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OUTREACH RECEIVES \$1.25 MILLION IN OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS FROM SUFFOLK COUNTY FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Outreach, the agency known for life-saving alcohol and substance use treatment, recovery, and professional training, was selected out of over 100 submissions to receive a two-year grant of \$1.25 million from the first phase of the Opioid Settlement funds in Suffolk County. To fill an urgent need for workforce for credentialed addiction and substance abuse counselors, these funds will provide Suffolk County Workforce Development Scholarships (SCWDS) for 200 Suffolk county residents to attend the Outreach Training Institute (OTI) Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC) training. This new free training opportunity for the community will lead to immediate job training and placement and help to fill workforce gaps throughout the county. In operation since 1997, OTI is licensed by the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) and delivers 350 clock hours of education required for CASAC. OTI is one of the largest and most well-established CASAC education and training providers in downstate New York.

Scholarships will be dispensed over the next two years and will include the cost of all coursework for recipients, valued at \$5,950 per person. In addition, 40 students will receive paid internships at Outreach and other Suffolk county treatment locations, with each receiving a stipend of \$1,500. The scholarships will create a pipeline to bring new workforce into the Suffolk County community.

"As a member of the Opioid Settlement committee, I am pleased to say that Outreach was chosen as a recipient of this grant because the organization has a record of providing quality addiction treatment services and integrated care to the community. By creating behavioral healthcare jobs, this Workforce Development Project will enable Outreach to advance and fulfill its mission to inspire individuals and families to achieve a life of unlimited potential," said Gregson H. Pigott, MD, MPH, Commissioner, Suffolk County Department of Health Services. "We're incredibly grateful to Suffolk County for making this funding available. The County will serve as a model for the rest of the country, enabling the program to be rolled out to reach as many people as possible. We pledge to put all our resources to work on the recruitment process to give us a wide pool of applicants from diverse backgrounds," added Christal Montague, Chief Strategy Officer.



The Suffolk County Workforce Development Scholarships (SCWDS) scholarships will be targeted at individuals seeking to pursue their CASAC certification and who have demonstrated an interest and passion for helping people in the Suffolk County community. These individuals might be those who work in Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) and Office of Mental Health (OMH) programs, human and social service

agencies, or at health facilities. They may have been involved in volunteer work in their communities and/or religious, civic, or cultural institutions. They could be individuals in recovery who wish to provide peer-to-peer support to others. For more information about OTI, please visit opiny.org/about-oti/. Scholarship applications will be posted as soon as grant funds are released.

About Outreach Training Institute

Outreach Training Institute (OTI), the largest provider of CASAC (Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor) training in New York State, provides the education hours required by the state to achieve a CASAC Trainee (CASAC-T) certification. The CASAC credential allows counselors in New York State to specialize in treating people with substance use disorders. It can be used to work with a broad range of clients, from adolescents to adults, and in different settings/treatment modalities. OTI also provides continuing education training for professionals on best- and evidence-based practices in behavioral health.

About Outreach

For more than 40 years, Outreach has provided substance use and mental health treatment services for the communities of Queens, Brooklyn and Nassau and Suffolk counties. The agency began by offering assessment and referral services, and eventually opening the first adolescent residential treatment program in New York, helping to define substance use treatment nationally for young people under the age of 18. Since then, its programs and services have expanded and now encompass outpatient and residential treatment for adults and adolescents, with culturally responsive programming in Spanish and Polish, and for veterans and LGBTQ+ identifying individuals. The agency's professional staff members hail from more than 25 countries and are native speakers of languages most common to its client communities, including Spanish, Haitian Creole, French, Russian and Polish.

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