

## Commissioners Speak with Legislators about Continuum of Substance Abuse Services



*The group who met in Knoxville in October to discuss and learn more about how the prescription drug abuse epidemic is affecting young women of childbearing age included (from left) Ron Hanaver of the Knox County Recovery Court; Dr. John Dreyzehner, Commissioner of the Department of Health; E. Douglas Varney, Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; Karen Pershing of the Metropolitan Drug Commission; Jim Henry, Commissioner of the Department of Children's Services; State Senator Becky Massey; Bill Gibbons, Commissioner of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security; State Senator Randy McNally; State Representative Steve Hall; and Andy Black, CEO of the Helen Ross McNabb Center.*

The problem of prescription drug abuse has reached epidemic proportions in Tennessee. One of the most heartbreaking consequences is the surge in the number of mothers taking drugs, either prescription or illegal, and subsequently giving birth to drug-dependent newborns that experience withdrawal symptoms. This problem is especially prevalent in the eastern and middle regions of our state.

As Tennessee struggles to address and reduce the impact of this problem on babies, mothers and families, Governor Bill Haslam has appointed a Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome subcommittee to investigate ways to address this issue.

TDMHSAS Commissioner E. Douglas Varney – along with Department of Health Commissioner Dr. John Dreyzehner, Department of Children's Services Commissioner Jim Henry, and Department of Safety and Homeland Security Commissioner Bill Gibbons – invited members of the General Assembly to join them in October as they toured a substance abuse treatment facility and discussed some options available to women who are pregnant or have given birth to a drug-dependent newborn.

The commissioners first met in Knoxville, at the Helen Ross McNabb Center's CenterPointe location, where they toured the facility and discussed the work being done by the Knox

### New Address for Central Office

The Department's Central Office has officially moved back to Downtown Nashville, effective Monday, November 18.

The mailing address is now: The Andrew Jackson Building, Sixth Floor, 500 Deaderick St., Nashville, TN 37243.

The following offices are on the **sixth** floor:

- Office of Commissioner E. Douglas Varney and Deputy Commissioner Marie Williams
- Division of Hospital Services (led by Assistant Commissioner John Arredondo)
- Division of Clinical Leadership (led by Medical Director Dr. Howard Burley)
- Division of Administrative Services (led by Assistant Commissioner Heather Gundersen)
- Office of Human Resources (led by Executive Director Vickie Graham)
- Office of Communications (led by Director Michael Rabkin)

The following offices are on the **fifth** floor:

- Division of Mental Health Services (led by Assistant Commissioner Sejal West)
- Division of Substance Abuse Services (led by Assistant Commissioner Rod Bragg)
- Division of Planning, Research & Forensics (led by Assistant Commissioner Marthagem Whitlock)
- Division of the General Counsel (led by General Counsel Zack Griffith)
- Office of Licensure (led by Director Cynthia Tyler)

All phone numbers, fax numbers, and email addresses remain the same.

## Pair of Regional Mental Health Institutes Earn ‘Top Performer’ Recognition from The Joint Commission

*Group Honors Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute and Western Mental Health Institute*

The Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute and Western Mental Health Institute have both been named “Top Performer on Key Quality Measures®” by The Joint Commission, the leading accreditor of health care organizations in the United States.

Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute, located in Nashville, and Western Mental Health Institute, located in Bolivar, were recognized by The Joint Commission for exemplary performance in using evidence-based clinical processes that are shown to improve care for inpatient psychiatric services. Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute and Western Mental Health Institute are two of 1,099 hospitals in the U.S. earning the distinction of “Top Performer on Key Quality Measures” for attaining and sustaining excellence in accountability measure performance.

“We understand that what matters most to patients at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute and Western Mental Health Institute is safe, effective care,” says E. Douglas Varney, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, which oversees the facilities. “That’s why we have made a commitment to accreditation and to positive patient outcomes through evidence-based care processes. We are proud that two of our state mental health institutes have received the distinction of being a Joint Commission Top Performer on Key Quality Measures.”

The ratings are based on an aggregation of accountability measure data reported to The Joint Commission during the 2012 calendar year. The list of Top Performer organizations represents 33 percent of all Joint Commission-accredited hospitals reporting accountability measure performance data for 2012.

“Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute’s goal is to provide the highest quality of care for our patients in a safe, therapeutic environment,” says Bob Micinski, CEO of Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute. “Our vision is to provide quality care and be recognized for excellence by professional agencies, the community, other health providers, and, most importantly, the patients we serve.”

“It is an honor for our hospital to be recognized as a national Top Performer by The Joint Commission,” says Roger Pursley, CEO of Western Mental Health Institute. “Our staff and leadership strive for excellence in what matters most with patient care and safety through the implementation of best practice guidelines. The credit for our success is a result of the efforts of our day-to-day frontline staff who provide the care and commitment to those we serve.”

Each of the hospitals named as a Top Performer on Key Quality Measures must: 1) achieve cumulative performance of 95 percent or above across all reported accountability measures; 2) achieve performance of 95 percent or above on each and every reported accountability measure

where there are at least 30 denominator cases; and 3) have at least one core measure set that has a composite rate of 95 percent or above, and within that measure set all applicable individual accountability measures have a performance rate of 95 percent or above. A 95 percent score means a hospital provided an evidence-based practice 95 times out of 100 opportunities.

“Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute, Western Mental Health Institute, and all the Top Performer hospitals have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to quality improvement and they should be proud of their achievement,” says Mark R. Chassin, M.D., FACP, M.P.P., M.P.H., president and CEO of The Joint Commission. “We have much to celebrate this year. Nearly half of our accredited hospitals have attained or nearly attained the Top Performer distinction. This truly shows that we are approaching a tipping point in hospital quality performance that will directly contribute to better health outcomes for patients.”

In addition to being included in The Joint Commission’s “Improving America’s Hospitals” annual report, which was released October 30, Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute and Western Mental Health Institute will be recognized on The Joint Commission’s Quality Check website ([www.qualitycheck.org](http://www.qualitycheck.org)). The Top Performer program will also be featured in the December issues of The Joint Commission Perspectives and The Source.

### New Website for Families

As part of the Governor’s Children’s Cabinet, TDMHSAS is proud to announce [kidcentraltn.com](http://kidcentraltn.com), a one-stop shop for Tennessee families to connect with important information and resources provided by state departments.

Along with tons of articles and information relating to health, education, development, and support, [kidcentraltn.com](http://kidcentraltn.com) features a comprehensive directory of state-operated and state-funded services for children and families.

And if you have a smartphone, check out the new Mobile App with some great features!



### Commissioners Speak

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County Recovery Court, and The Metropolitan Drug Commission.

The following week, the group met with more members of the General Assembly at Renewal House in Nashville, where they discussed and toured that facility. Also present at that event were members of Meharry Medical College, the Power of Putnam anti-drug coalition, and the 21st Judicial District Recovery Court.



## TAMHO Honors Governor Haslam with President's Award during Annual Conference



Prior to receiving the TAMHO President's Award, Governor Haslam speaks to attendees of the TAMHO Annual Conference in Murfreesboro. After making his remarks, he surprised the attendees by asking them if they had any questions or comments for him.

The Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO) recently bestowed its highest honors during their Annual Conference at Embassy Suites Hotel and Convention Center in Murfreesboro.

Governor Bill Haslam was the headliner, receiving the **TAMHO President's Award**. The award "is given at the discretion of the President of the TAMHO Board of Directors to



Governor Haslam speaks with attendees at the TAMHO Annual Conference.

recognize extraordinary contributions to the field of mental health," according to TAMHO.

After making some remarks about the state of behavioral health care in the state of Tennessee, Governor Haslam surprised those in attendance by asking if

anyone had a question or comment they would like to share with him, and a number of people took him up on his offer.

Other award recipients at the TAMHO Conference were:

- **Frank G. Clement Community Service Award:** Lee Ann Ingram of Centerstone Tennessee
- **Dorothea Dix Professional Service Award:** Jim Causey, Ph.D. (posthumously) of Professional Care Services of West Tennessee
- **Distinguished Service Award:** Larry Thompson, Ph.D., Chief Operations Officer of Volunteer Behavioral Health Services
- **Personal Courage Awards:** Harriette "Niki" Payne of Volunteer Behavioral Health System, and Marjorie Diefenbach of Peninsula
- **Media Award for Best Use of Social Media:** Helen Ross McNabb Center



Governor Haslam shows off the TAMHO President's Award with (from left) Charlie Good, CEO of Frontier Health and President of TAMHO; Ellyn Wilbur, Executive Director of TAMHO; and TDMHSAS Commissioner E. Douglas Varney.

- **Media Award for Best Newsletter:** Centerstone Tennessee
- **Programs of Excellence Awards:**
  - Case Management Services, Inc. – Project to Aid in the Transition from Homelessness (PATH)
  - Centerstone of Tennessee – Trauma Treatment Services
  - Ridgeview – Mothers and Infants Sober Together (MIST)
  - Case Management Services, Inc. – Peabody House Emergency Shelter for HIV/AIDS Consumers

TAMHO is a statewide trade association representing Community Mental Health Centers and other nonprofit corporations that provide behavioral health services. These organizations have historically met the needs of mentally ill and chemically dependent citizens of Tennessee from all age groups and socioeconomic levels. For more information, go online to [tamho.org](http://tamho.org).

## 11<sup>th</sup> OXFORD HOUSE IN TENNESSEE OPENS FOR PEOPLE TO RECOVER FROM ALCOHOL OR DRUG ABUSE

*Program is a Low-Cost, High-Impact Way to Help on the Road to Recovery*

The 11th Oxford House in Tennessee opened its doors on November 1, adding to the number of recovery homes around the state for people in recovery from alcohol and/or drug abuse issues.

Oxford Houses are safe, supportive housing options for adults at least 18 years old who are in recovery from alcohol abuse and/or drug abuse. Residents must be motivated to live in a disciplined, supportive, alcohol- and drug-free living environment and are able to gain employment or receive some type of legitimate financial assistance. Residents pay a weekly fee that includes rent, utilities, cable and internet connection. The fee varies between \$80 and \$110 per week, depending on the location.

“Oxford Houses are a good example of low-cost, high-impact alcohol and drug abuse services in the state of Tennessee,” says TDMHSAS Commissioner E. Douglas Varney. “These facilities have been proven to be a great way to serve the treatment and recovery community and get the most ‘bang for our buck.’”

