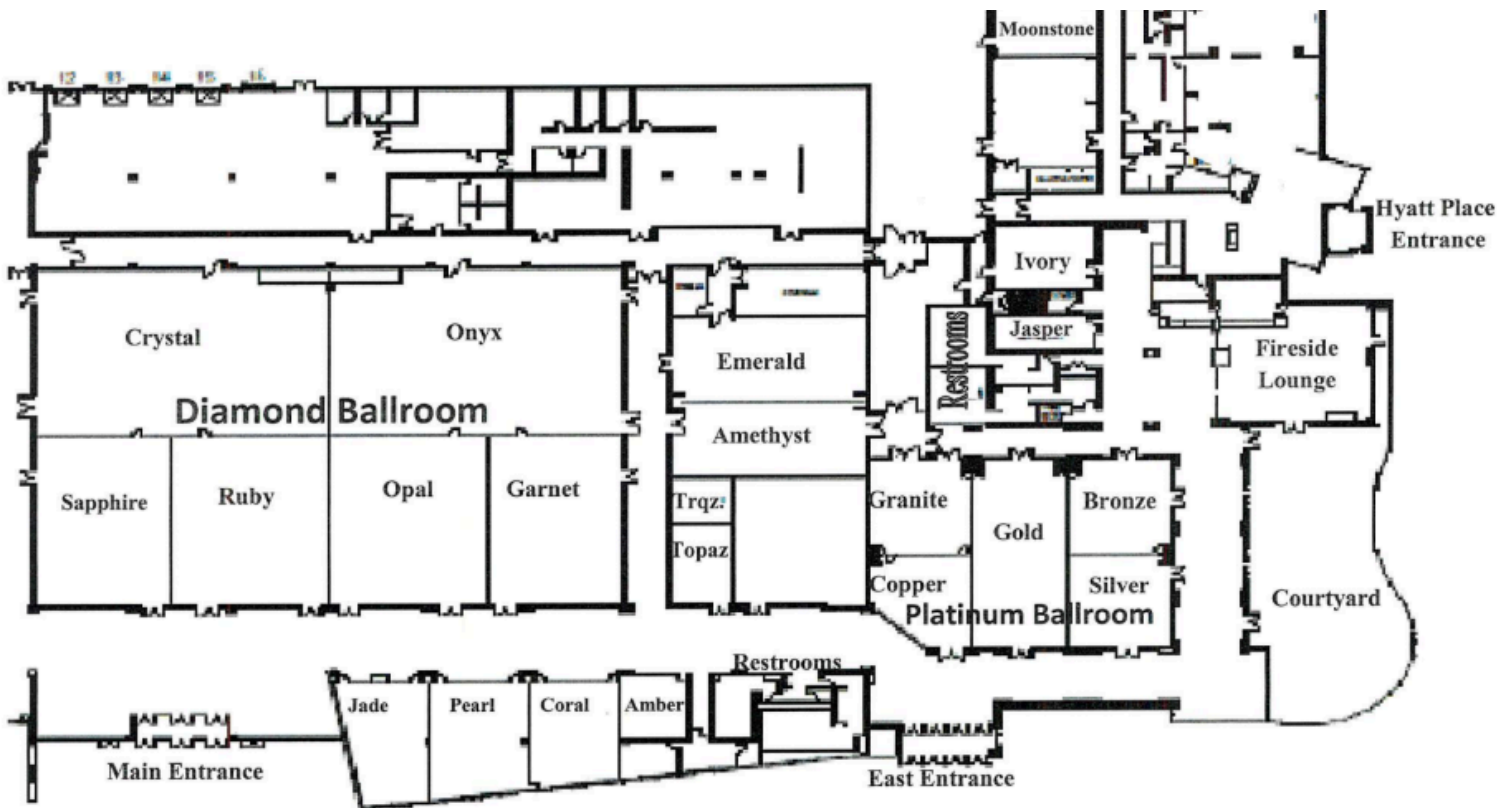
### **Parking:**

Parking at the Vibe Credit Union Showplace is free of charge. Areas around the conference center generally have ample free parking.

### **Evaluation:**

Your feedback helps make the conference better! Every year, our planning team reviews the feedback we get from our past conference evaluations. After the conference, keep an eye on your email for an invitation to take the post-conference evaluation survey.

# Vibe Credit Union Showplace Map



**Day 1 | Tuesday, April 28, 2026**

**7:30 a.m. | Breakfast and Networking**

*Lobby*

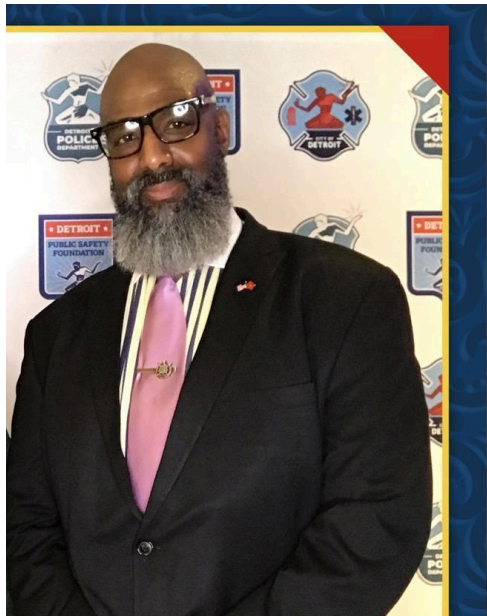
**9 a.m. | Welcome and Keynote**

*General Session Room*

**Keynote: Beautifully-Flawed**

Dr. Kevin R. Scott Sr.

