

The work of CCAR and its recovery community centers hinges on its volunteers. In 2012, for example, 291 volunteers contributed 23,264 hours of work in positions ranging from receptionists to peer group facilitators. These volunteer positions are treated as jobs and opportunities to gain experience and responsibility. Three full-time Volunteer Coordinators (one at each of the recovery community centers) and one full-time Volunteer Manager (who oversees the entire system) manage the volunteers.

CCAR Site Visit

The CCAR visit included tours of the Willimantic and Hartford Recovery Community Centers and gave stakeholders an overview of CCAR’s history, core concepts, day-to-day functions, and operational structure. The itinerary of the visit was divided between walkthroughs and presentations of CCAR, its philosophical underpinnings, its recovery centers, and their services (e.g., Recovery Walks, Recovery Oriented Employment Services, and Telephone Recovery Support). Staff also provided a calendar showcasing the sites’ additional work, including hosting recovery meetings every day and providing meeting space to Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous several times a week.

One of the most important functions of this visit was to showcase an example of an RCO and its community-wide impacts, providing both an educational and inspirational experience. One stakeholder later explained that she was initially skeptical of how an RCO could function in Idaho but left the CCAR visit believing it could have a powerful, transformative effect on Idaho’s communities.

Outcomes of the Visit

The CCAR visit inspired the Idaho team to discuss how they could develop an organization similar to CCAR in their State. The following morning, they informally met to review what they learned, identify barriers to establishing an Idaho RCO, and devise next steps. They agreed that a good starting point would be to convene interested parties from across Idaho to a meeting to organize an RCO. The invitees should include recovery advocates, treatment providers that offer recovery supports, members of Idaho’s regional behavioral health boards, recovery coaches, and graduates of drug court programs. Another step would be to host public screenings of *The Anonymous People** and attempt to use the momentum generated by the screenings to begin discussions about creating an RCO. The first screening was actually at the Idaho Capitol Building, and the Canyon County Commissioner that participated in the site visit to CCAR attended and spoke at that gathering.

CCAR has five core values that inform its work:

- *You are in recovery if you say you are*
- *There are many pathways to recovery*
- *Focus on the recovery potential, not the pathology*
- *Err on the side of the recoveree*
- *Err on the side of being generous*

CALDWELL COMMUNITY MEETING

The existing efforts of the recovery community in Caldwell, the county seat of Idaho’s Canyon County, provided the basis on which to build on the knowledge and enthusiasm generated by the CCAR visit. The event began with a screening of *The Anonymous People* and concluded with a wide-ranging dialogue with participants. This meeting functioned to mobilize those interested, organize their goals, and build momentum for the upcoming RCO Workshop to create a recovery community organization in Idaho.

* The Anonymous People is an independently produced documentary about recovery from substance abuse disorders.