Oxford Houses have been in existence since 1975. The current Oxford House locations in Tennessee (according to [oxfordhouse.org](http://oxfordhouse.org)) are:

- Oxford House Unaka in Johnson City (423-202-7963) – capacity for 6 women
- Oxford House Milton in Memphis (901-725-0407) – capacity for 6 men
- Oxford House High Pointe Terrace in Memphis (901-323-6607) – capacity for 6 men
- Oxford House Faxon in Memphis (985-265-2991) – capacity for 6 men
- Oxford House Hamilton in Nashville (615-244-9341) – capacity for 8 men
- Oxford House Hilson in Nashville (615-837-1867) – capacity for 12 men
- Oxford House Polar Bear in Nashville (615-742-9975) – capacity for 10 men
- Oxford House Meridian in Nashville (615-248-3224) – capacity for 8 men
- Oxford House Marthona in Madison (615-868-4707) – capacity for 10 men
- Oxford House Crieve Hall in Nashville (615-873-4020) – capacity for 8 women

- Oxford House Cleveland in Nashville (opened November 1) – capacity for 9 men

Also, an Oxford House for 8 women is scheduled to open in Nashville on January 1, with more to follow.

The Oxford House Model provides housing and rehabilitative support for adults who are recovering from alcohol and/or drug use and who want to remain abstinent from use. There are currently more than 1,650 self-sustaining recovery houses utilizing the Oxford House model around the United States. More than 10,000 individuals are in recovery living in these houses at any one time during a year, with more than 24,000 living in an Oxford House during course of a year.

“We are very pleased to have the opportunity to work with the State of Tennessee to develop a statewide network of self-run, self-supported Oxford Houses,” says Paul Molloy, the founder and CEO of Oxford House Inc. “Oxford House residents know that recovery without relapse can be the norm, rather than the exception, and are very grateful that the State of Tennessee has chosen to foster expansion of the Oxford House network. Oxford Houses provide the time, peer support, and system of operations that permit individuals to live in a safe environment for as long as it takes to stay clean and sober.”

To help promote the Oxford Houses and establish new locations, the TDMHSAS entered into a contract with Oxford House, Inc., to hire two outreach workers in Tennessee. These workers locate and establish appropriate housing, recruit and select appropriate recovery house members, submit loan applications, network with the local recovery community groups, and provide ongoing assistance as needed. In Tennessee, the recovery workers are Whitney Malone (615-300-7252 or [whitney.malone@oxfordhouse.org](mailto:whitney.malone@oxfordhouse.org)) and Marty Walker (985-265-2991 or [marty.walker@oxfordhouse.org](mailto:marty.walker@oxfordhouse.org)).

A recovering individual can live in an Oxford House for as long as he or she does not drink alcohol, does not use drugs, and pays an equal share of the house expenses. The average stay is about a year, but many residents stay longer, according to the Oxford House website.

Oxford House is a concept in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction. In its simplest form, an Oxford House describes a democratically run, self-supporting and drug free home. Parallel to this concept lies the organizational structure of Oxford House, Inc. This publicly supported, non-profit 501(c)3 corporation is the umbrella organization which provides the network connecting all Oxford Houses and allocates resources to duplicate the Oxford House concept where needs arise. For more information, visit [oxfordhouse.org](http://oxfordhouse.org) or call (800) 689-6411.



## Department Helps Kick Off ‘Working for a Healthier Tennessee’ with Various Events

In August, Governor Bill Haslam launched a new public-private wellness initiative called Healthier Tennessee. In conjunction with the governor’s office, the state introduced a companion initiative called Working for a Healthier Tennessee, which aims to create a healthy, positive workplace through small steps. The initiative focuses on improvements in three key areas: physical activity, healthy eating and tobacco cessation.

Each department in state government has been set up under a Site Champion program, which aims to create a healthy, positive workplace. This program will show how taking small steps can help achieve a larger goal.

A number of locations have held some fun, educational events over the past few weeks. Here’s a look at some of what has been done:

### TDMHSAS Central Office

Before moving from the Metro Center area to the Andrew Jackson Building in Downtown Nashville, the Central Office held a kickoff event that included a walk around the building, some games that involved a bit of physical activity, and a healthy foods potluck.

The events were heavily attended and drew raves from many of the employees who took part.

### Memphis Mental Health Institute

MMHI created a campaign called “A Healthier Tennessee ... That’s U & Me” and introduced to staff on Thursday, August 29. Adjunctive Therapy Director Charles Taylor, who represents MMHI on the TDMHSAS Wellness Team, spearheaded the event.

“Healthy is the integration of your physical, mental and spiritual well-being,” he said during the event. “This includes social, emotional, spiritual, environmental, occupational, intellectual and physical wellness.”

As part of the “A Healthier Tennessee ... That’s U & Me” campaign, MMHI has designated each day of the week to focus



*Members of the TDMHSAS Central Office Wellness Team hand out free bottle waters to staff members who took part in the kick-off event, which included a walk around the building, games, and a healthy potluck.*

on a different idea that can lead to a healthier life. They are:

- Move It Mondays
- Tennis Shoe Tuesdays
- Water Wednesdays
- Tenacious Thursdays
- Fit Fridays

Susan Murley, RN, participated in the kickoff event by sharing health tips and encouragement to be vigilant about maintenance for your body. Lillian McGhee also participated by sharing her journey with cancer and noting the importance of keeping medical and screening appointments. She reports that she is cancer-free and encouraged everyone present to get the recommended annual check-ups, as well as to encourage friends and family members to do the same. Staff joined in to demonstrate exercises that are easy to do and accessible to everyone, and a short skit

was performed to show how bad habits can lead to a breakdown in health and how changing those bad habits to good ones can improve your quality of life.

### Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute

A number of health and wellness events were held at MTMHI recently.

On October 2, a “Healthy Tasty Tailgate” was held in which employees brought in a variety of healthy snacks and foods to share with each other.

Also, more than 300 employees signed pledges to drink water on Wednesdays. Everyone who signed up got a free bottle of water.