Dr. Kevin R. Scott Sr. is a nationally recognized trauma specialist, veteran peer mental health advocate, researcher, and public speaker whose work bridges lived experience, trauma science, and systems-level reform. He is a MDHHS Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) and Certified Peer Recovery Coach (CPRC). A decorated United States Marine Corps veteran of the Persian Gulf era, Dr. Scott is widely regarded as a leading voice in trauma-informed peer support, justice-involved populations, and veteran crisis intervention.



He is the founder and executive director of the Crisis Peer, a community-based mental health and crisis response initiative rooted in trauma-informed, culturally responsive practice. Through training, consulting, media engagement, and direct service, Dr. Scott works with clinicians, first responders, justice systems, community organizations, and veterans nationwide translating complex trauma science into practical, real-world interventions that improve outcomes for historically underserved populations.

Dr. Scott holds a Doctor of Education in Traumatology, with doctoral research examining the perceived effectiveness and systemic utilization of peer support within the Veterans Health Administration. His research has been accessed internationally and contributes to the evolving evidence base for peer-driven models of care. He completed advanced trauma training under Dr. Bessel van der Kolk through the Trauma Research Foundation and holds an executive leadership certification in Global Mental Health from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Professionally, Dr. Scott has served in senior peer leadership roles within the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, supporting veterans affected by PTSD, substance use disorder, housing instability, moral injury, and justice involvement. Since 2019, he has delivered Crisis Intervention training and trauma-informed education to law enforcement, first responders, clinicians, and community stakeholders nationwide.

## 10:30 a.m. - Noon | Workshop Session 1

*Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits for peers.*

### **Rooted in Evidence, Rising in Practice: Evidence-Based Peer Support**

Emerald Room

Peer support is evidence-based, yet peers are often asked to justify their work using clinical frameworks that do not fit their role. The introductory, experiential session reframes evidence-based practice through a peer lens, centering lived experience, practice-based evidence, and community outcomes rather than medicalized models of care.

Designed for peers, this training explores core evidence-based practices that align with peer roles and responsibilities, including trauma-informed peer support, peer-adapted motivational interviewing, recovery capital, Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) - informed support, and harm minimization. Participants will engage in reflection and real-world examples to identify what these practices look like when implemented ethically by peers and where clear boundaries must be maintained.

Emphasis is placed on role clarity, documentation language, and boundary-setting as tools to protect peer labor, prevent role drift, and strengthen the integrity of peer support within complex systems.

#### **Presented By:**

Braunwynn Franklin - CPSS

### **Apps and Devices in Support of Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder (SUD)**

Granite/Copper Room

Apps and assistive technology devices are a part of our everyday lives. Apps and assistive technology can be an important part of our recovery plan. Join us to learn, try tools/apps for trauma, sensory integration, mental health, and substance recovery. Learn about opportunities to borrow devices, try apps and decide for free from the Michigan Assistive Technology Program - to access tools for your recovery and the recovery of those you support.

#### **Presented By:**

Aimee Sterk - LMSW

## **Independent Facilitators: A Partner in the Person-Centered Planning Process**

Garnet Room

An independent facilitator (IF) is an individual who facilitates the Person-Centered Planning (PCP) process in collaboration with the person. Individuals who receive behavioral health support and services have the right to choose an IF to facilitate the PCP process that is used to develop the Individual Plan of Service (IPOS). Independent facilitation is a Medicaid covered service. They partner with the person to facilitate their PCP process focusing on the person's preferences, personal goals, and what is important to them. The IF works with the individual and their support coordinator/case manager to ensure the IPOS reflects the planning process. IFs are a valuable resource. This presentation will describe how peers can work with IFs and how to explain the benefits to individuals served in the public behavioral health system.

### **Presented By:**

Angela Martin - MSW

Jan Lampman - BA, QIDP, CAPP

## **Shining Like a Rainbow Through Recover**

Amethyst Room

This presentation will explain how peers help create safe and supportive spaces for LGBTQ+ people. Using their own lived experience, peer supporters offer understanding, comfort, and hope to individuals who may face stress, stigma, or questions about their identity. The session will show how peer support helps people feel accepted, valued, and less alone.

Participants will learn simple ways to build trust, listen without judgement, and support LGBTQ+ individuals in their wellness journey. The presentation will also share easy strategies for creating safe spaces, building confidence, and helping people connect with resources and community support. By the end, participants will understand how peer support strengthens LGBTQ+ wellness and why shared experience is an important tool for healing and growth, to help create safe spaces, reduce stigma, and encourage self-acceptance.

### **Presented By:**

Blake Harvey - CPSS, BSW

## **Welcome to Recovery Coaching: The ER/Hospital Setting**

Sapphire Room

This session will give a general overview of what a recovery coach position may look like and unique factors of working in the emergency room setting. This workshop will explore identifying what stage of change an individual may be in and what approach may be applicable, including how person-centered planning is beneficial to those we serve. While this training is centered around recovery coaching in the hospital setting, the skills and material presented may be useful to peers working in other positions, as well.

### **Presented By:**

Kara Trainor - CPRC, CPSS

## **Peers Leading Change: Strengthening Advocacy Leadership in Civic and Voter Engagement**

Bronze/Silver Room

This workshop is designed to strengthen the leadership skills of advocates who want to guide peers in becoming active, informed participants in the political process. Participants will learn practical strategies for teaching fellow advocates how to navigate political systems, use their voice effectively, and advocate for themselves with confidence.

