



Bobby Dorton

Peer Support Specialist

I'm Bobby Dorton. I'm an Alaskan Athabascan Native, originally from the interior village of Northway. I was incarcerated for nearly five years in Alaska's correctional system and was released in July of 2018. I am currently on parole.



Since my release, I have been actively working to reintegrate into my community of Fairbanks. I have a job as counselor/case manager at Fairbanks Native Association and I volunteer on both the Fairbanks Diversity Council and the Alaska Peer Support Advisory Board. I am also the community co-chair for the Fairbanks Reentry Coalition. Most recently, I was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Alaska Mental Health Board and Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse.

Most importantly, I'm a Peer Support Specialist and my strongest passion is peer support for justice-involved Alaskans!

How the Mental Health Trust Has Helped Me

- In the spring 2018, I first met Marsha, a reentry case manager for the *Fairbanks Reentry Coalition*, when I was incarcerated at Wildwood Correctional Center.
- In July of 2018, I was released in Fairbanks and lived at a sober house.
- In August of 2018, I signed up to be on Marsha's case load through the *Fairbanks Reentry Coalition*. She provides case management for returning citizens after incarceration. The Trust is in a funding partnership with DHSS in supporting the reentry coalition coordinator and reentry case manager.
- Also, in August of 2018, Marsha helped me get my own apartment with a \$700 deposit that came from the Trust. Because of that grant, I was able to get stable and safely start working on my foundation in recovery.

- Then, I started studying for my GED and volunteering at the Stone Soup Café, a soup kitchen for people who are homeless. It was December, and Marsha helped me get a mini-grant from the Trust to buy winter gear.
- In January 2019, I attended an advocacy training in Fairbanks taught by Teri Tibbett, funded by the Trust. This started me on the track of learning to tell my story to policymakers, which I have done every year since—calling in for public testimony in front of the Alaska State Legislature.
- On January 15, 2019, I graduated from the reentry case management program through the *Fairbanks Reentry Coalition*.



*Me with Marsha Oss, my case manager,
and James Johnson, my probation officer*



Me speaking the JustLeadership training.

- In 2019 and 2020, I was invited to attend the *Reducing Recidivism and Reentry Conference* in Anchorage, which is funded by the Trust. I got to meet a bunch of people who invited me to hang out with Judge Jeffery, Judge Rhoades, Travis from the Trust, Cathleen McLaughlin from Partners for Progress, Linda Setterberg from Fairbanks, and many more people.
- In the summer of 2019, I attended the *JustLeadership* training in Anchorage to learn leadership and advocacy skills. My travel and hotel was paid for by the Trust.



Me getting my Peer Support Specialist certificate with the owner of Peer Star.

- I am currently serving on the planning team for the 2021 *Virtual Reducing Recidivism and Reentry Conference*, sponsored by the Trust.
- In May 2019, I received my Peer Support Specialist Certificate from *Peer Star*. The Trust is one of the main supporters of the peer support certification effort in Alaska.

Thank you!