

# **AMARE: A non-for profit support group for individuals in recovery**

by Brittany Kohler, Content Manager  
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**ALTON** – Drugs and/or alcohol and depression typically go hand in hand. It is no secret that each day, the war on drugs defeats someone. That someone could be you, your co-worker, a family member, a friend.

That someone was almost **Ty Bechel**. Ty, along with many others active in the community got wrapped up in the wrong game, which nearly took his livelihood. Thankfully, Ty stood up, received the proper assistance and came to acknowledge that he was heading down the wrong path. Ty was lucky to defeat the demons and now wants to help those that are in the position he was once hid in.

Ty founded **Amare**, a **Not-For Profit & Community Organization** that assists those in recovery, which is a very critical step.

“I came up with the idea and my fiancé incorporated this program together,” said Bechel. “She went through hell and back with me, so did my family, and it is something that is tackling our area significantly.”

Amare is the Italian word for love. The Amare, Inc. logo is a lotus flower, which symbolizes someone going through addiction.

“The lotus flower, grows through the mud and the muck, it goes through all this stuff to come out beautiful and pristine,” said Bechel.



**Amare, NFP**

Ty recognizes that getting clean from drugs and/or alcohol is tough enough in itself, but the battle is not yet over there. It is important for those in recovery to continue treatment, even if ‘treatment’ is talking to someone, volunteering or simply offering your support to others. Amare offers programs and services that many consider an essential part of someone’s recovery process from addiction.

“We have a lot of ideas we are working on, many programs in place,” said Bechel. “We successfully completed our inaugural Hunger for Life Food Drive in the month of September.”

The mission of Amare is to instill action and get the community involved. As declared in their mission statement, Amare strongly believes in growing community awareness and aims to encourage residents and family members to heavily involve themselves in hopes to make Madison County a beacon of light for neighboring counties - leading by example.

“Amare is not just for the person that is suffering from addiction themselves,” said Bechel. “It is for the community to say ‘wait a minute, we are going about this all wrong, we keep having awareness rally and awareness rally after awareness rally, but now it’s time to put our big boy pants on and if we are going to do this, we need to do this together.’”

The number one problem with the start to heroin addiction is prescription drugs.

Ty injured his leg back in November and knew it would not be a good idea to accept any prescription drugs from the doctors, but they pushed it anyway.

“I told them from the beginning that I was in recovery and that I do not want any narcotics,” said Bechel. “Every shift, they would ask me if I wanted any and even still, they wrote me a prescription before I went home.”

Ty was livid.

“I was furious, not because of me, because I knew I was going to rip it up,” said Bechel. “But if someone was only 30 days, 60 days clean, that would have been a relapse point because that would have been their excuse.”

The Amare staff believes in leading by example and hopes to guide the surrounding community to a positive light and be a pillar for those in the recovery process or those with loved ones in the recovery process.

“Addiction hits one in ten people in America above the age of twelve, so there is a chance that everyone in Madison County knows at least one person,” said Bechel. “To be able to combat this and make a change, it’s got to be together. And it can’t just be about awareness. Awareness is great, but action is the best step.”



Amare focuses on the positive things in life and ensures that you are not alone in the world. Those involved with this program have experienced many hardships themselves and are able to directly relate to others, which enables a trust bond to be formed and walls to come down.

“When dealing with drug/alcohol addiction we feel nobody understands us or even cares,” as stated on [www.Amare.com](http://www.Amare.com). “We want you to know you are not alone and there are many individuals that want to assist in you getting well.”

One aspect that Amare feels strongly about is volunteering. Not only does volunteering allow individuals to give back to the community, but it gives us a sense of accomplishment, it demonstrates commitment, makes us feel part of a team, it keeps people busy and focused on something good and it may even open doors for future employment opportunities.

“We have a volunteer supplemental program that we’re looking to get up and running,” said Bechel. “We take a select group of people in recovery, especially early in recovery, and when they go volunteer somewhere and get signed off for a certain amount of hours, they can bring that back to us and get points. They then can shop with their points in a



catalogue for diapers, toiletries, hygiene products, maybe even theatre tickets. It's hard sometimes for people to be able to get those simple items when they don't have any support."

Another focus for the Amare Team is helping others grow and accomplish educational goals. Focusing on school can sometimes distract people from outside negative temptations. In recovery, people sometimes want to earn a college degree but may need a little extra help getting started. Amare is there to help find resources and a path that is right for you. The Amare team is working on panning out a **The Kickstart Your Life Scholarship** fund, which is a small scholarship aimed at higher education. **The Kickstart Your Life Scholarship** helps toward tuition, which is often a stress for college students.

The board plans to implement the scholarship by the end of the year so that they can begin accepting applications from those in recovery for the Spring 2017 semester. Although guidelines are still being discussed, the team is listing education as a priority for to enhance opportunities for career advancement.

"It's about building this community back up, it's about letting these kids know that whatever they are doing, they don't have to do it," said Bechel.