The session will also provide a step-by-step framework for planning, developing, and executing a successful voting campaign from outreach and messaging to turnout and follow-up. In addition, participants will explore methods for building strong collaborations with advocacy agencies, community partners, candidates, and peer groups to advance shared civic-engagement goals.

### **Presented By:**

Robert Spruce - CPM

Michael Tribble - CPM

Jamie Junior - CPM

Peer Talks	Pearl Room
<p><i>Peer Talk is a short presentation to inspire, educate and spark conversations around innovative ideas, while sharing knowledge and fostering dialogue.</i></p> <p>To receive 1.5 CEs for this session, you must attend all three Peer Talks. Partial CEs will not be awarded.</p>	
<p><b>Inner Power</b></p> <p>This mini session is a motivational presentation designed to inspire confidence, self-awareness, and personal growth. This presentation explores the idea that every individual has a powerful inner strength shaped by their experiences, values, and ability to overcome challenges.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Todd Fowler - CPRC</p>	
<p><b>The State of Mind for Empowerment</b></p> <p>Role modeling for those we serve involves using our wisdom in challenging situations. Peers can explore how using wisdom can bring clarity and emotional balance for not only themselves, but others. In this peer talk, we will understand the emotional regulation that plays a part in encouraging others during states of crisis or mental health concerns. While wisdom is often hard to quantify, we often define wise behaviors in certain parts of psychology as the middle between emotional mind and rational mind-encompassing this notion with those we serve can create an atmosphere that gives power when individuals might believe otherwise.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Angela McMillan - CPSS</p>	
<p><b>HOPE &amp; Awakening the Inner Power: The Role of Peer Support</b></p> <p>Hope is more than a feeling - it is a powerful force that awakens inner strength and fuels recovery. In this session, peers will explore hope as lived experience, favorable expectation, and a bridge between despair and possibility. Drawing from personal recovery and peer practice, participants will reflect on how their presence alone offers hope and ignites power in those they serve.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Perry Hoskins - CPSS</p>	

## 1:15 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. | Workshop Session 2

*Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits for peers.*

### **Peer Roles in Mobile Crisis**

Gold Room

This presentation provides an overview of peer support roles within mobile crisis teams operating in hospitals and community settings. It covers practical strategies for engaging consumers in crisis, collaborating with social workers, maintaining professional boundaries, and ensuring safety when working alongside law enforcement. Participants will also learn how to identify and access community resources while in the field to support consumer stabilization and follow-up care.

#### **Presented By:**

Micole Jameson - CPSS

### **When Recovery Overlaps: Supporting Co-Occurring Eating Disorders, Mental Health, and Substance Use as a Peer**

Garnet Room

Eating disorders frequently co-occur with mental health and substance use challenges, yet they are rarely addressed in peer training or recovery spaces. This workshop explores how disordered eating and food-related behaviors may show up across mental health and substance use recovery, using a peer-led, lived-experience perspective. Participants will gain practical tools to recognize warning signs, respond without shame or diagnosis, and stay grounded in the peer role. The session emphasizes trauma-informed support, reducing harm, ethical boundaries, and recovery-oriented language relevant to both CPSS and CPRC. Through real-world examples and discussion, attendees will leave better equipped to support individuals navigating overlapping recovery needs while honoring multiple pathways to healing and wellness.

#### **Presented By:**

Allison Herrst- CPRC

## **Recovery Advocacy: Building Relationships with Elected Officials and Leaders**

Sapphire Room

This presentation equips recovery leaders, advocates, and community partners with the knowledge and practical skills needed to effectively engage elected officials and community leaders in support of recovery-focused policies and systems. Participants will explore the role of recovery advocacy, including how lived experience, data, and storytelling can influence decision-making and public policy. The session will provide actionable guidance on building and sustaining relationships with policymakers, preparing for meetings, communicating with clarity and respect, and navigating advocacy in a nonpartisan and ethical manner. Through real-world examples and applied strategies, attendees will gain confidence in advancing recovery priorities, strengthening partnerships, and elevating the voice of the recovery community to create lasting, systems-level change.

### **Presented By:**

Patrick Patterson - CPRC

## **Breaking Barriers: Addressing SUD Stigma and Savings Lives with Narcan**

Amethyst Room

This session provides a comprehensive overview of SUD, emphasizing the importance of reducing stigma and promoting compassionate, evidence-based support. Participants learn to recognize and challenge common stereotypes and misconceptions, as well as explore the impact of stigma on individuals seeking treatment and recovery.

By the end of the session, participants are better equipped to support individuals affected by substance use, respond to overdoses with confidence, and build a more inclusive and supportive community.

### **Presented By:**

Brooke Cross - CPRC

## **Boundaries and Balance: Enhancing Interpersonal Practices for Peer Support Specialists**

Emerald Room

This training session addresses the unique challenges faced by certified peers in Michigan in their interpersonal practices at work and during recovery. Participants will be guided through a comprehensive examination of the common obstacles that can lead to burnout or relapse. Through interactive discussions and practical exercises, attendees will learn to identify and understand the root causes of these difficulties. This deeper insight will enable participants to pinpoint specific areas for improvement in their own practices. Additionally, the training will provide essential strategies for establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries, both personally and professionally. By equipping peers with these vital tools, the session aims to bolster resilience, foster sustainable recovery and enhance the overall well-being of certified peers in their professional roles.

