

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 5:45 pm ET September 21,-2022**

Sis Wenger @ [SWenger@nacoa.org](mailto:SWenger@nacoa.org)  
Marie Gallo Dyak @ [mgdyak@eiconline.org](mailto:mgdyak@eiconline.org)

**National Recovery Month Planning Partners Honor, Jay Chaudhary, Director – Indiana’s Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services**

**With the *Ramstad/Kennedy Award for Outstanding Leadership***

*The Single State Authority for the State of Indiana 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 21, 2022) – The annual **Ramstad/Kennedy Award** for outstanding leadership recognizes Jay Chaudhary who is being honored for his leadership in recovery support programs across his state and nationally, and for his creative and unique Recovery Month awareness activities. The award was established in honor of Congressmen Jim Ramstad and Patrick Kennedy. The two Congressmen led the movement for parity and have continued as powerful vocal advocates of recovery support services in all forms, and championed localized efforts to support prevention, treatment, and recovery across the state.

“Now, more than ever before, dedicated leaders like Mr. Chaudhary are critical to combatting historical 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. Chaudhary for embodying the spirit of recovery in every way.”

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 2022 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.

Jay Chaudhary has been an advocate for those in recovery and those seeking recovery. He has named a department for recovery support, adjusted the Department of Mental Health and Addiction mission statement to include recovery language, and established recovery as one of the primary areas of focus for Indiana’s efforts. Director Chaudhary has turned recovery month into recovery year!

“Director Chaudhary’s heart and support for recovery are intentional and apparent across every aspect of his office as he leads the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services in Indiana. Together, in partnership with the dedicated organizations who comprise the National Recovery Month Planning Partners, recovery success stories are becoming commonplace in Indiana, in part because of Jay’s exceptional leadership and commitment,” said Sis Wenger, Chair Emerita with the National Association for Children of Addiction (NACoA).

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

Both Retired Minnesota 3<sup>rd</sup> district representative Jim Ramstad and Retired Rhode Island 1<sup>st</sup> 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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