

State Senate Appoints Joyce Rivera to NYS Opioid Settlement Board

Joyce Rivera, CEO and Founder of St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction, Will Make Recommendations on Disbursements of \$1.5 Billion in Opioid Settlement Funds

BRONX, NEW YORK, USA, March 8, 2022

/EINPresswire.com/ -- The New York State Senate announced the appointment of [Joyce Rivera](#) to serve on the state's Opioid Settlement Board, which will assist in distributing up to \$1.5 billion to communities across New York state to invest in opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery programs. Ms. Rivera is the Chief Executive Officer and founder of St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction, the oldest continuously running multi-service harm reduction organization in the country.

Pursuant to the new law establishing the opioid settlement fund, all funds collected by the state from opioid settlements or litigation victories will be allocated specifically for abatement efforts in communities devastated by the opioid epidemic and will not go towards the state's general fund. The law granted the Senate the authority to appoint four (4) individuals to serve on the twenty-one (21) member Opioid Settlement Board, which makes recommendations to the state Legislature on how programs across the state will receive funds.



Joyce Rivera, Founder & CEO, St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction

“The Opioid Settlement Fund Advisory Board will play an instrumental role to help New Yorkers struggling with addiction recovery,” said Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins. “Although no amount of money can bring back those who were lost, these funds are an important part of securing justice for our New York families,” she said. “I thank the Board for its work and will continue to fight for all those affected by this deadly epidemic.”

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I am honored to represent the harm reduction movement at this historic moment.”

Joyce Rivera

"I am honored to represent the harm reduction movement at this historic moment in our history and am grateful to continue the work of our Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, Governor Kathy Hochul, Attorney General Letitia James, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and Senate Health Committee Chair Gustavo Rivera, while also remembering the history of our brothers and sisters and families in seeking to redress the harms of the pharmaceutical opioid industry," said Joyce Rivera, CEO and Founder of St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction. "Fighting the opioid epidemic by helping drug users help themselves is a service framework that creates safety for personal and group advancement that is immediately effective. By accepting people as they are, we can build nuanced collaborations and education with the groups who view drug use as a moral failing; heal our communities and families by leading with empathy, practicing mercy and providing safety."

Ms. Rivera joins, Lawrence Brown, Joshua Lynch and Stephanie Marquesano as the Senate appointees for the 21-member advisory board, which was created under legislation signed last summer.

For more information email Steven Hernandez, shernandez@sachr.org

About St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction

We provide non-judgmental quality access to health resources to persons for whom the social stigma attached to their illicit drug use, HIV/HCV status, poverty, race, gender identity, homelessness, or health undermines their ability to access the services they require and deserve. We meet every person where he or she is. We recognize that people take risks and that change is never easy. We do not wait for people to choose to quit life-threatening behaviors. Instead, we create a safe haven where participants can consider their personal choices and begin to move toward manageable changes. All of our services are free and anonymous with no demands placed on those who need help. Our grassroots work began with a needle exchange program to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS among intravenous drug users in the South Bronx. This practice is now accepted as the international gold standard for disease prevention and endorsed by public health groups, such as the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, and the U.S. Surgeon General. Providing syringe access and disposal continues to be a critical part of our harm reduction efforts.

Today we are a multi-service agency providing a continuum of interventions that treats the whole person – at whatever stage they are. In addition to our street outreach, our center assists with basic needs such as showers, food, and clothing. We offer a quiet sanctuary with stress-reduction services, including acupuncture, yoga and massage. We also provide educational workshops and mental health counseling. Referral relationships with other service organizations and colleagues give our participants choices – both in and outside of SACHR – as they make their journey toward a healthier and safer life.

Steven Hernandez

St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction

+1 718-585-5544 x1006

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