### **Presented By:**

Jason Knight - CPRC, CPSS

Katharine M. Jackson - CPSS, LLMSW

## **Recovery Coaching the Justice Impacted Population**

Bronze/Silver Room

This workshop focuses on the essential function of recovery coaches in aiding individuals grappling with substance use disorders and mental health challenges who find themselves in or at risk of entering the criminal justice system. It seeks to illuminate the ways in which peers can assist the people they serve to overcome barriers, access crucial resources, and ultimately achieve lasting recovery. By addressing the needs of this population, peers can contribute to reducing recidivism and fostering healthier communities.

### **Presented By:**

Rebecca Rich - CPRC

Kara Thompson - CPRC

Joseph Murphy - CPRC

Holly Kotchman - CPRC

**Real-World Employment Coaching in Recovery: A Practical, Interactive Peer Workshop**

Granite/Copper Room

This interactive session equips providers with person-centered strategies and practical tools to support clients in recovery, obtain and sustain immediate employment. Through a realistic case scenario, hands-on exercises, and facilitated discussions, participants will explore evidence-based approaches, including the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model. Attendees will gain skills to address common employment barriers. The session emphasizes collaborative, problem-solving, peer-informed approaches, and employer engagement, equipping providers to help persons served achieve sustainable employment and enhanced independence. Insights from case scenarios will be translated into actionable strategies.

**Presented By:**

Amy Miller - SHRM-SCP

Peer Talks	Pearl Room
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<p><b>What Real MI Peers Do</b></p> <p>Drawing from more than 22 years of service in the United States Army - including 36 months as a Drill Sergeant and over 11 years of lived experience with incarceration and recovery, this session offers an authentic, deeply human perspective on transformation. The presenter shares a journey from addiction, stigma, and self-doubt to purpose-driven living, emphasizing that recovery is possible for anyone. Through evidence-based guidance, peer support, and real-life application, this session highlights how individuals can overcome barriers such as having justice involvement, low self-esteem, and lack of support to build meaningful, sustainable lives.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Reginald Woodward - CPRC</p>	
<p><b>Building Inner Strength</b></p> <p>This session is designed to help peers discover, develop and use the strengths they already have within themselves. Participants will explore how confidence and resilience grow through lived experience, connection and practice. This session will help peers identify what makes them strong and learn simple strategies to overcome challenges.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Randy May - CPM</p>	
<p><b>The Radical Act of Being Seen: Self Advocacy Through Recovery</b></p> <p>This session features a journey from shame and silence to leadership and visibility transforming my life and the lives of countless others. I lead with vulnerability, courage, and deep belief in second chances. The presenter speaks openly about recovery as a pathway to personal power, self-advocacy, and becoming the person you always hoped you could be. This mini-session explores how self-advocacy began the moment you stop hiding and start telling your story. Attendees will walk away with a deeper understanding of how sharing your truth becomes both a healing act and a powerful tool for justice and connection.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Paula Lipinski</p>	

**3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. | Workshop Session 3**

*Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits for peers.*

**From Holding Space to Healing Systems: Redefining How We Lead, Listen, and Heal Together**

Sapphire Room

What if healing wasn't just personal, but cultural? This session reimagines recovery as something that happens not just in our relationships, but also in our workplaces and systems. Through story, reflection, and interactive practice, this session explores how we can lead and listen in ways that build trust, prevent burnout, and transform organizational culture. Come ready to reflect, connect, and rediscover what it means to hold space for change.

**Presented By:**

Tobias Neal - MComm, THM

**Freedom Within: The Power of Medication Assisted Treatment and Peer Support in the Incarceration Setting**

Granite/Copper Room

This presentation explores the transformative impact of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) and peer recovery coaching within correctional settings. Participants will learn how these evidence-based approaches work together to support healing, reduce recidivism, and foster hope among incarcerated individuals with substance use disorders. Through real-world examples and best practices, we will highlight how peer support provides a clinical foundation for sustained recovery. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of how integrating these tools can create a culture of recovery behind the walls and beyond.

**Presented By:**

Elizabeth Kelly - CPRC  
Tara Cullen- CPRC

John Lockwood - CPRC  
Thomas Conover - CPRC

**Peer Continuum: Burnout, Compassion Fatigue and Longevity in the Field**  
Emerald Room

It is understood that peer work is stressful. For some, the combination of too much stress (both work and personal) and lack of coping skills can result in burnout, compassion fatigue and/or secondary trauma. Facilitators, from different peer disciplines, will provide lived experience with burnout and fatigue in the field of behavioral health as well as coping skills and self-care recommendations.

**Presented By:**

Chris O'Droski - CPRC

Tonnio Graves - CPM

Deborah Monroe - CPSS, CPRC, CHW

**Peer Support: Multiple Pathways to Recovery and Resilience**  
Gold Room

Peer support is more than a service: it is a lifeline for those standing at the edge of hopelessness. It transforms isolation into connections, despair into resilience, and pain into purpose. This presentation will illuminate why peer support is essential - not optional - in every recovery system. Attendees will learn strategies to integrate peer support across disciplines, dismantle stigma, and champion hope as a cornerstone of healing. We will explore creative, peer-led wellness tools and highlight evidence-based practices that restore dignity and empower self-advocacy. By embracing multiple pathways to recovery, we can build systems that heal hearts and save lives.

This session is a call to action: to elevate peer support as a national priority and ensure no one walks the path of recovery alone. Together, we can turn brokenness into resilience and make hope a living reality.

**Presented By:**

Johnny Poynter - CPRS

## **Multiple Pathways: How Nontraditional Pathways Transform Long Term Recovery**

Bronze/Silver Room

This session explores three powerful recovery pathways - Recovery Dharma, Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families (ACA), and Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) and how they uniquely support healing through mindfulness, relational repair, and family-of-origin work.

