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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Richard Buckman, President of Long Island Recovery Advocates
Named *Advocate of the Year*.

(New York, NY — June 30, 2005—) — New York's leading association for chemical dependency counselors, the Association of Addiction Professionals of New York (AAPNY) has named Richard Buckman, a licensed social worker and addictions counselor, *Advocate of the Year*.

Mr. Buckman, is president and founding member of the Long Island Recovery Advocates (LIRA), New York's largest and most active grassroots recovery advocacy organization.

In a ceremony June 22nd, in Rochester, NY, Mr. Buckman was recognized for his recovery-advocacy work, including efforts to secure passage of insurance parity legislation for those suffering from chemical dependency and mental illness.

"Richard Buckman has been tireless in his efforts to win parity for New York's recovery community," says AAPNY President, Edward L. Olsen, LCSW, CASAC and Director, EAC Outpatient Program, Hempstead, NY. "With the energy, creativity and passion he brings to this crusade, I'm sure he will ultimately prevail."

One of the main legislative initiatives championed by Mr. Buckman is known as "Timothy's Law," named after 12-year old Timothy O'Clair, who took his own life after his family's mental health benefits were exhausted. Employee health plans in New York State typically provide limited coverage for addiction and mental illness, while a comprehensive parity bill would require insurance companies to cover these conditions the same way they cover other chronic, physical illnesses like heart disease and diabetes.

Mr. Buckman, 49, of Dix Hills, NY, said, "I accept this award on behalf of LIRA, and would like to shift the spotlight to all the hard work by advocates in the trenches around New York and across this country."

"The recovery movement itself has grown enormously in New York State due to the work of Richard Buckman and LIRA," said Deirdre Drohan Forbes, CASAC-T, Campaign Chairperson of Faces and Voices of Recovery of Westchester County, NY, another grassroots recovery advocacy sister-organization. "They've been especially effective in raising awareness of Timothy's Law, helped to keep it a focal point in Albany again this year. LIRA's work has set a standard of excellence that can only help and inspire other advocates everywhere."

Patricia Taylor, national Campaign Coordinator of Faces and Voices of Recovery, said, "Richard Buckman and recovery advocates at LIRA are part of a growing national movement of people in recovery, their family members and friends who are organizing and mobilizing to end discrimination and achieve a just response to addiction as a public health crisis. Their tireless efforts are making a difference."

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