And the staff has started “Hit the Trail Thursdays,” which encourages staff to walk the greenway with peers during the 11 a.m. and noon lunch breaks.

### Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute

MBMHI held their Annual Health Fair on September 24-26 for staff to learn about the new statewide initiative and have their heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, and other tests.

## 'SAD' Feelings During Winter Months Can be Treated

*'Seasonal Affective Disorder' Can Lead to Depression for Many*

The cold temperatures and dreary days that often occur during the winter months can often bring about feelings of depression for many Tennesseans. These feelings may be caused by a condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

It is now estimated that about five percent of the population suffers from SAD – this is the equivalent of approximately 317,000 Tennesseans, based on a 2010 U.S. Census state population of 6,346,105. SAD is four times more common in women than in men, but when it is present, men likely have more severe symptoms. Young adults are also more likely to suffer from SAD, but it is uncommon in people under 20.

“There is no test for SAD, so it’s

important for anyone who is feeling that they may be depressed to speak with their behavioral health care provider as soon as possible,” says TDMHSAS Commissioner E. Douglas Varney. “This is a very serious, very real condition, and people shouldn’t try to self-medicate with alcohol or drugs – either illegal drugs or prescription drugs – to deal with it on their own.”

SAD is a mood disorder that follows a seasonal pattern related to variations in sunlight. Symptoms of SAD are often similar to those of other forms of depression, and often can include:

- Feeling sad, grumpy, moody, anxious, or depressed
- Losing interest in usual activities
- Eating either more or less, and craving sugary or starchy foods
- Gaining weight
- Sleeping more and feeling drowsy during the daytime
- Avoiding social situations

If a person experiences these symptoms, a mental health expert can accurately diagnose SAD so that treatment options can be explored. Symptoms are often triggered by a lack of exposure to

light and tend to drastically decrease, and even go away completely, when light increases. Lack of light can upset a person’s sleep-wake cycle and other circadian rhythms, and can cause problems with the production of serotonin, a brain chemical that affects mood.

“Without treatment, symptoms can improve with the changing of seasons,” says Dr. Howard Burley, TDMHSAS Medical Director. “But with treatment, symptoms can improve much more quickly, and people can return to living their so-called ‘normal’ life.”

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), SAD is characterized by recurrent episodes of depression, usually in late fall and winter, alternating with periods of normal or high mood the rest of the year. Some people with bipolar disorder can also have seasonal changes in their mood and experience acute episodes in a recurrent fashion at different times of the year. For more information on NAMI, go online to [namitn.org](http://namitn.org) or call (615) 361-6608.

## National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day Held in 47 Counties

To help reduce the number of teens and adults who are abusing prescription medicine, National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day – when thousands of pounds of unused and potentially addictive medications and other substances are removed from homes around the United States – was held in late October.

The event is held twice each year and helps raise awareness of the permanent prescription-drug-disposal boxes that have been established around the nation. Currently, there are 82 permanent prescription drug disposal boxes located at law enforcement facilities in 47 counties across Tennessee. Law enforcement professionals highly recommend the use of these permanent boxes throughout the year to reduce the possibility of theft and accidental overdose. For a list of the

permanent locations, visit the TDMHSAS website at <http://www.tn.gov/mental/publications/Permanent%20Drug%20Take-Back%20Boxes.pdf>.

“The importance of removing unused medications from homes cannot be over-emphasized,” says TDMHSAS Commissioner E. Douglas Varney. “More than 1,000 Tennesseans die yearly from drug overdoses, and many of them could be prevented if prescription medication was disposed of properly.”



## Healthier Tennessee

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Flu vaccines and hepatitis vaccines were also made available, and a number of different vendors were on hand to share to key health-related information with staff.

Also, Gerald LaCourse, who represents MBMHI on the TDMHSAS Wellness Team, had been working with staff to map a number of indoor and outdoor walking routes and providing all with key health and wellness information. He has also made the facility’s gym available for walking or basketball during lunch breaks or after-duty hours.

## Coming Soon!

Be sure to stay tuned for information and announcements about upcoming events. And you can also connect with “Working for a Healthier Tennessee” on Facebook and Twitter, or online at [tbsitechampions.com](http://tbsitechampions.com).



## High-Risk Drinking Remains a Concern on College Campuses

### *Coalition for Healthy and Safe Campus Communities Provides Services*

NASHVILLE – The problem of high-risk drinking among college students and young adults is widespread and results in numerous short- and long-term consequences for students, educational institutions, and their surrounding communities.

To address this behavior, the TDMHSAS funds the Coalition for Healthy and Safe Campus Communities (CHASCo) to provide prevention services on a number of college and university campuses throughout the state.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's (NIAAA) "Update on College Drinking" report (available online at [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)) shows disturbing increases in binge/unhealthily drinking, driving while intoxicated, and alcohol-related deaths and injuries. The survey also indicates that college students continue to put themselves at risk with their frequency and level of alcohol consumption. Additionally, students who don't drink are exposed to alcohol-use consequences such as increased traffic crashes, assaults, property damage, and other crimes.

"College and university orientation programs offer an opportunity to address campus policies, individual responsibility, performance expectations, and community values related to substance use and abuse," says TDMHSAS Commissioner E. Douglas Varney, "but university administrators can't do it all."