Through lived experience and evidence-informed insight, participants learn how these pathways complement one another to expand personal and community recovery capital. This session emphasizes recovery as non-linear and connection-centered. Participants will leave with a broader understanding of multiple pathways, practical insight for supporting others, and renewed inspiration for their own recovery journey.

### **Presented By:**

Barbara Alexander - CPRC, CPRM, RCP-F, MA

## **Safety, Trust, and Healing: Building a Trauma- Informed Space**

Amethyst Room

This will be an interactive session on creating trauma-informed spaces. These spaces are specifically designed to feel safe, supportive, consistent, and empowering. This is to prevent re-traumatization by taking into account the impact of past trauma. To do this, one must focus on using calming sensory elements, offering choice, and furthering trust through clear communication, signage, open layouts, and options for privacy.

The importance of ethical practices and boundaries will also be explored. This is necessary to increase the likelihood that we, as peer-support providers, will model empathy, maintain necessary boundaries, and focus on supportive environments centered in healing.

### **Presented By:**

Michelle Olson - CPSS

Brian Wellwood - CPSS

Matthew Whipple - CPSS

Peer Talks	Garnet Room
<p><i>Peer Talk is a short presentation to inspire, educate and spark conversations around innovative ideas, while sharing knowledge and fostering dialogue.</i></p> <p>To receive 1.5 CEs for this session, you must attend all three Peer Talks. Partial CEs will not be awarded.</p>	
<p><b>Veteran Suicide Prevention: The Crucial Role of Peer Support Specialists</b></p> <p>This session will highlight the presenter’s personal story as a Marine combat veteran, their struggle with addiction, depression, PTSD, suicidal ideation, and the work they are currently doing to help combat veteran suicide. This presentation is a story of resilience, hope and finding purpose in recovery.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Dustin Curtis - CPSS</p>	
<p><b>Rebuilding Leadership from the Inside Out</b></p> <p>Leadership often breaks down internally long before it fails outwardly. In this mini session, the presenter shares a personal story of rebuilding his identity and leadership after losing his leg in a motorcycle accident, and how that experience reshaped his understanding of resilience, ownership and growth. This session explores the internal work required to lead through adversity, uncertainty, and emotional strain. Participants will reflect on the habits, narratives, and support systems that either strengthen or undermine leadership from the inside out.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Joshua Reed - PMP, CAPM</p>	
<p><b>Turning Barriers into Breakthroughs Through Emotional Intelligence</b></p> <p>Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a foundational skill in recovery-oriented systems of care, supporting self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and healthy relationships. For individuals navigating recovery through multiple pathways, EI strengthens personal agency and peer connection while honoring diverse experiences, cultures, and recovery goals.</p> <p>This interactive, peer-led workshop explores emotional intelligence as a practical, accessible tool for empowerment in recovery. Participants will examine how EI supports self-determination, reduces shame, enhances resilience, and promotes wellness across multiple recovery pathways - including abstinence-based, harm minimization, medication-supported, faith-based, and holistic approaches.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Angelique Mills - CPSS</p>	

**Day 2 | Wednesday, April 29, 2026**

**7:30 a.m. | Breakfast and Networking**

*Lobby*

**9 a.m. | Welcome and Keynote**

*General Session Room*

**Keynote: Fentanyl Nation to Recovery Future: Advocating for Life in the Face of Toxic Crisis**

Ryan Hampton



A prominent advocate, speaker, author, and media commentator, Ryan Hampton travels coast-to-coast to add solutions to our national addiction and drug overdose crisis. In recovery from a decade-long opioid addiction, Hampton is regarded as a forefront expert and thought leader in America's rising addiction recovery advocacy movement. For nearly a decade, he has worked with multiple non-profits and addiction recovery organizing campaigns. He is now a prominent, leading face and voice of recovery advocacy and is now working to change the longstanding negative narratives about those impacted by addiction, recovery, and overdose. Hampton breaks down cultural barriers that have kept people suffering in silence and is helping to inspire a new

generation of advocates recovering out loud, pushing for common-sense policy. He was part of the core team that released the first-ever U.S. Surgeon General's report on alcohol, drugs, and health in 2016 and was singled out by Forbes the following year as a top social entrepreneur in the recovery movement.

Through the Overdose Response Initiative, a not-for-profit coalition Ryan helped form in 2019, over 950,000 free doses of naloxone have been distributed in 21 states as of January 2025. The alliance comprises nearly 40 organizational stakeholders nationally.

Ryan lives in Nevada with his husband, Sean, and their boxer puppy, Quincy.

## 10:30 a.m. - Noon | Workshop Session 4

*Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits for peers.*

### **Moral Injury**

Garnet Room

Moral Injury refers to the deep psychological, emotional, and spiritual wounds that occur when individuals engage in, witness, or fail to prevent actions that violate their moral or ethical beliefs. Unlike PTSD, which is a fear-based trauma response, moral injury is predicted on a guilt/shame based internal wound stemming from acts of commission and/or omission. Moral injury is most pervasive in high-stakes professions such as military service, healthcare, law enforcement/first responders, and those impacted by the justice system.

#### **Presented By:**

Kevin Scott Sr. - PhD, CPRC, CPSS, CHW

### **Your Voice Can Spark Change in Your Life and Others**

Amethyst Room

Your voice holds the power to inspire, influence, and spark meaningful change in others. In this interactive workshop, participants will explore how authentic communication can create connection, build trust, and drive positive impact. Through guided reflection, storytelling exercises, and group discussions you'll learn how to use your voice and confidence and purpose. We will examine how tone, empathy, and intentional messaging can shape conversations and motivate others toward action.

