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To the honorable Senator Harp and Representative Geragosian, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony to the Appropriations Committee. My name is Normajeon Cefarelli and I am a person in recovery since Father's Day, June 19, 1993. I am also employed as the Volunteer Manager at Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR).

I would first like to take the opportunity to share some of my personal experience of what led me to CCAR, and then give you a detailed description of CCAR's Volunteer Management System.

I come from a family of ten. My parents were active alcoholics. As true with any other story that you may have heard, they made many choices that were influenced by their addiction. Therefore, I know addiction well and don't think it would be an exaggeration if I were to say it shared space with me in my mothers' womb. As a result, in my early adulthood, I struggled with my own addiction until 1993.

Since 1993, I raised my son and returned to college earning my Masters Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. I was determined to break the cycle of addiction in my family of origin. So, if you have ever asked yourself, "Are there success stories?" the answer is, yes. What I have found by becoming involved with the recovery communities and CCAR is that mine is not an isolated story. There are many others who have struggled with addiction and have made significant changes to leave the world a little better place than the way we found it.

I remember my last semester in graduate school. Our professor told us it was critical that we find a non-profit organization that was near and dear to our heart to work for. She explained that it was our obligation to give to our local communities the knowledge and expertise that we had. I researched many different organizations and stumbled across CCAR in the process. Once I read their mission and vision, I knew it could be the perfect fit. I started as the Volunteer Coordinator in 2006 and since have become the Volunteer Manager...and then some ☺

Our volunteer force which started out at approximately 90 or less volunteers in 2006 has increased significantly over the course of just three years. We now have a volunteer pool of 514 volunteers. In 2008, 276 volunteers both new and existing have given their time to volunteer which in turn perpetuates the positive recovery movement.

I believe that you will find our volunteer force not only a significant asset to our community but also to humanity. Every day our volunteers help others both in and out of recovery. I remember one day sitting at my desk crunching numbers, and a volunteer came in, sat down and said, "You know what I love most about CCAR? The warm, calm feeling I have when I come here. Some of my friends say, Why do you volunteer, you don't get paid for it? I tell them, that the people in the center show me by example how to live my life without alcohol and other drugs and you can't put a price on that." There are many other stories just like this one.

Our volunteers are the backbone of our organization. Our volunteers consist of not only individuals in recovery, but also college students from at least ten local universities and community colleges throughout Connecticut, family members that have been affected by addiction, and other members of the community that want to be part of the "solution". But please, do not take my word for it. I have built a table below that summarizes the steady and consistent increase in numbers over the past four years.

The formula that we use in our chart is taken from the Independent Sector Valuation Method. Charitable organizations most frequently use the value of volunteer time for recognition events or communications to show the amount of community support an organization receives from its volunteers. The value of volunteer time is based on the average hourly earnings of all production and nonsupervisory workers on private nonfarm payrolls (as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics). Independent Sector takes this figure and increases it by 12 percent to estimate for fringe benefits.

The "national" estimated dollar value of volunteer time is \$19.51 per hour for 2007. The national average for 2008 will be released in Spring 2009. According to the Independent Sector Valuation Method, the state (Connecticut) volunteer value is \$25.75 per hour as of 2006.

The estimate helps acknowledge the millions of individuals who dedicate their time, talents, and energy to making a difference. CCAR uses this estimate to quantify the enormous value volunteers provide. Over the past four years, CCAR has been able to capture some critical data outlining a steady and consistent increase in volunteers as well as volunteer hours. Please see the table below.

YEAR	Hours Served	Connecticut Volunteer Rate	TOTAL
2005	3,450.25	\$21.70	\$ 74,870.43
2006	5,327.75	\$21.70	\$115,612.18
2007	8,078.00	\$21.70	\$175,292.60
2008	13,079.50	\$25.75	\$336,797.13

Presently, CCAR has a pool of 514 volunteers. During the period January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008, 276 volunteers contributed their services.

Each year, we invite our volunteers to celebrate an evening with us. This year on Friday, April 24, 2009 we will be celebrating in the Prince Edward Ballroom at the Saint Clements Castle in Portland, Connecticut. Our entertainment for the evening is Mark Lundholm, a nationally known comedian and inspirational speaker in recovery. Our host for the evening is WDRC Radio Personality Mary Jones.

I am proud to say that this year we will be inviting over 300 volunteers to attend, as CCAR guests, in recognition of more than 13,079.50 hours of service. Also CCAR will present 26 Presidential Awards! Last year we presented 22 Presidential Awards and for the first time, we presented a Presidential Family award! Along with these prestigious awards, Attorney General Richard Blumenthal recognized our Presidential Award recipients with a State of Connecticut Office of Attorney General Official Citation. In order to qualify for a Presidential Award, a volunteer must have given at least 100 hours of service within that calendar year. As you can see, our volunteers take great pride in this award, as there has been a steady increase in the amount given out since the inception of our volunteer dinner.

Our data shows an uphill trend that continues with unprecedented momentum. Keep in mind, to the degree that addiction stunts a person is to the opposite degree that growth occurs for the person in recovery. We do make a difference, every day!

I ask that you keep recovery in mind when making tough fiscal decisions because of the difference we have made and continue to make in our communities.

It is my hope that this letter will leave you thinking well into the night about the impact that CCAR and its volunteers have on our community. I humbly ask for your support.

Warm Regards,



Normajean Cefarelli
CCAR Volunteer Manager