

COMMUNITY LEADER

SCOTT KELLY

“RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE”

BY JOHN KEYSER

Michigan State Trooper Corey Hebner encouraged me to meet Scott Kelly and write about all he has and is doing in our community, vitally important work, helping our children and others here learn the skills to recover from drug and alcohol abuse. Thank you, Corey, Scott is certainly a valuable resource to a great many, as is his wife, Celia.

Scott grew up in Charlevoix, attended high school here, was an outstanding athlete, i.e., football, basketball, and baseball, and was a member of National Honor Society.....in spite of his, at the time, alcohol abuse. He intended to go to Central Michigan to play baseball, but had a car accident while he was not sober, entered rehabilitation, and then enrolled at Ferris State, again to play baseball. After several years of mostly ups and a few downs, Scott was able to enter into long-term recovery and turned his life around, even became Male Athlete of the Year for the university his senior year and graduated with honors with a bachelor's degree in social work.

Knowing that he wanted to help others lead better lives, he accepted a role as a counselor in 1986 at Harbor Hall in Petoskey. During those four years, Scott learned a great deal and the struggles of residents fueled his deep desire to help others. He had seen successes and a number of sad failures. He began taking classes toward a master's in counseling degree at Central Michigan University in 1990, while working part-time at Chip Counseling Center in Charlevoix.

From 1992-1994, Scott worked at Boyne City Schools as their Student Assistance Program Coor-

dinator and Varsity Baseball Coach. While at Boyne schools, Scott had the opportunity to work with a team from Charlevoix County by participating in a series of trainings about federal funded programs that could be implemented in our area. Those relationships and education about the different systems for counseling agencies, schools and courts would turn into some big changes in Charlevoix County. At that time, Charlevoix County's teen substance abuse statistics were worse than the region, state and national numbers.

In 1993, Scott and Celia Kelly founded Bay Area Substance Education Services, Inc. (BASES for short). This private, non-profit substance abuse agency, BASES, wrote a grant in the mid-1990's and was able to carry out a year-long needs assessment throughout Charlevoix County and those efforts spawned the Recovery High Program. This program was a collaboration between Charlevoix Probate Court, local school districts and BASES that was implemented from 1997 until 2015 to address teen substance abuse. Recovery High helped over 10,000 local teens and their families and saw teens from 55 of Michigan's 83 counties also participate in the program. BASES involvement in the program ended in 2015 due to changing priorities in the community.

Today, local teen substance abuse is lower than the region, state and nation in part through the efforts of these collaborative efforts.

BASES continues to work closely with numerous organizations, schools, courts and law enforcement to address the needs of our community. These efforts help others realize that re-

covery is possible. BASES teaches that addiction is a brain illness and by learning new skills, we can all become healthier. Through numerous partnerships with individuals and community groups, the barriers for recovery are removed so people have access to the resources and opportunities to break free from the self-defeating cycles of the past.

Today, BASES provides outpatient counseling services primarily for adults and some teens.

BASES staff provides counseling for the local Juvenile Drug Court, the newly formed 33rd Circuit Court Hybrid Drug/DWI Program, conducts weekly jail groups for men and women at Charlevoix County Jail, and coordinates volunteers that lead

12 step meetings in the jails. BASES staff also includes therapists that specialize in mental health and trauma therapies. Their staff provide professional support services to First Responders throughout Charlevoix County. We are all in need of safe, stable and nurturing people and places. BASES strives to increase those healthy individuals, organizations and communities since 1993.

Ours is a community that cares!

Scott and Celia, the BASES staff and their team throughout the region are an absolute blessing to our very special community!

Substance abuse concerns? Call BASES 231-547-1144 to learn that help is available. www.BASESmI.org



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