Transitioning into college is challenging, with approximately one-third of first-year students failing to enroll for a second year. The first six weeks of a freshman's college experience are critical for predicting overall academic success. Student expectations and social pressures, combined with unstructured free time, can precipitate excessive alcohol consumption. Additionally, college students frequently have exaggerated perceptions of alcohol use: Tennessee college students who were surveyed estimate peer alcohol use at more than twice the level of actual rates for their campus. As a result of these pressures, expectations, and misperceptions, research indicates that students may increase their own alcohol use. Ensuring that students understand the truth of alcohol use in their campus community is an important preventive measure.

Contrary to popular belief, parents maintain a significant amount of influence as their child transitions to college. Advances in communication technology make frequent contact between parents and college students easy and affordable; also, studies show that communication (particularly on weekends) is a prudent protective strategy that parents can employ to reduce dangerous drinking behaviors. Parents should make sure that their child understands the expectations for their behavior and the consequences for underage drinking, public drunkenness, using a fake ID, driving under the influence, assault, and other alcohol-related offenses. Parents should also become familiar with the name of their child's academic advisor and the on-campus services available to students for assistance.

TDMHSAS and CHASCo are proud that the strategies being implemented on Tennessee's campuses have resulted in reported high-risk drinking rates for students and young adults (age 18-26) significantly lower than the national average. According to Tennessee Regional Behavioral Health Prevalence Estimates

(available at the TDMHSAS website online at [www.tn.gov/mental/policy/tmhsas\\_data\\_rpt.shtml](http://www.tn.gov/mental/policy/tmhsas_data_rpt.shtml)), Tennessee students and young adults indicate a past-month alcohol high-risk use rate of 33.8 percent, well below the national rate of 41 percent.

While this is a significant achievement, it still shows that one-third of Tennessee students and young adults drank to excess creating greater risk for themselves and those around them. With additional parental and community support, Tennessee students will be safer and more productive.

#### **The campuses where CHASCo will provide prevention services are:**

##### **In 2013:**

Baptist College of Health Sciences, Memphis  
 Christian Brothers University, Memphis  
 East Tennessee State University, Johnson City  
 Lane College, Jackson  
 Lemoyne-Owen College, Memphis  
 Lipscomb University, Nashville  
 Pellissippi State Community College, Knoxville  
 Tennessee Tech University, Cookeville  
 Tusculum College, Greeneville  
 University of Tennessee at Martin  
 Vol State Community College, Gallatin  
 Walters State Community College, Morristown

##### **In 2014:**

Aquinas College, Nashville  
 Belmont University, Nashville  
 Carson-Newman University, Jefferson City  
 Cumberland University, Lebanon  
 Maryville College, Maryville  
 Motlow State Community College, Tullahoma  
 Northeast State Community College, Blountville  
 Rhodes College, Memphis  
 Sewanee: The University of the South, Sewanee  
 Tennessee State University, Nashville  
 University of Memphis  
 University of Tennessee at Knoxville

##### **In 2015:**

Austin Peay State University, Clarksville  
 Bethel University, McKenzie  
 Freed-Hardeman University, Henderson  
 Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate  
 Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro  
 Southern Adventist University, Collegedale  
 Tennessee Technology Center at Crump  
 Tennessee Wesleyan College, Athens  
 Trevecca Nazarene University, Nashville  
 Union University, Jackson  
 University of Tennessee at Chattanooga  
 Watkins College of Art & Design, Nashville

## Building Strong Families Conference Helps Improve the Landscape for Children and Families

By Edwina Chappell, Ph.D., TDMHSAS Division of Clinical Leadership

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Building Strong Families conference, which took place in September in Murfreesboro, this year placed particular emphasis on the social and emotional wellbeing of children and families. Each training, plenary session, and workshop aimed at providing tools to facilitate recovery when parents and/or caregivers abused substances and/or had trauma issues.

Titled “Rooted in Recovery, Substance Abuse and Trauma, Prevention to Treatment,” more than 300 individuals attended the three-day conference each day, which was a 50 percent increase from previous years. Also, attendance was more widespread, as more than 30 counties were represented this year from all over the state. Attendees included staff from the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services (DCS), mental health centers, school systems, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs), substance abuse facilities, health departments, recovery courts, managed care organizations, and other social service agencies. Continuing education units (CEUs) and prevention credits were available for a small fee.

The first day of the conference was training day in which participants learned about “Seeking Safety,” the evidence-based therapy for trauma, substance abuse, and/or post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as how to build and ensure sustainability, especially of community anti-drug coalitions. Attendees were also introduced to the kidcentral tn program and website ([www.kidcentraltn.com](http://www.kidcentraltn.com)) from the Governor’s Children’s Cabinet that provides information on health, education, development, and support to Tennessee families, as well as a searchable State Services Directory.

The second day focused on prenatal



Ken Stewart, Regional Director of Clinic Services of Centerstone, and TDMHSAS Commissioner E. Douglas Varney enjoy the 4th Annual Building Strong Families conference in Murfreesboro.

substance exposure and its effect on brain development. Ira J. Chasnoff, M.D., professor of clinical pediatrics at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Chicago and one of the leading researchers in the field of early child development, explained the physical and developmental impact of prenatal drug and alcohol exposure on children as they grow. He offered practical intervention ideas and strategies for professionals and parents to help children develop to their maximum potential.

TDMHSAS Commissioner E.

Douglas Varney opened activities on the final day. He provided updates regarding Tennessee’s initiative to battle the prescription drug abuse epidemic and shared information about recent departmental initiatives, including the Lifeline program and Oxford Houses. Lifeline utilizes peer professionals to address stigma related to addiction and establish recovery services statewide. Oxford Houses are safe, supportive housing options for adults who are in recovery from alcohol and/or drug abuse. Afterwards, Fred Brason spoke about

Project Lazarus, a strategy used in North Carolina to reduce prescription drug abuse and prevent overdoses..

