



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Council on Recovery Opens Virtual Fundraiser featuring Sugar Ray Leonard to the Community at no Cost

HOUSTON, Texas (Oct. 29, 2020) – For the first time, The Council on Recovery is opening up their annual fundraiser to the community at no cost to provide hope for recovery amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. “Finding North: Stories to Guide, Heal, and Inspire,” will air virtually at 7 p.m. on Thursday, November 12, 2020 and features legendary boxer, philanthropist, and best-selling author Sugar Ray Leonard as the keynote speaker. Proceeds from this virtual event will fund The Council’s programs that help individuals and families affected by addiction and co-occurring mental health disorders.

“The pandemic has brought tremendous hardship to our community,” says Mel Taylor, President and CEO of The Council, “And we are seeing its impact through rising rates of substance use and co-occurring mental health conditions nationwide. By making this event available to all, we hope to bring these messages of hope and healing to anyone who needs to hear it.”

Keynote speaker Sugar Ray Leonard is highly regarded as one of the greatest boxers of all time, and was the first boxer to win world titles in five different weight classes. During his 20-year boxing career, Leonard also won three National Golden Gloves titles, two Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) championships, the 1975 Pan-American Games crown, and a gold medal in boxing at the 1976 Olympic games.

Since his retirement from boxing, Leonard has had success as a television personality, sports commentator, best-selling author, and philanthropist for children living with type 1 and type 2 diabetes. In his 2011 memoir, *The Big Fight: My Life In and Out of the Ring*, Leonard revealed his struggle and recovery from depression and substance abuse.

“Finding North: Stories to Guide, Heal, and Inspire” is available to the general public at no cost thanks to the support of sponsorships and individual donors. All funds raised will help to support The Council’s mission throughout the pandemic.

“We hope that those moved by the stories they hear during Finding North and by the good work of The Council will contribute what they can to help The Council keep our promise to turn no one away,” says Taylor.

This event is part of the The Waggoners Foundation Speaker Series, created in memory of June and Virgil Waggoner’s son Jay, who died of alcoholism at the young age of 36. Since its inception, the Speaker Series has raised over \$16 million to help individuals and families overcome addiction.

To sign up to receive a free link to the event, text SPEAKERSERIES TO 51555. For more information or to sponsor this event, contact us at specialevents@councilonrecovery.org or call 281.200.9336.

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About The Council on Recovery: Founded in 1946, The Council on Recovery is Houston’s oldest and largest non-profit organization providing the full spectrum of prevention, education, intervention, treatment, and recovery services for individuals of all ages. The Council on Recovery is committed to helping Houston overcome the addiction epidemic through a focus on family healing and long-term support that is equally accessible to all in need. Directly touching over 50,000 lives each year through prevention programs for children and youth, in-school and clinical counseling for teens, outpatient substance abuse treatment for adults, and more, our mission is to provide the highest quality of care at affordable rates for individuals and their families. Affiliated with the United Way of Greater Houston, The Council receives funding from private contributions and grants, special events, and program fees. For more information, visit www.councilonrecovery.org.