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EDUCATION:

Juris Doctorate, Nova-Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law Center, Ft. Lauderdale, Fl. 2001

Bachelor of Arts, Human Resources Management, Trinity International University, Miami, Fl. 1998.

Certificate in Chemical Dependency Studies, University of Miami Chemical Dependency Training Institute, Miami, Fl. 1990.

Certificate in Chemical Dependency Counseling, University of Miami Chemical Dependency Training Institute, Miami, Fl. 1990.

Certificate in Addictionology, Graceland University, Saint Martin's College, and Holder Institute of Addictionology and Compulsive Disorders, Miami, Fl. 1998

Registered Addiction Specialist, Registry of Addiction Specialists, Registration No. M990917203

State of Florida Supreme Court Certified County Court Mediator, Certification No.14565C

North Carolina Certified Peer Support Specialist Certification No. 2015-2710-01

North Carolina Certified Older Adult Peer Support Specialist Certification No. 2015-2710-01-C

North Carolina Qualified Professional For Therapeutic Community and Substance Use Disorders

***PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE*:**

Administrative Coordinator, FIRST at Blue Ridge, Inc.: 2023-Present

Currently stepping back from the Executive Director position and responsibilities and working the succession plan while still providing input and oversight to ensure that FIRST remains one of the most successful, progressive and dynamic residential treatment programs in North Carolina and the region which is 12 Step Based, Peer Run, and Peer Driven while still maintaining an intensive Clinical Overlay.

Executive Director, FIRST at Blue Ridge Inc.: 2003-2023

Executive Director of FIRST at Blue Ridge Inc., a 203 bed Residential Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Vocational Training Center with an annual operating budget of over two million dollars. Responsibilities include the development of new funding sources, maintenance of existing contracts with vocational training partners, NC Department of Corrections and Community control, the operation and development of existing and future internal companies with a focus on vocational training, employability, life skills, and maintaining a drug free life style.

Guided the agency to becoming only the second such licensed facility in the state as well as writing and receiving grants from United Way, Asheville- Buncombe North Carolina ABC Board, Black Mountain North Carolina ABC Board, Federal Home Loan Bank, Kate B. Reynolds, Cannon, Bob Barker, Stonecutter and Janirve Foundations, as well as several others.

Developed a short term 30 to 90 day “fee for service” program for those who for employment of family reasons could not commit to the long term Therapeutic Community model.

Implemented 20 transitional housing beds located in two houses adjoining the FIRST campus for continued care for those program graduates desiring a structured supportive environment. Developed an additional 20 male and 10 female bed program on the FIRST campus for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) which provides up to 24 months of room, board and treatment for substance abusing homeless veterans.

Negotiated and implemented a contract with the NC Department of Public Safety, (formally Dept of Corrections) for over 70 male and female 90 Day Transitional Housing for Probationers at risk to re-offend and for those recently released from state custody. Additionally, implemented a component for Extended Limits of Confinement (ELC) which releases inmates with less than a year of their sentence to the FIRST program for a version of work release while still remaining in custody located on the FIRST campus. Completed and licensed a new building which houses 50 to 60 women, pregnant women and women with children. With this project FIRST is the largest residential substance use disorder treatment program in the western part of the state.

Wrote grants and established state and county contracts for Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) beds for Jail Diversion, Veterans and general population.

Mecklenburg County Health Department, Multi-Cultural Coordinator: 2003

Contracted to develop the first ever Multi-Cultural Coordinator position for the Mecklenburg County Health Department. Duties included acting as liaison between the Health Department and the Hispanic, Middle-Eastern, Eastern European, Asian, Native American, and African American communities. Represented the Department to these communities with the goal of their perceiving the Department as their first choice for health services as opposed to their last resort.

Responsible for the representation of the Department to the minority media and press. Member of the Health Department's Bio-Terrorism Team with the responsibility of disseminating emergency information to over sixty thousand non-English speaking residents of the county in the event of an incident. Assisted the Department's "Fighting Back" drug prevention and gang violence program in the minority communities. Assisted the Department in its goal to integrate its healthy eating initiative "Fit City Challenge" into the county's minority populations.

The Village, Director of Admissions: 1995 - 2003

Duties include the processing of all patients into the agency, the maintenance, servicing and negotiating of all insurance and HMO contracts, as well as representing the agency in court and at meetings in the community, nationally and internationally. Closely worked with resources and funding sources in order to facilitate the admissions process.

The Village, Community Coordinator: 1992 - 1995

Community relations representative representing the agency in public and private sectors; duties also included marketing and negotiating provider contractual agreements. Also served as Administrative Coordinator of The Village-Puerto Rico, outpatient program: responsible for overseeing the entire project development.