In addition to workshops on skill-and competency-building interventions that can improve outcomes for children and families, one of the final sessions addressed emerging substance abuse trends, as reported by Task Force Officers for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency.

The conference originated in 2010 through the Building Strong Families (BSF) in Rural Tennessee grant project to enhance regional partnerships, expand service capacity, and

provide education and information to stakeholders in targeted counties. This year, the new Therapeutic Intervention, Education, & Skills (TIES) grant project that additionally serves Davidson and Rutherford counties was also involved in the conference.

Also, Centerstone and the Coffee County Anti-Drug Coalition (CCADC) should be acknowledged for organizing such a resource-rich conference. Centerstone is an official partner on both the BSF & TIES grants and CCADC is a member of the regional collaborative council for the grants. DCS and Centerstone Research Institute are also official grants’ partners. TDMHSAS is the lead agency for BSF and TIES, which operate through funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau.

Overall, the conference was deemed a success. It was well attended and full of great information and tools. As one participant said, “The conference was so amazing. It continues to surpass all expectations every year.”



## Western Mental Health Institute Opens Doors for Pharmacy Students

By Wesley Geminn, Pharm.D., Clinical/Informatics Pharmacist, WMHI

Western Mental Health Institute (WMHI) has begun accepting pharmacy students from the University of Tennessee College of Pharmacy for a one-month clinical rotation.

The program will help educate students in the pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatment and prevention of mental health and substance abuse issues. The students' participation will allow for better education of future community practitioners related to mental health issues, including inpatient treatment, and it will afford them the opportunity to become more involved with patient advocacy issues to help reduce the stigma historically associated with mental illness.

While on clinical rotation at WMHI, the students will participate in treatment teams, conduct chart reviews, complete special pharmacy projects, conduct a monthly journal club webinar, help provide medication education to patients and hospital staff, and provide information for the monthly pharmacy newsletter. WMHI is providing on-

campus housing for the students who are unable to commute on a daily basis at no charge.

In addition to the clinical benefits provided by pharmacy students, there are multiple published studies on cost-avoidance outcomes that have shown the economic benefits of having pharmacy students present. According to an analysis, each pharmacy student has the potential to show an average savings to their clerkship location between \$500 and \$6,000 during a month-long rotation.

Wesley Geminn, Pharm.D. – a 2011 graduate of the University of Tennessee College of Pharmacy, a former TDMHSAS pharmacy resident, and current pharmacist at WMHI – has been tasked to serve as the pharmacy students' primary preceptor at the hospital. He is currently an assistant professor at the University of Tennessee College of Pharmacy and has previously served as a pharmacy student preceptor at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute (MTMHI) in Nashville and Memphis Mental Health Institute (MMHI).



Keysha Ray, a student pharmacist from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, stands with (from left) Roger Pursley, CEO of WMHI; Wesley Geminn, Pharm.D., Clinical/Informatics Pharmacist at WMHI; and James Varner, M.D., Clinical Director at WMHI.

## Memphis Mental Health Institute Kicks Off New Customer-Focused Government Initiative



Ellouise Warr (left) and Linda Bolden are the Customer Focused Government trainers at Memphis Mental Health Institute.

Memphis Mental Health Institute (MMHI) has implemented a new mechanism for continuous focus on great customer service called "The F.A.C.E. of MMHI," which stands for "Friendly, Attitude, Connect, Enthusiasm."

The program, which took effect following the completion of staff training in December 2012, was enacted because MMHI management wanted to make sure that customer service remained a primary focus of the hospital's day-to-day operations. It is part of Governor Bill Haslam's statewide Customer-Focused Government (CFG) initiative.

CFG trainers Ellouise Warr and Linda Bolden proposed a program that would solicit input from internal and external customers through use of "nomination cards" that can be completed by any customer who would like to recognize service "above and beyond."

There are four levels of recognition for positive customer service: daily, monthly,

quarterly and annual. Daily nominations are posted in a display board in the front lobby of the hospital, and at the end of each month, a CFG committee reviews all daily nominations and selects an employee for monthly recognition. A picture of that employee and a description of their extraordinary delivery of customer service is posted in the display board.

The employees who receive monthly recognition are eligible for consideration as the quarterly "F.A.C.E. of MMHI." Their picture and description of their exemplary customer service is placed in the lobby, and the recipient receives a special designated parking space. Quarterly nominees are then eligible for nomination as Employee of the Year.

## MBMHI NURSE EXECUTIVE RECEIVES EXCELLENCE AWARD FROM TENNESSEE NURSES ASSOCIATION



**D**r. Charlynn Parson, Nurse Executive with Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute (MBMHI), has been named recipient of the 2013 Tennessee Nurses Association Award for Nursing Excellence in Administration.

“Dr. Charlynn Parson has provided outstanding leadership for our nursing department for many years,” said William Ventress, CEO of MBMHI. “She is a valued member of the team at MBMHI. Her positive attitude coupled with a wonderful sense of humor make her a joy with whom to be associated. We are extremely proud of her accomplishments.”

Dr. Parson has been with MBMHI since September 1, 1989 and was appointed Nurse Executive in May 1992. Prior to joining MBMHI, Dr. Parson worked for 25 years at Erlanger Medical Center in Chattanooga, doing

clinical practice in Pediatric, Psychiatric Nursing and Nursing Education.