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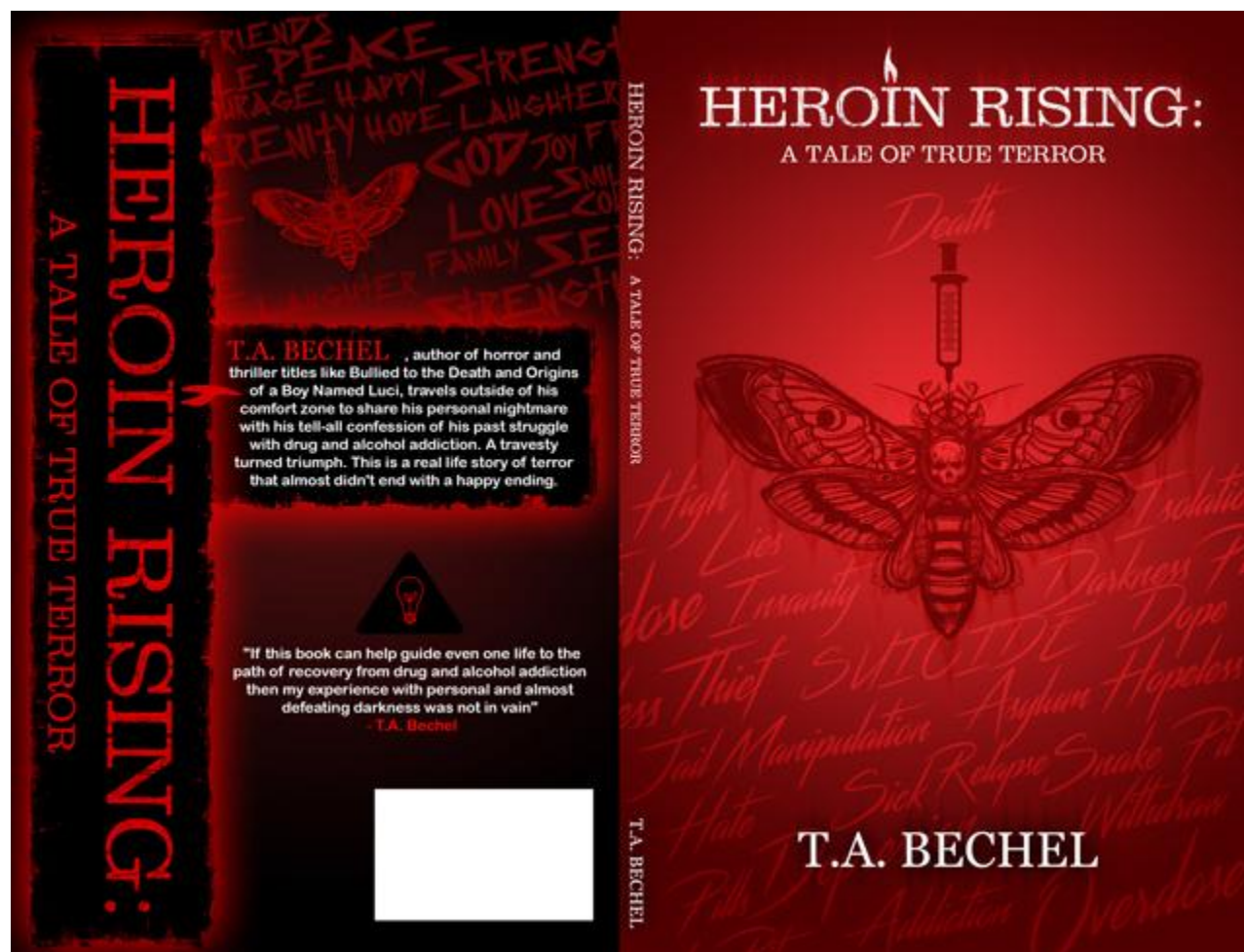


Many great things are in the works for the future of Amare to include an adult play, *If I Never Wake Up*. The play is slated to showcase the life of a user, from several aspects and the hardships it has on the family and community as a whole.

Ty did not hold back with the plot, characters, the scenes or the realism of the effects of drugs and alcohol. He believes this is a serious issue that several people throughout our community face on a daily basis.

Synopsis: "In a world stricken by fear, Rob and Angie want to protect their only child from harm's way. A culture, a drug culture, has infested the city's streets, the residents' homes, and now Rob and Angie's daughter, Aurora. Rob and Angie's worst fears are realized as father time picks no sides. As the clock ticks, can they save their only child from the gruesome grip of drug addiction? We can only hope - sometimes hope is all the strength we have left. Our original awareness play, *If I Never Wake Up* in one act, comes packed full of peer pressure, pain, parenting woes, and an ending you will not want to miss."

[If I Never wake up showcases on March 13 at The Alfresco Performing Arts Center located at 2401 Delmar in Granite City, Illinois. Door open at 6:30 p.m. and the play begins at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \\$7 each, proceeds benefit Amare, Inc.](#)



As a personal venture and healing mechanism, Bechel is also looking to publish an autobiography called *Heroin Rising: The Tale of True Terror* where again, he does not hold back.

Ty's hope is that this type of "in your face" approach opens eyes and provides awareness on this tough and very REAL issue.

"I attack the emotion as strongly as I can," said Bechel.

As Amare continues to grow, more opportunities will come about and the board members anticipate a big future. The team is here to be a shoulder to lean on, a resource for treatment options and simply to exist as a personal support group. Amare is one more way to help get users clean and happy in life again.

To learn more or donate to the new program, visit [www.Amare.com](http://www.Amare.com).

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