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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VOA TEXAS STAFF SAVE FOUR LIVES BY ADMINISTERING NARCAN *CEO Applauds FDA's recent approval for over the counter use.*

[FORT WORTH, TX MARCH 29, 2023]— Four individuals at the Volunteers of America Texas Residential Re-entry Center (RRC) in Fort Worth, TX were found unresponsive on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, just before 8 p.m. Staff members took immediate action by administering Narcan, an opioid antagonist used to treat overdoses in an emergency. They also performed CPR on three of the four, until emergency officials arrived. All four residents had become responsive before leaving the center by EMS. They were treated and released from a nearby hospital around 1 am. on Wednesday.

“All of our staff members in our residential re-entry and treatment centers are highly trained in recognizing the signs of an overdose and administering Narcan” said Angela King, VOA Texas President, and CEO. “Their swift action and ability to perform CPR made all the difference in the recovery of those impacted.”

As a result of the risks involved with providing treatment to those struggling with addiction, VOA Texas has several protocols in place to prevent and respond to emergencies. Its centers proactively work to prevent potential drug use by routinely checking for illicit substances. Drug sniffing dogs are regularly called in to help in the effort, most recently on Wednesday, March 15. Shortly after the incident, the Fort Worth center was checked thoroughly for any signs of drugs which resulted in drug paraphernalia being found by the combined efforts of the staff and Fort Worth Narcotics Officers.

“We are on the front line of the drug epidemic that plagues our communities. Many people in our programs are fighting drug addiction,” King said. “While we know emergency medicines like Narcan are not the solution for drug treatment and prevention, we applaud the FDA for making an over-the-counter version of Narcan available to citizens everywhere. The move approved just this week will save lives throughout the country. We believe having Narcan on hand and staff members trained to use it, prevented the deaths of our residents.”

The center is currently home to 60 individuals who remain in the custody of the Federal Bureau of Prisons but are receiving transitional assistance by VOA Texas in the way of housing, treatment, job training and job placement.

VOA Texas operates two residential re-entry centers in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, one in Fort Worth and one in Hutchins, just south of Dallas. The organization also runs a residential treatment center in Fort Worth on Riverside Drive that focuses specifically on substance abuse treatment. The programs help nearly 3,000 people fight addiction and successfully re-enter their communities from prison, each year.

In addition to its re-entry and treatment programs, VOA Texas also works to prevent substance use in teens by facilitating drug prevention services inside Tarrant County schools, serving nearly 15,000 students and their families each year.

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The Federal Bureau of Prisons, who maintains custody of all the residents at the VOA Texas RRC will ultimately determine the consequences associated with the incident, which could result in more prison time for the individuals involved.

About Volunteers of America Texas

Volunteers of America Texas is a faith-based organization that empowers individuals and families to overcome obstacles to reach their full potential and thrive. The ministry of service strengthens communities through an array of services including substance abuse treatment and prevention, affordable housing, community re-entry, employment training and disabilities services. With locations in more than 30 urban and rural communities, Volunteers of America Texas has been helping those who need the most help for more than 127 years. For information, visit www.voatx.org.

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