Dr. Parson graduated from the Baroness Erlanger Hospital School of Nursing. She received two Bachelors of Science degrees, one in Psychology and one in Nursing, from the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga; a master’s degree from Andrews University with a concentration in Nursing Administration; and her Doctorate from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

According to TNA, the award “recognizes outstanding performance in administration, leadership which improves the quality of nursing care, and professional and community service.” The award presentation took place October 18 during the TNA & Tennessee Association of Student Nurses joint convention in Murfreesboro.

## COMMUNITY NEWS & INDUSTRY AWARDS



### McNabb Center, Foundation Name New Board Members, Officers

The Helen Ross McNabb Center has announced the board members and officers to its board of directors for the 2013-14 year. **They are:**

- Susan Conway, Chairwoman
- Wade Davies, Chairman-Elect
- Charles Finn, Secretary
- Debbie Jones, Treasurer
- Joe Connell, Past Chairman
- Dr. Harold Black
- Linda Gay Blanc
- Joe Fielden
- Mai Bell Hurley
- Ellie Kassem
- Ford Little
- Richard Maples
- Della Morrow
- Joe Petre
- James Schaad
- Ross Schram III
- Dr. Karen Sowers
- Nikitia Thompson
- Traci Topham
- Linda Vaughn
- Dedra Whitaker
- Chris Kittrell

The Helen Ross McNabb Center is a premier not-for-profit provider of behavioral health services in East Tennessee. Since 1948, the Center has provided quality and compassionate care to children, adults and families experiencing mental illness, addiction and social challenges. As the Center begins its 65th year of providing services to communities in East Tennessee, its mission remains clear and simple; “Improving the lives of the people we serve.”

For more information, visit [www.mcnabbcenter.org](http://www.mcnabbcenter.org) or call (865) 637-9711.

Since its founding in 1972, the Helen Ross McNabb Foundation has worked diligently to support the work of the Helen Ross McNabb Center. In addition to providing leadership and direction, the Foundation’s staff and 30-member volunteer board actively raise, hold, and invest funds on behalf of the Center.

#### **New board members include:**

- Debbie Brown, Raymond James
- Bob Joy, Colgate Palmolive - Retired

- Mark Kroeger, Scripps Network
- Jim Lloyd, CPA, Perishing Yoakley & Associates
- Virginia Love, Baker Donelson
- Keith Sanford, First Tennessee

#### **Newly appointed officers are:**

- George Kershaw, Chairman, D&K Management
- Jeannie Dulaney, Chairwoman-Elect, Lattimore Black Morgan & Cain
- Greg Gilbert, Treasurer, Lattimore Black Morgan & Cain
- Jenny Brock, Secretary
- Nick Chase, Past Chairman, Egerton, McAfee, Armistead & Davis

Funds raised by the Foundation over the past 40 years have contributed greatly toward the stability and growth of the Center.

For more information, visit [www.mcnabbcenter.org/foundation](http://www.mcnabbcenter.org/foundation) or call (865) 541-6684.



## Ridgeview Names Brian Buuck as New Chief Executive Officer



Brian D. Buuck

Ridgeview Behavioral Health Services recently announced the appointment of Brian D. Buuck to the position of Chief Executive Officer, effective January 1, 2014. Buuck will replace Bob Benning, who retires at the end of December after 27 years of service to Ridgeview.

In his position at Ridgeview as Chief Operating Officer for the past 10 years, Buuck was responsible for the day-to-day operations of Ridgeview's clinical and support programs and was instrumental in expanding Ridgeview's services through grants and networking with other area providers.

Buuck is credited with establishing the East Tennessee Crisis Intervention Team, which has trained more than 70 law enforcement officers from 8 counties and has been cited as one of the strongest CIT programs in Tennessee.

Through his leadership, Ridgeview has partnered with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) on a "teletreatment" pilot project that provides substance abuse treatment services using "telehealth" technology to connect remote areas. This is the first and only program in Tennessee using this technology to conduct group therapy.

In addition to his work at Ridgeview, Buuck serves on the TDMHSAS State Planning and Policy Council and is currently chairman of the Region 2 Planning and Policy Council. He is also on the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO) Board of Directors; TAMHO's Recovery and Resiliency Committee; the East Tennessee Mental Health Association Board of Directors; the Rural Appalachian Project Board of Directors; the Volunteer State Hospital Plan, Behavioral Health Advisory Board; and chairman of the East Tennessee Mental Health Association Public Policy Committee.

He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Louisiana, Lafayette, and a Master's in Social Work degree from the University of Tennessee. He is certified as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.

Ridgeview Behavioral Health Services has provided mental health services in the area for over 57 years. The main administrative and clinical offices and adult acute inpatient hospital is located in Oak Ridge, with additional clinical sites in Campbell, Morgan, Roane and Scott counties. For additional information, call (865) 482-1076 or go online to [ridgevw.com](http://ridgevw.com).

## TSPN Introduces Newsletter for Survivors of Suicide Attempts



The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) has issued the first edition

of "can you hear me?", a newsletter for survivors of suicide attempts. It is available online at [tspn.org/can-you-hear-me](http://tspn.org/can-you-hear-me).

"Can you hear me?" will include articles and poetry associated with the recovery process, as well as artwork from various sources. Each edition of the bimonthly newsletter will include information on Suicide Anonymous ([suicideanonymous.net](http://suicideanonymous.net)) and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-TALK and [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)).