Whether you are leading a team, engaging in community work, or seeking to strengthen personal relationships, this session will help you discover the power of your voice as a tool for influence and change.

#### **Presented By:**

Malika Williams - BIS

## **Unaddressed Bias and Recovery Pathways**

Gold Room

This presentation explores how hidden assumptions - at individual, organizational, and system levels - shape access, outcomes, and experiences in peer-delivered services and recovery-oriented systems of care. Bias is not always intentional, but when left unexamined it can undermine impartiality, trust, and authentic recovery. This session invites participants to look honestly at how bias shows up in practices, language and decision-making within values-driven, peer-led spaces.

Grounded in peer perspectives the workshop will highlight practical recovery pathways that move beyond awareness toward meaningful change. Participants will explore strategies for recognizing bias, repairing harm, and strengthening systems so they better reflect lived experience, empathetic engagement, and shared power. Through reflection and real-world examples, attendees will gain tools to support accountability, foster comprehensive environments, and promote resilience for both peers and the communities they serve. This session is designed for peers, leaders, advocates, and allies committed to advancing recovery, fairness, and continuous learning across Michigan's peer workforce.

### **Presented By:**

Elisha Ash - CPRC

Eric Hoffman - CPRC, CPSS

## **Implementing Multiple Pathways and Enhancing Recovery Capital**

Sapphire Room

This presentation invites the audience into a dynamic, visual exploration of recovery through real stories, lived experience, and community transformation. Using powerful storytelling and engaging visuals, this presentation highlights how recovery is not one-size-fits-all, and how communities can better support diverse recovery journeys by embracing multiple pathways and building recovery capital.

Through personal narrative and examples from the field, participants will see how language, systems, and culture can either open doors or create barriers to healing. The session challenges traditional assumptions, encourages critical thinking, and leaves audiences inspired with practical ways to foster autonomy, inclusions, and wellness within their communities.

### **Presented By:**

Amy Brune - CPRC, CPRM

## **Ethics, Wellness, and Evidence: Strengthening Peer Roles Across Multiple Pathways of Recovery**

Emerald Room

This session is designed to strengthen peer roles by integrating ethics, wellness, and evidence-based practices grounded in recovery values. Drawing from lived experience and professional practice, the session explores how peers can support whole-person recovery while maintaining clear boundaries, role integrity, and ethical responsibility. Participants will examine common ethical situations in peer work, including self-disclosure, confidentiality, and boundary management, and discuss practical, recovery-oriented responses.

The session also highlights evidence-based peer practices and emphasizes respect for multiple pathways to and of recovery, including abstinence-based, harm minimization, faith-based, and medication-assisted approaches. Through guided discussion, reflection, and real-world examples, participants will gain practical tools to enhance confidence, strengthen ethical decision-making, and provide inclusive, person-centered support.

### **Presented By:**

Tamesha Little - CPRC, CADC-DP, AA, CPRM, CHW

Tameca Presley - CPRC

## **From Prison to Purpose**

Bronze/Silver Room

This workshop examines how lived experience can drive meaningful public health policy, system change and innovative partnerships with law enforcement and corrections. Drawing from a journey that includes 23 years of substance use and six prison sentences, this session highlights the real-world consequences of policy gaps and the life-saving impact of harm minimization.

This workshop traces a transition from incarceration to recovery leadership in Arkansas, including becoming the first parolee to hold a state government position under the governor while directly reporting to a former arresting officer who later became the state drug czar. Attendees will learn how this collaboration led to the creation of 54 recovery-focused programs, the nation's first peer support career ladder, and policy changes allowing justice-impacted individuals to work in state recovery roles. The session offers practical insight for public health, peer workforce and justice systems.

### **Presented By:**

Jimmy McGill - CPRS

## **Harm Minimization**

Granite/Copper Room

Harm minimization is a compassionate, evidence-based approach to reducing the negative consequences of substance use without requiring abstinence. This presentation will show how harm minimization tools, peer support, and community partnerships can reduce risks, improve health outcomes, and empower individuals to make positive changes at their own pace.

### **Presented By:**

Todd Fowler - CPRC

Vivian Nikole Breslin - Street Outreach Specialist

Peer Talks	Pearl Room
<p><i>Peer Talk is a short presentation to inspire, educate and spark conversations around innovative ideas, while sharing knowledge and fostering dialogue.</i></p> <p>To receive 1.5 CEs for this session, you must attend all three Peer Talks. Partial CEs will not be awarded.</p>	
<p><b>Barriers: Lessons That Only the Work Teaches Us</b></p> <p>This peer talk explores how individuals and systems can move beyond obstacles that often limit access, engagement, and progress in recovery-oriented settings. Barriers; whether personal, structural, or systemic, are a common part of the journey, but they can also become opportunities for growth, innovation, and meaningful change. Grounded in lived experience and frontline practice, this session examines how challenges such as stigma, limited resources, communication gaps, and system constraints impact outcomes.</p> <p>Participants will gain insight into how small, purposeful shifts in approach, advocacy, collaboration, flexibility, and persistence; can create momentum and open new pathways forward.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Kristina DeClue - CPSS</p>	
<p><b>Rewriting the Story of Struggle: Turning Setbacks into Purpose.</b></p> <p>This peer talk is designed for peers and recovery professionals that invite participants to re-examine how adversity shapes identity and direction. Drawing from lived-experience, psychology, and purpose-driven insight, the session explores how personal setbacks, systemic barriers, and internal challenges can become meaningful sources of growth rather than defining limitations.</p> <p>Through storytelling and guided reflection, participants are encouraged to examine the narratives they have accepted about failure, labels, and struggle, and to consider how those experiences can be reframed with intention and meaning.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Stacey Foster - CPRC</p>	
<p><b>What I Built When Everything Fell Apart</b></p> <p>This peer talk will focus on how to use barriers as information, authenticity as a pathway, and permission as a cornerstone, to rebuild yourself to courageously take the next step.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Carolyn Pifer - CPSS, CHW</p>	

