

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

2020 Missouri Mental Health Champions

Missouri Mental Health Foundation

*Changing
Attitudes,
Building Hope*

**Missouri Mental Health
Champions' Award:** *An
award presented to three
individuals annually -- an
individual living with mental
illness, an individual living
with developmental
disabilities and an individual
in recovery for substance use
disorders. The award
recipients make positive
contributions to their
community, exemplify
commitment and vision, and
their actions have increased
the potential for
independence in others with
similar mental health
conditions.*

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Please join us in CONGRATULATING Tim, Candace and John -- the recipients of the 2020 Missouri Mental Health Champions' Award!

JOIN US on June 23, 2020 in Jefferson City to recognize and celebrate the award recipients!

Tim Conroy (St. Louis) – Tim is a champion and advocate representing individuals living with a mental illness. He openly shares his story, including his experience in the criminal justice system, by traveling the state and encouraging others to have faith in their recovery journey. He is now a successful volunteer, dedicating his life as a Certified Peer Specialist. He is an active volunteer and advocate for Missouri Crisis Intervention Programs (CIT), which is a model of specialized law enforcement expertise. Trained CIT Police Officers carry on the normal duties of law enforcement but switch to a specialist role when a potential mental health-related crisis is identified. Tim sits on the CIT Council as a *Working Committee* member and he also serves as the Co-Chair of the *Self-Care Subcommittee*. He has been essential to the Missouri program's growth and recognition among persons living with mental illness. He is a courageous, tireless advocate for many initiatives across the State.

Candace Cunningham (Lee's Summit) Candace was born with cerebral palsy and has faced many life challenges, but never lets it stop her or defeat her in pursuing her dreams or living the life she wants! She attended college and has been tenaciously pursuing employment and further education for the duration of her adult life. Most recently, she has accepted the position as the People First of Missouri Coordinator at UMKC's Institute for Human Development. She has served on the Jackson County Senate Bill 40 Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Board, the Summit Future Foundation, a paid Fellowship Participant in the LEND program, and is a graduate of Partners in Policy Making. She has been selected to organize, motivate and support self-advocates across the State of Missouri in her role with the People First program. Furthermore, she volunteered as an AmeriCorps member to provide peer support to young adults with IDD and the University of Missouri-Kansas City Propel Program. In all these endeavors, she has shown that those living with disabilities and those individuals that do not, that she has ideas, rights and freedoms that can't and won't be affected by limitations. Her smile and upbeat personality are a beacon to all those who know her.

John Stuckey (St. Charles) – As an adolescent, John had difficulties with sleep, anger and depression and began using drugs and alcohol to cope. He was exposed to heroin after college and quickly spiraled downhill, struggling with opioid use disorder. After multiple barriers and treatment attempts, it was medically assisted treatment, transitional living and a supportive community that brought him out of this darkness. He has been in long-term recovery for seven years, working in the treatment field for this length of time as well. While working two additional jobs he was able to get his non-profit, the ARCHway Institute, started and running smoothly. Today it is very successful in aiding individuals and families affected by substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders. He has told his story and spoken about his work at numerous events and in front of thousands of people. He's worked with the Assisted Recovery Centers of America in both their inpatient and outpatient programs and served as the Executive Director of Recovery House-St. Louis. He is driven by his work and fights for those struggling on their path to recovery. He fights for caregivers and for those working in the field, especially his peers. He is an advocate, a champion, and an inspiration to all.