The Network is actively soliciting articles and artwork for forthcoming editions. These may be submitted to the TSPN central office by email at [tspn@tspn.org](mailto:tspn@tspn.org) with the subject line "CYHM Submission"; also, feedback and suggestions can be emailed to this address with the subject line "CYHM Feedback."

## TDMHSAS Update

### SHARE YOUR NEWS AND AWARDS!

Have something interesting that you want to include in an upcoming issue of this newsletter? Send your information and/or photos (in jpeg format) to Michael Rabkin at [Michael.Rabkin@tn.gov](mailto:Michael.Rabkin@tn.gov), or call (615) 532-6597 if you have questions.



# COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

## New Employees Join Division of Planning, Research and Forensics

The Department would like to welcome Dwan Grey and Lymari Benitez to the Division of Planning, Research and Forensics.

Dwan joins the Office of Forensic Services as a Forensic Specialist. She will manage a part of the inpatient and outpatient forensic services system. Dwan has a Master's Degree in Special Education and has worked at Hermitage Hall, the Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS), the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS), and at Cigna.

Lymari joins the Office of Research to focus on children's projects. Lymari has a Doctorate in Philosophy, Environmental Psychology, and has 10 years of experience in research and evaluation. She has held research positions at Harlem Children's Zone, ActKnowledge, the Center for Human Environments and other programs.

## Pair of Nurses Join Staff at MTMHI

In May, Kathy Lewis, RN, MSN, joined the Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute as the Assistant Director of Nursing. Kathy has 25 years' experience as a Chief Nursing Officer in rural for-profit hospitals in Tennessee and Florida.



Prior to joining MTMHI, Kathy was the Chief Nursing Officer at Riverview Regional Medical Center in Carthage.

Kathy received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Tennessee Technological University in

1985 and a Master of Science in Nursing from Vanderbilt University in 1993. Kathy is a member of the American Nurses' Association and a member of Sigma Theta Tau, International Honor Society of Nursing.

Kathy has three grown sons, Steven, Brandon, and Daniel, and a 2-year-old granddaughter, Avery. She also has two cats, Chester and Bailey, and one dog, Roscoe.

Also, effective October 27, Kathy Sanchez accepted the Director of Nursing position at MTMHI. Kathy began her career in 1983 at Lakeshore Mental Health Institute as the Assistant Director of Nursing, where she worked until 1990. She spent the next 12 years in the private mental health field, serving in various nursing supervisory roles, before returning to LMHI in 2002, where she was the Interim Director of Nursing



until 2012.

Kathy received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville in 1978 and received a Masters in Public Health with a concentration in Health Planning and Administration in 1984.

In her leisure time, Kathy enjoys being outside and working with her horses. She participates in various equestrian events but especially enjoys the Hunter/Jumper classes.

## WMHI Doctor Joins Governor's Committee to Recommend Judicial Nominees

Dr. Jesse Cannon, a physician at Western Mental Health Institute in Bolivar, has been selected to serve on one of Governor Bill Haslam's selection committees to recommend nominees to fill vacancies within the State Judicial System.

"Our primary role, as a 17-member body consisting of attorneys and lay persons, is to assist the Governor in identifying highly qualified judicial nominees, to fill



vacancies in Tennessee trial courts, Court of Appeals, Court of Criminal Appeals and the Supreme Court," said Dr. Cannon.

Gov. Haslam recently issued Executive Order no. 34 establishing the Governor's Commission for Judicial Appointments, a necessary step to sustain the judicial branch of government and its operations. The Tennessee Attorney General issued an opinion confirming the governor's authority to continue making judicial appointments after the termination of the Judicial Nominating Commission on June 30.

Dr. Cannon is Board Certified in Internal Medicine. He joined WMHI as the Medical Director for the Health Care Clinic in August 2007. Originally from Haywood County, he now resides with his family in Tipton County and has been practicing medicine in West Tennessee since 1976.

"It is an honor not only for Dr. Cannon, but also a positive reflection on the quality of staff serving Western Mental Health Institute, to have one of our own as a representative selected for such a high honor," said Roger Pursley, CEO of WMHI. "I have



## Commissioner's Corner

*continued from page 12*

known Dr. Cannon for more than 30 years and I know he will serve on this committee with dignity, fairness and keeping the best interest of Tennesseans foremost in his mind as a member."

## Publication Editor and Web Manager Retires

On November 6, Lorene Lambert, Publications Editor and Web Manager, retired after 35 years of state service in order to care for her husband and father-in-law, both facing multiple health



issues. Lorene made her decision suddenly but with the same care and discipline she has used during her tenure with the Department.

Over the years – whether it was bringing new life to the newsletter and website, finding creative ways to dress up a room for employee service awards, retirements and other gatherings, or just by the countless small

things she did every day – she showed how much she cared about each employee and the people we serve. She is especially proud of her continued development of the annual "Art for Awareness" event with the Healing Arts Project for consumers in recovery and her work to preserve and protect the department's historic records and artifacts.

Please join us in wishing her all the best as she prepares for her next big adventure. Her email at home is [catlambert@icloud.com](mailto:catlambert@icloud.com), or you can call her at (615) 654-2256.

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is to plan for and promote the availability of a comprehensive array of quality prevention, early intervention, treatment, habilitation and rehabilitation services and supports based on the needs and choices of individuals and families served. For more information, visit [www.tn.gov/mental](http://www.tn.gov/mental).



**Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services**

## Update

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Contact the department's EEO/AA Coordinator at 615-532-5680, the Title VI Coordinator or the ADA Coordinator at 615-532-6700 or 1-800-560-5767 for inquiries, complaints or further information.



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