**1:15 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. | Workshop Session 5**

*Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits for peers.*

**Veteran Reinforcement and Resource Session**

Bronze/Silver Room

This session provides expert guidance on the complexities of the Veteran Affairs (VA) system including health care support, benefit support, and understanding of burial support. Community partner connections are important to link veterans and support staff with local, state, and national organizations. We will provide guidance to assist veterans that are underserved, unserved and transitioning out of the military. This workshop breaks down complex processes into simple action steps and overcoming barriers that prevent services.

**Presented By:**

Dwayne Kelly - CPSS

Ronald Henson - CPSS, CPRC

**Results of the 2025 Michigan CPSS and CPRC Survey**

Gold Room

This presentation will review the results of the 2025 combined Peer Specialist/Peer Recovery Coach survey, including information on wages and workplace experience. The results of the survey can support advocacy to improve recruitment, retention, training, and workplace experience of CPSSs and CPRCs throughout the state.

**Presented By:**

Adrienne Lapidos - PhD

## **From Stigma to Strength: Peer Navigators Supporting Moms, Babies and Families in Recovery**

Sapphire Room

The “From Stigma to Strength” initiative empowers mothers in Michigan navigating SUD, pregnancy, and parenting through peer-led support. At its core, the program leverages peer navigators - people with lived recovery experience - to reduce stigma, foster dignity, and build recovery capital. By promoting person-centered language and educating professionals on recovery-appropriate communication, the initiative aims to dismantle barriers to care and engagement. Peer navigators provide compassionate guidance through treatment access, family preservation, and system navigation, strengthening maternal wellness and parent-child bonding.

This model elevates the peer workforce while enhancing collaboration among healthcare, behavioral health, and child welfare systems. Expected outcomes include improved maternal and infant health, increased family stability, and expanded recovery networks statewide. This session helps mothers not only recover but thrive.

### **Presented By:**

Ricki S. Harmon - CPRC

Kristen Gannon - CPRC

## **Where Life and Leadership Overlap: The Venn-tricular Diagram of Your Untapped Potential**

Garnet Room

Just as the heart's ventricles are the powerful chambers that pump blood to the entire body, the various roles you have held in your life comprise the chambers of your identity. Where they overlap—in your personal 'Venn-tricle'—is where you find the most powerful source of your purpose and energy, pumping meaning into everything you do. We will take a closer look at the other roles in our lives outside of the peer space and identify ways to bring those skill sets into peer leadership to make you a more effective, authentic leader that honors all parts of you. We will empower peers to solidify new, advanced strategies for taking their local and state advocacy efforts to the next level. Come ready to ask questions, share insights, and collaboratively map the next steps for Michigan's recovery movement.

### **Presented By:**

Ryan Hampton

Jaclyn Brown

## **Relationship Wellness: A Generational Legacy**

Emerald Room

Relationships modeled in the home- spoken and unspoken- share how we understand love, safety, communication, and self-worth. Long before entering relationships of our own, we are quietly learning what connections look like by observing the adults who care for us. This session invites us to reflect on the powerful role we play in shaping future generations. Through examples and reflective moments, learn how everyday interactions become lessons for our intimate relationships. With intention and care, those behaviors have the power to interrupt harmful patterns and replace them with connection, trust, and resilience. This presentation centers on hope: the belief that adults can consciously choose relationship practices that foster healthy, lasting intimacy across generations.

### **Presented By:**

Tonya Mavericks - CCUFC

## **Risk Reduction: The Consequences of Stigma in Healthcare Settings**

Amethyst Room

This session explores how stigma related to substance use increases risk by limiting access to care, discouraging honest disclosure, and reinforcing unsafe use practices. Using a risk reduction framework, participants will learn how to meet people where they are and support practical, incremental changes that enhance safety without requiring abstinence or recovery. The workshop highlights trauma-informed, strengths-based strategies to reduce stigma, build trust, and support safer engagement across different settings.