Somerset Treatment Services, Director of Community Services: 1992

Responsibilities included all aspects of community relations, negotiating provider agreements with various referral sources and the maintaining of existing accounts. Also assisted in development of conjunct sober living facility census

Somerset Treatment Services, Program Development Coordinator: 1991 - 1992

Duties included servicing business and industry accounts, establishing new referral sources and maintaining EAP contract. Development of Hispanic Outpatient Program in Miami-Dade County and Outpatient Eating Disorder Program in Broward County. Also assisted counseling staff with group facilitation and psycho-educational program.

Flowers Health Management, Community Relations Coordinator: 1988 - 1991

Assisted Director of Marketing in representing program in community, attending special events and servicing existing referral sources.

Assistant Trainer, William P. White Racing Stables, Calder Race Track: 1987-1988

Responsible for training and preparing thoroughbred racehorses.

Assistant Farm Manager, Larry Lyons Racing Stables, Davie, Florida: 1986 - 1987

Responsible for training and preparing thoroughbred racehorses.

Proprietor, Cheese and Wine House, Morganton, North Carolina: 1985 - 1986

Owned successful freestanding store with over $250,000 in revenue.

Agent, Promoter and Musician: 1970 - 1986

Managed and promoted regional touring bands throughout the southeastern United States and the Caribbean. Played both bass and keyboards. While involved in sixteen-year career in music, playing jazz, rock, country, Latin and show music, performed in front of audiences of up to 70,000 persons. Currently still performing with various regional groups.

LANGUAGES:

Fully bi-lingual English and Spanish.

GEOGRAPHIC EXPERIENCE AND MAJOR RECOGNITION:

Government of Mexico, September 2006, Traveled to Mexico at the request of the United States Consul General in Monterrey.

Conducted a series of presentations in several cities in Mexico. Audiences included police officers, public health officials, representatives of citizen councils working on anti-drug abuse programs, drug treatment professionals, teachers, counselors, federal, state, and other government officials, municipal reps, members of state legislation, state education office, and members of the state committee on drug abuse control.

Topics included the intervention and treatment of substance abusing criminal offenders and street youth, dealing with problems such as teen substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, gangs and youth violence, problems faced by recovering addicts during and after re-introduction to society and the rising Methamphetamine epidemic among others

Seminars were also conducted in how to organize a substance abuse treatment and vocational training center such as First at Blue Ridge, how to develop funding sources, how to establish vocational training partners, etc.

Government of Colombia, April 2002, Traveled to Bogota Colombia at the request of the Colombian Civil Aeronautics Board, the Narcotics Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy and the First Lady of Colombia's "RUMBOS" program to conduct the second part of a continuing series of training on Drug Free Workplace.

This conference consisted of supervisory training to representatives of Colombian Airlines, Flight Schools, Flight Maintenance Shops and Air Traffic Controllers. Speaking engagements were scheduled at schools and universities in the Bogota area as well.

Government of Colombia, October 2001, Traveled to Colombia at the request of the Colombian Civil Aeronautics Board, the Narcotics Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy and the First Lady of Colombia's "RUMBOS" program.

Purpose of trip was to conduct a series of trainings on Drug Free Workplace to representatives of Colombian Airlines, Flight Schools, Flight Maintenance Shops and Air Traffic Controllers. Trainings were conducted in Bogota, Medellin, the islands of Providence and San Andres. Also conducted trainings for the Colombian Anti-Narcotics Police and the Colombian Navy.

Organization of American States, August 2001, Traveled to Montego Bay, Jamaica to represent the United States in a regional "Meeting of Experts in the Field of Demand Reduction." Presented results of a research project concerning the efficacy of short vs. long-term treatment for marijuana dependency.

These were the results of a research study conducted by the University of Connecticut and The Village. Meeting was attended by representatives from thirty-four member nations.

Government of Colombia, May 2001: Traveled to Colombia with an expert on the American Drug Court System and held a three day training for psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and other addiction treatment professionals regarding intervention and treatment of substance abusing criminal offenders and the homeless population.

Participated in a two-day exchange of information in the field with representatives of the Colombian military and the Colombian
Anti-Narcotics Police regarding the eradication efforts in Colombia and its effects on drug use in the United States.

Government of Colombia, December 1997: Assembled and directed a team of experts which traveled to Colombia and held a five day training for the Colombian Department of Corrections, regarding the treatment of the substance abusing criminal offender and problems faced during and after re-introduction to society. Assisted in developing the first Therapeutic Community within the Colombian penal system.

