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**NAME:** Mary Rhodes

**ORGANIZATION:** Vermont Foundation of Recovery and Recovery Partners of Vermont

**LOCATION:** Essex Junction, VT

I would like to start off by thanking the committee for having me here. My name is Mary Rhodes. I am a person in recovery and I currently live in Vermont Foundation of Recovery's Women's Recovery Home in Essex Junction, Vermont. I am truly honored to be standing before you today to share my journey of recovery, to highlight the incredible role that the Vermont Foundation of Recovery has played in helping me rebuild my life, and to ask you to support Recovery Partners of Vermont's funding requests.

Recovery is not a linear path, and it's not easy. For many of us, addiction is a deep and painful struggle, but it's important to remember that recovery is possible. For me, it took hitting rock bottom to realize that I needed help. I was trapped in a cycle of self-doubt, despair, and the constant pull of addiction, but I knew deep down that I wanted something better for myself, for my family, and for my future.

That's when I found the Vermont Foundation of Recovery. It was here that I found the support, resources, and community that were essential to my journey. The organization doesn't just offer recovery housing—it offers hope. They provide a safe space where people like me can begin to heal, free from judgment and filled with encouragement.

One of the most important things I've learned during my time with the Vermont Foundation of Recovery is that recovery isn't just about stopping the use of drugs; it's about rebuilding your entire life. It's about learning how to live again. And for me, that meant rediscovering who I was outside of my addiction. This organization has helped me re-establish a sense of purpose, offering both the tools and the guidance I needed to face the challenges ahead.

During my time in VFOR's Essex Recovery Home, I was able to participate in group therapy, one-on-one counseling, and most importantly, be surrounded by people who truly understand what it feels like to fight every day. There's something powerful about being around others who've walked a similar path. It's not just the professional support that makes a difference; it's the sense of community. I learned that I didn't have to face this battle alone. And neither do any of us.

Vermont Foundation of Recovery also emphasizes the importance of giving back. I've had the privilege of connecting with other individuals who are at different stages in their recovery journeys, and I've been able to share my experiences to support others in their struggles. This mutual support is what makes recovery sustainable—it's a continuous cycle of helping and being helped.

Through their guidance, I learned that recovery doesn't stop the moment you put down the drugs. It's an ongoing process. It's about personal growth, creating new habits, and building a foundation of strength and resilience. Thanks to recovery housing, I was equipped with the skills I needed to navigate life's ups and downs without falling back into old destructive patterns.



Today, I stand before you not as someone who has all the answers, but as someone who has been given a second chance. I am proud to say that I am sober, and I've been sober for 19 months now. I owe so much of that success to the unwavering support I've received from Vermont Foundation of Recovery and the incredible people I've met along the way.

To anyone who is struggling, please know that recovery is possible. No matter how far down the road you may feel you've gone, there is always hope. Vermont Foundation of Recovery will stand with you, every step of the way, to help you rebuild, reconnect, and rediscover your strength.

Thank you to Vermont Foundation of Recovery for helping me reclaim my life. And thank you to all of you for listening. Please support Recovery Partners of Vermont's funding requests. If I can do it, so can others.

Sincerely,

Mary Rhodes

On behalf of Recovery Partners of Vermont

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