



## Fletcher Group Partner Success Story

# IT TAKES A VILLAGE

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## RECOVERING TOGETHER

*Never Alone Recovery Support Services on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Pablo, Montana stands out in many ways. "But the big difference," says Executive Director Don Roberts, "is that we heal as a community, with our families, the people we know, the people we grew up with, the people we love. Recovery in isolation is very difficult. We do it together, eating together, spending time together, planning events together, camping together. That makes our peer support different from the clinical peer support offered elsewhere."*



### COMMUNITY FIRST

*Launched just five years ago with volunteers offering day services in a small donated space, NARSS has grown to include men's and women's recovery residences, two Recovery Hall drop-in centers, culturally-supportive programming including all aspects of the Walking in Balance and Wellbriety models, and an ambitious new 44-bed Recovery Village created in partnership with the Salish Kootenai Housing Authority that will provide long-term housing and recovery services for both individuals and families.*

### HOUSING PLUS

*NARSS also works with Cedar Creek Integrated Health, the local Tribal Healing Court, and the 20th District Adult Drug Court to offer recovery support services and life skills training for drug court participants in both individual and group settings.*

*"I helped start the drug court here," says Roberts. "But many participants struggled because they were still living where people were using. They needed safe housing plus supportive services. That's where the Fletcher Group's peer-support model came in. It gave us the road map we needed."*

## MONTANA'S GO-TO GUY

"Don's amazing," says Scott Warnell, the Fletcher Group Outreach and Engagement specialist who's worked with Roberts on a daily basis the last two years. "Don will do whatever it takes to help heal his community. He's also changed the recovery narrative in Montana from one of short-term crisis treatment and intervention to one of long-term recovery and hope. He's become the go-to guy here when it comes to quality recovery housing. There's no one else quite like him."





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## PEER SUPPORT WORKS!

*A key step in the journey was Robert's tour of a Recovery Kentucky facility in Lexington, one of 17 that Fletcher Group Founder Ernie Fletcher helped establish when governor there. "I embedded in that program for a week, fell in love with it, and immediately told them, 'I'm ripping you guys off. I'm taking it.' I especially loved the peer-support element because I know from experience the kind of social pressure it takes for people to change. Like Recovery Kentucky, our staff is built entirely from people coming up through the program. That's the most effective way to get people out of their comfort zone, aware of the choices they make, and working together to lift up our community."*



## GOD'S ANGELS

*The new recovery village came about, says Roberts, "by the grace of God and God's angels. The director of tribal housing reached out to us and said they had some units that were afflicted with drugs, violence, and constant evictions. It was a bad neighborhood and they felt like a program like ours would work really well there. That started the process of developing the Recovery Village. As a result, we can now help families as well as individuals by providing a recovery residence program that's both long-term and community-based."*

## NO ONE'S LEFT OUT

*"We're don't demonize people who are still using," says Roberts. "We still love and respect them and will never stigmatize them or pretend they don't exist. As long as they respect everyone's attempt to become healthier and don't bring drugs or alcohol onto the property, they're welcome to drop by, have a cup of coffee, socialize, play cards or watch a movie. Our health as a community depends on having a healthy soil and space for individuals to heal and blossom. We're all survivors and we will always give a helping hand to those trying to survive."*

## A HELPFUL HAND

"We've run into a ton of different groups, but the most consistently valuable is the Fletcher Group," says Roberts. "Because there's no one else in Montana doing what I'm doing, I often feel like I'm inventing the wheel. But Scott will say no, you're not, we have a model for that and we can walk you through it. I turn to Scott and the Fletcher Group whenever I'm stuck, can't figure things out, or need resources. It means a lot to me because that kind of expertise is so rare in rural areas like ours."