Government of Panama, June 1997: Assembled and directed team of experts on Teen Substance Abuse, Juvenile Delinquency,
Gangs and Youth Violence pursuant to a request by Panama's Minister of Education, and the Office of the First Lady. Team traveled to Panama and provided five days of intense training to over two hundred and fifty teachers from the Republic's most at-risk schools.

United States Embassy, Panama, August 1996: Keynote speaker to VIII Annual Conference of Drug Treatment and Prevention held in the Republic of Panama, and included presentation to First Lady of Panama's Anti-Drug Coalition.

Arts and Entertainment Network (A&E), New York City September 2008: Selected to represent the State of North Carolina as an example of positive recovery. Was one of fifty one delegates chosen to lead a group of thousands of recovering individuals across the Brooklyn Bridge to a series of events as part of the A&E network's Recovery Project which includes the TV shows: "Intervention" and "The Cleaner"

North Carolina Health Disparity Program, November 2008: Selected for a two year "Fellowship" The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund as part of its Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative has partnered with the Duke Global Health Institute to create the NC Health Disparities Fellowship Program.

This was a new effort designed to engage talented public health and social work professionals in ongoing efforts to decrease health disparities in North Carolina;
to increase their knowledge about health disparities in North Carolina;

to develop the problem-solving skills required to design and implement community-based interventions and/or conduct related evaluations that address health disparities in their community. One of five individuals selected for this honor.

Arts and Entertainment Network (A&E), New York City, September 2009: Selected to represent the Alcohol and Drug Council of North Carolina and Recovery NC as an example of positive recovery and to accompany and support the 2009 NC Delegate.

North Carolina Street Safe Task Force, September 2009: Appointed by NC Governor Beverly Perdue to sit on this committee which is charged with investigating methods aimed at reducing repeat offenders into the NC Criminal Justice System.

Healthy North Carolina 2010, February 2010, Appointed to the Substance Abuse Sub-Committee

Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, February 2014, Recipient of the 2014 Sabbatical Grant. This three to six month sabbatical offer individuals the opportunity to focus primarily on their personal needs and devote themselves to self-revitalization.

The award provides the financial support necessary for sabbatical recipients to temporarily leave their place of employment. Sabbatical recipients use this time to engage in non-professional development activities of their own choosing to aid in personal renewal and growth. While on hiatus, award recipients travel, study, read, reflect, rest, and/or explore interests unrelated to their field of work. It is the Foundation's hope that sabbatical recipients will return recommitted to the challenges and rewards of public service and thus prolong their tenure in the nonprofit sector.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

Alcohol and Drug Council of North Carolina, Board Member, Past Board President,

North Carolina Substance Abuse Federation, Therapeutic Community representative

Sunrise Community for Recovery and Wellness, Board Member

Recovery North Carolina, Steering Committee member

North Carolina Peer Support Specialists Advisory Board, Member

North Carolina Peer Support Expert Commission, Member of team which developed statutory language for Peer Support Specialists

North Carolina State Re-Entry Council Collaborative, Treatment Committee Member

North Carolina Association of Drug Court Professionals, Past Executive Board member

North Carolina 25th Judicial District Drug Court Advisory Board, Past Executive Board member

Burke County North Carolina Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, Member and Chair of the Finance Committee.

Burke County North Carolina Department of Social Services, Past member for six years with three as Board Chair and sworn in again July 2017 for an additional three year term.

Asheville – Buncombe County Drug Commission, Executive Board member and Treatment Committee member

Office of Justice Programs, Program Peer Reviewer

Bureau of Justice Assistance, Program Peer Reviewer

National Institute of Justice, Program Peer Reviewer

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Program Peer Reviewer

Office for Victims of Crime, Program Peer Reviewer

HONORS/AWARDS:

Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association, Dedication Award, 1990

Dade County Red Ribbon Council, Service Award, 1990

Dade County Florida Red Ribbon Council, Special Recognition Awards, 1990 and 1992

Commissioners of Dade County Florida, Appreciation Award, 1991

Commissioners of Dade County Florida, Appreciation Award, 1993

Miami Coalition for a Safe and Drug Free Community, Certificate of Appreciation, 1994

Pembroke Pines Police Department, Achievement Award, 1996

Alcohol and Drug Council of North Carolina, Appreciation Award for Service to the Field of Addictions, 2009

Alcohol and Drug Council of North Carolina, Bronze Key Award, 2022

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Frequent appearances on English and Spanish language Local, National and International radio and television newscasts and talk shows on the subject of Substance Abuse, Addictions, Treatment, Drug Free Work Place, Gangs and Juvenile Crime, the Substance Abusing Criminal Offender, Re-Entry of the formally incarcerated and other related issues.