



Three winners in the 2016 International “In My Own Words....” Essay Contest

KANSAS CITY, MO, June 12, 2017 – The [Addiction Technology Transfer Center \(ATTC\) Network Coordinating Office](#), in partnership with [Faces & Voices of Recovery](#) and [Facing Addiction](#), announced the top three winners of the [2016 International “In My Own Words...” Essay Contest](#). The 2016 essay contest focused on the use of positive, non-stigmatizing and “person first” language for individuals in recovery from substance use and/or mental health disorders. The winners are:

Jennifer Colon (Williamsport, PA), First Place
Jennifer Whitehead (Salem, NJ), Second Place
Sharon Leftwich (Martinsville, VA) Third Place

In recognition of [Recovery Month 2016](#), this essay contest encouraged people across the globe who are in recovery from substance use and/or mental health disorders to harness the power of their stories by participating in an international essay contest.

Contestants described, in their own words and using non-stigmatizing language, why they are speaking out about my recovery, how recovery has changed their lives, and how they maintain their recovery.

The contest drew 114 entries, with submissions from India, Tanzania, Canada, Vietnam, and the United States.

The ATTC Network Coordination Office and our 2016 contest sponsors are grateful to each of the contestants for submitting their very personal entries. All participants will receive a special certificate of appreciation for their willingness to share these inspiring stories.

“We need to continually do all we can to end discrimination against people with substance use disorders, including the use of stigmatizing and inaccurate language,” says Laurie Krom, Director of the ATTC Network Coordinating Office. “I’m proud of the essay contest winners for taking up that challenge by telling their stories in a way that promotes the promise of recovery.”

The top 25 essays will be compiled in a commemorative booklet, available soon on the ATTC Network (www.ATTCnetwork.org) website.

For more information about the ATTC Network’s International Essay Contest, contact Cindy Christy at christyc@umkc.edu

###



ATTC

Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration