



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ***THE RECOVERY PROJECT LAUNCHES MULTIPLE INITIATIVES FOR ARTISTS AND ARTS WORKERS STRUGGLING WITH ADDICTION***

(Sarasota, FL) —**Florida Studio Theatre** (FST) is proud to announce the launch of multiple initiatives this month through *The Recovery Project* aimed at utilizing the arts to combat addiction and promote recovery.

Developed over the past year in collaboration with **Live Tampa Bay**, these initiatives represent an ongoing focus in addressing addiction within the performing arts community. One of the cornerstone efforts unveiled today is the release of a comprehensive HR video tailored to guide performing arts organizations in fostering recovery-friendly workplaces. This resource, featuring puppeteering by esteemed Henson Board Member **Raymond Carr**, and generously supported by technical assistance grants from the **Opioid Response Network**, provides practical insights and strategies for organizations seeking to create supportive environments. The video, available for free, serves as an accessible tool for organizations of all sizes, aiming to bridge the gap between intention, and action in promoting recovery advocacy within the workplace.

"The fundamental premise behind this initiative is to empower employers with the knowledge and tools necessary to cultivate recovery-friendly workplaces," remarked **Sean Daniels**, Director of the Recovery Project and Director of Live Tampa Bay's Anti-Stigma Project. "Through education and accessibility, we aim to eliminate barriers and equip organizations with the means to enact meaningful change."

In addition to the HR video, a dedicated warm line is being introduced for artists, arts workers, and administrators within the Sarasota and Manatee County performing arts communities. Accessible via 1-833-OKIQUIT, this confidential assistance phone number connects individuals with peer advocates who offer support and guidance tailored to the unique challenges faced by those in the arts sector. Spearheaded by Florida Studio Theatre, The Recovery Project, Live Tampa Bay, and **LightShare**, this initiative seeks to provide a vital lifeline for individuals seeking assistance and encouragement on their journey to recovery.

"No one should feel isolated in their struggle," emphasized Daniels. "By establishing a direct line of communication between peers within the arts community, we aim to create a supportive network where individuals feel understood and supported."

Furthermore, these efforts complement the recent launch of Live Tampa Bay's "Stories to End Stigma" campaign, which collected a myriad of one-minute stories of recovery and is actively disseminating them within the communities most affected by addiction.

"These initiatives mark a significant step forward in harnessing the transformative power of the arts to combat addiction," said Daniels. "By providing resources and support to performing arts organizations and individuals, we are poised to make a tangible difference in the lives of countless individuals, fostering understanding, empathy, and a culture of inclusivity in our communities."

### **ABOUT FLORIDA STUDIO THEATRE**

Florida Studio Theatre (FST) is Sarasota's contemporary theatre. Founded in 1973, FST has grown to a village of five theatres located in the heart of downtown Sarasota. Each theatre is small-in-size and large in impact, providing intimate and engaging settings for high-quality, professional performances.

Today, FST has established itself as a major force in American Theatre. FST is the largest subscription theatre in the state of Florida and among the largest in the country, serving more than 200,000 live attendees each year across its diverse programs: Mainstage, Cabaret, Stage III, Children's Theatre, The FST School, FST Improv, and New Play Development.

Even with its growth, Florida Studio Theatre remains firmly committed to making the arts accessible and affordable to as many people as possible. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Richard Hopkins, FST develops theatre that speaks to our living, evolving, and dynamically changing world. Hip and historical, entertaining, and challenging, we are the theatre where the street meets the elite — where everyone is welcome to engage in the art of theatre.

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