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National Recovery Month Planning Partners Honor, Kirk Lane, Arkansas Drug Director, Arkansas Office of the Drug Director and Arkansas Department of Human Services

With the Ramstad/Kennedy Award for Outstanding Leadership

The Single State Authority for the State of Arkansas honored for outstanding leadership in supporting addiction recovery and Recovery Month and in promoting systemic change within the state to promote sustained recovery for individuals and impacted family members.

Washington, DC (September 23, 2021) – The Annual **Ramstad/Kennedy Award** for outstanding leadership recognizes Kirk Lane who is being honored for his leadership in recovery support programs across his state and nationally. The award was established in honor of Congressmen Jim Ramstad and Patrick Kennedy. The two Congressmen have been vocal advocates of recovery support services in all forms, and championed localized efforts to support prevention, treatment, and recovery.

“Now, more than ever before, dedicated leaders like Mr. Lane are critical to combatting historic rates of overdoses and helping families to navigate the brain disease of addiction,” said former U.S. Rep. and founder of The Kennedy Forum, Patrick J. Kennedy. “It takes thoughtful, consistent action—not just words—to truly make a difference in communities. I applaud Mr. Lane for embodying the spirit of recovery in every way.”

Kathryn Ramstad, wife of Congressman Ramstad, participated in the Award presentation. “I am deeply grateful to the Recovery Month Planning Partners for continuing to honor Jim’s legacy,” she said. “I know Jim is smiling down on you today with gratitude for all you do each and every day to spread the message that recovery is possible.”

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recognizes that long-term recovery is not only possible but is the goal of addiction treatment and recovery support programs. The 2021 honoree has worked to spread this positive message and the message that prevention can be effective in helping to break the cycle of addiction in families.

Kirk Lane supports proven programs such as the Arkansas Drug Take Back Day; Arkansas is the sixth in the nation in the amount of law enforcement agencies who participate in the drug take back day. Kirk continues to be instrumental in the development and growth of Peer Recovery. His support and belief in recovering people is the reason Peer Recovery is thriving in Arkansas. He empowers his team to plan and host the Annual Peer Recovery Conference in September bringing together Peer Specialists and community stakeholders to learn, grow and network to support recovery sustainability. Kirk actively participates in overdose awareness events standing in solidarity with the recovery community and family members who have lost a loved one to an overdose.

“Director Lane’s heart and support for recovery is intentional and apparent in every aspect of his office leading the Arkansas Office of Drug Director and Department of Human Services. Together, in partnership with the dedicated organizations who comprise the Recovery Month Planning Partners, recovery success stories are becoming commonplace in Arkansas, in part because of Kirk’s on-going and exceptional leadership and commitment,” said Sis Wenger, President and CEO of the National Association for Children of Addiction (NACoA), a Recovery Month Planning Partner.”

“The Ramstad/Kennedy award is awarded to Kirk Lane a leader dedicated to support prevention, treatment and recovery in Arkansas. On behalf of over 200 collaborating organizations in the Recovery Month Planning Partners, we congratulate Kirk on his vision and commitment” said Recovery Month partner Marie Gallo Dyak, President of the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc.

Both Retired Minnesota 3rd district representative Jim Ramstad and Retired Rhode Island 1st district representative Patrick J. Kennedy also championed a mental health and addiction parity law in 2008 requiring easily accessible health insurance coverage for mental illness and addiction treatment. Together the Congressmen sponsored Recovery Month and other programs to further therapy, treatment, and recovery

services for these illnesses across the country. The award in their names honors a recipient who has shown upmost commitment in expanding the prospects for recovery of addicted persons and their families.

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