



Lisa Mojer-Torres was the first addiction services consumer advocate. She courageously used her own addiction to open a dialog and, ultimately, change attitudes about diverse pathways to a life in recovery. Lisa believed in many pathways to recovery, but it was important that these pathways have ongoing support from the community. Her recovery pathway included methadone maintenance treatment (MMT), not something easily spoken about, even today. But speak she did, turning legislators' heads, as well as their policies. Lisa put a face on recovery long before it became popular.

Lisa was a licensed civil rights attorney in both New York and New Jersey. Her dedication to the recovery community was evident as a founding member and first chairperson of Faces and Voices of Recovery, and her service on the boards of the National Alliance of Medicated Assisted Recovery Advocates, the National Institute of Medicine and the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. She testified to Congress, advocated for countless addicts and family members navigating a myriad of challenges, collaborated and wrote on various topics and issues within addiction recovery.

Lisa advocated for the creation of NJ DMHAS Consumer Advisory Council in 2009. As founder of the CAC, Lisa saw this as an opportunity to work with her peers to change the individual and community response to people with addiction and to focus more on the individual and their care for a lifelong support to achieve sustained recovery from active addiction/alcoholism. It was important that the CAC consist of consumers and citizens who could represent the voices of people who were at risk for, or struggling with, the diseases of addiction. The CAC goal would be to provide input and guidance to the Division in the best interest of the individuals, families and communities. In 2008 the application process began and the new members worked with Lisa in the development of the mission statement and by-laws to provide a foundation for a strong council. The Council remains strong today as it continues to support the education, prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery from alcohol, drugs, gambling, and other addictive disorders, along with the elimination of associated stigma.

National recognition for Lisa's work included many national awards for her recovery advocacy efforts: The first Public Service Award presented by the National Institute of Drug Abuse, (1996), the Johnson Institute's Award, "America Honors Recovery" (2006) and the Richard Lane and Robert Holden Patient Advocacy Award from the American Association of Opiate Addiction Treatment (2010).

Lisa's voice was only silenced when she lost her battle with ovarian cancer in April of 2011. However, her contributions continue to be recognized and honored. Faces and Voices of Recovery has established an annual award in Lisa's name. The state of Maine also has created a Lisa Mojer-Torres Recovery Advocacy Award. On Saturday, April 12th, a memorial brick in her name was dedicated at the Rutgers Law Center in New Brunswick. It reads: Lisa Mojer-Torres Esquire, Recovery Advocate and Friend.

The words of William L. White, renowned leader in addiction recovery and policy, and coauthor with Lisa, sums up Lisa’s legacy so eloquently: *“Lisa, you touched so many of us in ways we could never fully express to you. If anyone could ever doubt the power of one person to make a difference—to change the world, your life is that evidence. We hope you are resting easy in the knowledge of how much you achieved and how much you were loved. We will miss you dearly, but we will not let your vision or your legacy die.”*