### **Presented By:**

Darin Szczotka - CPRC, LMSW, CAADC

Jamie Decker - CPRC

Yolanda Preston - BSN, RN, CARN, CCM

Peer Talks	Pearl Room
<p><i>Peer Talk is a short presentation to inspire, educate and spark conversations around innovative ideas. Sharing knowledge and fostering dialogue.</i></p> <p>To receive 1.5 CEs for this session, you must attend all three Peer Talks. Partial CEs will not be awarded.</p>	
<p><b>How Artificial Intelligence (AI) Can Make Peer Work Easier and More Empowering</b></p> <p>AI can feel overwhelming, but it does not replace the heart of peer support. This peer talk makes AI simple and shows how it can support healing, connection, and daily wellness tools. The presenter will share how their journey led her to peer support and then to exploring AI as a way to lighten the load for herself and others. Participants will learn how basic AI tools can help with organizing thoughts, reducing stress, supporting goal settings, and helping peers reflect on barriers in a safe and empowering way. This peer talk is designed for beginners. The goal is to help peers feel confident using technology as a tool that supports recovery and strengthens human connection.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Katonya Jones - CPSS</p>	
<p><b>Your Ripple Effect - The Power of Trauma</b></p> <p>This peer talk will discuss understanding the power of trauma and how to use your experiences, lessons, and trauma to heal, help, and inspire. Typically, one bad experience will lead you to another because we carry energy from one moment to the next, but the power is in the breakthrough. One drop of hope can cause a ripple effect bigger than the initial occurrence of our trauma, if we let it.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Gabriel Gibson - CPRC</p>	
<p><b>Transforming Barriers into Breakthroughs in Recovery-Oriented Practice</b></p> <p>This peer talk explores how barriers commonly faced in recovery and helping roles can become powerful opportunities for growth, leadership, and impact. Drawing from lived experience and professional practice, this presentation focuses on recognizing challenges such as stigma, burnout, self-doubt, boundary concerns, systemic inequities, and responding to them with intention and purpose. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on how personal experiences shape their approach to supporting others and how those moments can strengthen empathy, credibility, and effectiveness.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Tamesha Little - CPRC, CADC-DP, AA, CPRM, CHW</p>	

### **3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. | Workshop Session 6**

*Choose from one session below. All sessions are eligible for 1.5 MDHHS CE credits for peers.*

#### **Overcoming Imposter Syndrome**

Sapphire Room

This session explores the shared experience of self-doubt, comparison, and feeling like you don't quite belong. In his peer-aligned training, participants will examine where imposter feelings come from and how they can be reframed as signals for growth rather than evidence of inadequacy. This workshop introduces the layers of the mind, addresses the cycle of people-pleasing, and offers practical ways to separate identity from the roles we play-supporting greater self-trust, confidence, and authenticity in both work and life.

#### **Presented By:**

Chuck Hendrix - CPSS, CCHT, MNLP, MHA

#### **Living Your Best Life**

Bronze/Silver Room

The Community Transition Trainers of the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Institute at Wayne State University inform and educate people with disabilities and their families about independent living. The trainers share their own journeys to independent living and explain the steps others need to consider when thinking about a change in housing. The trainers emphasize the crucial role of PCP in the process. The workshop will provide information about helpful housing resources.

#### **Presented By:**

Angela Martin- MSW

Alex Kimmel

Leonardo Bravo

Ryan Klotz

Julie Fitzsimons

## **From Lived Experience to Leadership: Peer Roles in Recovery Community Organizations (RCOs)**

Garnet Room

This session is an engaging presentation designed to showcase the transformative power of lived experience in peer recovery support settings. This session will highlight how personal recovery journeys uniquely inform and strengthen the role of peer support within the RCOs, emphasizing the invaluable perspectives peers bring to the recovery process.

This presentation will also explore clear pathways for peers to cultivate leadership skills and advance into positions of greater responsibility within recovery organizations. By examining real-world examples and case studies, participants will gain insight into the tangible impact of peer-led initiatives and the successes achieved through peer leadership. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of how lived experience can be leveraged for professional growth and community transformation within RCOs.

### **Presented By:**

Brooke Cross - CPRC

## **Breaking the Stigma: The Power of Open Conversations**

Amethyst Room

Stigma often carries a mark of shame, misunderstanding, or exclusion - especially for those navigating recovery. In this empowering session, participants will explore how stigma impacts personal identity, access to support, and long-term recovery outcomes. Through open dialogue and practical strategies, this session will equip you- and those you serve - with the confidence and tools to challenge unhelpful narratives, foster resilience, and create a culture of acceptance. In this workshop, you will learn how to transform silence into strength and advocacy into action.

### **Presented By:**

Stacey Foster - CPRC, CPRM

Peer Talks	Gold Room
<p><i>Peer Talk is a short presentation to inspire, educate and spark conversations around innovative ideas. Sharing knowledge and fostering dialogue.</i></p> <p>To receive 1.5 CEs for this session, you must attend all three Peer Talks. Partial CEs will not be awarded.</p>	
<p><b>Peer Mentoring: The Power of Advocacy</b></p> <p>This peer talk explores the power of advocacy and how peer mentors with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) can use their lived experience to create meaningful change. Participants will learn how personal stories and community connections can influence systems and support others on their self-determination journey.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Ray Schuholz - CPM</p>	
<p><b>The Role of Peers in Supporting Collaborative Care and Health Literacy</b></p> <p>In this peer talk, the presenter shares lessons learned from working as a pharmacy technician since the start of the COVID pandemic and how these insights strengthen her current work with peer support clients. This talk explores common barriers to psychiatric treatment, ways peers can empower clients to advocate for their needs, and strategies for improving collaborative care. Attendees will gain an inside look at the pharmacy counter, challenge myths about psychotropic medications, and leave with practical resources focused on health literacy, empowerment, and inclusive recovery pathways.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Marie Cherry - CPSS</p>	
<p><b>Rainbow Recovery</b></p> <p>The presenter will talk about becoming who they were in addiction, where their mental health stood, while trying to understand identity and sexuality and reaching their darkest emotional battle. From there, they turned inward and asked for help to take action in their life and move towards a healthier, productive and more fulfilling recovery.</p> <p>This peer talk will focus on how advocacy played a role in their personal journey in addiction and mental health issues, as they pursued to understand their identity in sexuality. This personal account will highlight how peer support advocacy can build connection, confidence, while assisting them in discovery of their needs and rights.</p> <p><b>Presented By:</b> Blake Harvey - CPSS</p>	

