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**Nation's Leading Addiction Organizations Sponsor FED UP! Rally in Washington, D.C.**

*The Treatment Community Supports the Call for a Federal Response to the Opioid Addiction Epidemic*

NEW YORK, NY – October 8, 2014 – On Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, [Caron Treatment Centers](#), [CASAColumbia](#), [Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation](#), [Phoenix House](#), and other organizations in the addiction field co-sponsored the second annual [FED UP! Rally](#) in support of thousands who have lost loved ones to the opioid addiction epidemic.

Almost 2,000 people, including individuals in recovery, families, those who lost a loved one to the disease, and members of the treatment community, joined together on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. on Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup> to draw attention to the epidemic of opioid addiction and overdose deaths and to demand a federal response to the crisis. Many traveled from across the country and brought signs with photos of family members lost to overdose and messages calling for change, as leaders in addiction treatment criticized the federal government for a slow, unproductive response to the crisis.

“This is a severe addiction epidemic devastating families and communities across the country. It’s time for the federal government to do its part to help bring this crisis under control,” said Marv Seppala, M.D., chief medical officer of Hazelden.

According to Andrew Kolodny, M.D, chief medical officer of Phoenix House and director of Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing (PROP), local governments and community groups will not be able to control the epidemic without help from the Administration. “We need the federal government to lend a hand,” he said.

“CASAColumbia was proud to sponsor and send several staff to attend this inspirational rally to end the opioid epidemic and the tragic effect this has on individuals and families,” said Samuel A. Ball, Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of CASAColumbia. “Opioid overdose is a leading cause of death among young people. A coordinated attack on this problem should be our nation’s number one public health priority. We need tighter restrictions and monitoring of pain medicine prescriptions, persistent enforcement, more basic and clinical research, greater availability of medication-assisted treatments, public health and education campaigns, and widespread training in the use of the opioid overdose medication, Narcan. Too many people suffer from this chronic disease that is deadly if left untreated. Too many families have been destroyed by irreparable losses.”

Some state leaders, such as Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), have recognized the need for action. Senator Klobuchar and a bipartisan group of senators have introduced [legislation](#) to improve prevention, research, and treatment for addiction.

“Drug abuse is claiming lives and tearing families apart in Minnesota and across the country, and we can spare no effort to reverse this deadly trend,” Klobuchar said. “If we’re going to be successful in the fight to prevent abuse, we need to take a comprehensive approach that’s focused on expanding the use of proven tools in the fight against addiction. This commonsense, bipartisan legislation includes my provision to strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs across the country and will help ensure that communities have the resources they need to combat this epidemic.”

This year’s rally tripled in size over last year, demonstrating increasing public concern about the skyrocketing rate of narcotic painkiller addiction and overdose deaths. Over the last decade, overdose deaths due to opioid painkillers have increased sharply ([Opioid analgesic-related deaths](#) are up from more than 2,700 in 1999 to nearly 12,000 in 2011) fueled by a parallel rise in the sheer number of addictive painkillers prescribed to Americans. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has declared the opioid crisis the worst drug epidemic in U.S. history.

The rally featured a musical performance by rock band and recovery advocates Clean Getaway and speakers including Greg Williams, producer of the documentary *The Anonymous People*, and Melissa Fitzgerald, senior director of Justice for Vets and *The West Wing* actor. Afterward, all participants marched together to the White House.

[Photos of the rally](#) are available from Kate Meyer Photography.

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### **About the FED UP! Rally**

Sponsored by Phoenix House, the FED UP! Rally took place on Sunday, September 28, 2014, in Washington D.C. The event joined thousands of people from the recovery community—including friends and family, physicians, advocates, journalists, and concerned citizens—together to call for an end to the opioid addiction epidemic. The rally was followed by a march to the White House.

### **Caron Treatment Centers**

With nearly 60 years in the field, Caron Treatment Centers operates lifesaving treatment at residential facilities in Wernersville, Pennsylvania and Dallas, Texas. Caron also operates Ocean Drive and Caron Renaissance in Palm Beach County, Florida. Caron's regional offices in Atlanta, Boston, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. offer community and recovery support. Caron has the most extensive continuum of care including adolescents, young adults, adults, baby boomers and older adults. Caron's treatment is customized to meet the needs of individuals and families – with highly trained teams prepared to address co-occurring disorders. Caron offers an innovative approach to ongoing recovery care support for its former patients and their families during the first year of transition following discharge. The online recovery support connects patients and families with peer groups and a Caron Recovery Specialist. For more information on Caron please visit [Caron](#) online or follow us on Twitter @CaronTreatment.

### **CASAColumbia**

CASAColumbia is an independent non-profit policy and research center and a leading voice in the addiction field informing the American people of the consequences of tobacco, alcohol, prescription and illegal drug abuse and addiction. CASAColumbia's major contributions to the addiction field focus on: 1) the translation of scientific findings and dissemination of information to the general public, policy makers, and providers (healthcare, education, social service); 2) policy reports and health services research projects (national surveys, regional program evaluation of healthcare system reform) focused on the financial and human costs of substance use and addiction on various sectors of American society; 3) family-based adolescent substance use prevention and treatment research.

### **The Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation**

The Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation is a force of healing and hope for individuals, families and communities affected by addiction to alcohol and other drugs. It is the nation's largest nonprofit treatment provider, with a legacy that began in 1949 and includes the 1982 founding of the Betty Ford Center. With 15 sites in California, Minnesota, Oregon, Illinois, New York, Florida, Massachusetts, Colorado and Texas, the Foundation offers prevention

and recovery solutions nationwide and across the entire continuum of care to help youth and adults reclaim their lives from the disease of addiction. It includes the largest recovery publishing house in the country, a fully accredited graduate school of addiction studies, an addiction research center, an education arm for medical professionals and a unique children's program, and is the nation's leader in advocacy and policy for treatment and recovery. Learn more at [www.hazeldenbettyford.org](http://www.hazeldenbettyford.org).

### **Phoenix House**

As a leading nonprofit provider of substance abuse treatment and prevention services since 1967, Phoenix House is known for innovative and research-tested treatment methods and practices that strive to meet the distinct needs of each individual client. More than 120 programs in California, Florida, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and Metro D.C. help individuals and families affected by substance abuse lay the foundation for long-lasting recovery so they can lead healthy, productive lives.

### **Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing (PROP)**

PROP is a several hundred-member education and advocacy group whose mission is to reduce morbidity and mortality resulting from opioid prescribing by promoting cautious, safe, and responsible opioid prescribing practices. Its membership includes both physicians and concerned citizens.