

TDMH Update

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

VOLUME 15, NO. 1

SUMMER 2011

Art for Awareness Update

Photo by Erin Plew



On May 2, 2011, over 85 consumer artists and their representatives from across the state came to the Legislative Plaza to share their works and to talk about the role that art has played in their recovery from mental illnesses and substance abuse problems. Billed as the Sixth Annual Art for Awareness, the event, sponsored by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health (TDMH) and the Middle Tennessee Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition (MTMHSAC), brought public recognition of May as National Mental Health Awareness Month. Mental



Photos by Dawn Majors

Tea Time by Barbara Wright and Abstract House by Amber Rodgers are typical of the variety of mediums and creativity fostered at peer support centers. Both women from Springfield, TN took art classes at Reconnect Clarksville.

Health Commissioner Doug Varney thanked the consumers for coming and for participating in their own recovery through art. Senator Mike Faulk also

took a few minutes to address the crowd and thank them for their wonderful work. Governor Haslam signed a proclamation for May 2 as Tennessee Mental Health Awareness Day.

Consumers were filled with pride over seeing their works on display. Whether they were once professional artists or novices who recently picked up a pencil or brush for the first time, all characterized art as something that gave their lives meaning and made them happy and calm. Several artists, who

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C O N S U M E R C O R N E R

The following is from a Behavioral Health Safety Net of TN service recipient. His name is Larry D.

On the safety net

The single most important thing the state of Tennessee has done to help meet the mental health needs of its citizens is the creation of the behavioral health safety net. For something like \$750 a year a person is eligible to receive therapy, medication management and case management services. The people on the Safety Net have no where else to go.

Without for many the options would be jail, death or the streets. NO ONE who needs mental health care should ever be told that they cost too much.

On a personal note, the Safety Net has saved me. When depression was threatening to destroy me, my life and most of the things I held dear, it offered me somewhere to go, somewhere to get help. Even a \$20 co-pay would have been more than I could do. I thank God for it everyday.

The biggest fear is not mental illness. It

is in knowing that you need help, that help is available, but that you can't access it because you have no insurance or even money to pay the most minimal co-pays. It puts you in a space hard to describe. It is a space of utter terror where you are left alone and terrified of yourself and not knowing where to turn.

Many things are not what they advertise themselves to be. The Safety Net is. However you measure it you can only call it a success. It saves lives and families. It makes Tennessee a better place to be. Thanks to everyone who is part of it. ■

Governor Haslam Signs “I Hate Meth” Bill

On June 6, Gov. Bill Haslam signed into law a comprehensive bill structured to combat the problem of methamphetamine manufacturing and use in Tennessee. Last year, law enforcement officials seized a record 2,008 meth labs in Tennessee.

“This bill helps us to confront Tennessee’s meth problem head on and is a comprehensive approach to addressing a serious problem in our state,” Haslam said.

Many of the key provisions of the law take effect July 1, 2011. The legislation is designed to tackle Tennessee’s meth problem in a variety of ways:

- It increases the penalty for making meth in the presence of children;
- tracks the sale of products containing pseudoephedrine, a key ingredient in making meth;
- makes that sales information available promptly to law enforcement;

- makes it easier to prosecute those who purchase pseudoephedrine products at different times; and places for the purpose of exceeding the allowable amount, or through use of false identification;
- imposes minimum mandatory fines on those offenders.

Haslam also announced the availability of over \$1 million to assist in meth lab cleanup. Working with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI), the Tennessee Meth Task Force will purchase special storage containers and additional supplies for the disposal of meth waste. The containers will be placed at secure locations across the state.

The state of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) has also committed a \$200,000 grant to the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security to fund a targeted communication campaign to educate and warn citizens of the consequences of violating the new law, specifically making meth in front of children and purchasing pseudoephedrine for non-medical or illegal purposes. ■

THE NEXT DOOR CHATTANOOGA OPENS IT’S DOORS



U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder speaks at Next Door’s grand opening in Chattanooga.

On May 25, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder along with Director of The White House Office of National Drug Policy, Gil Kerkowske joined state and local officials in Chattanooga for the grand opening of The Next Door’s new facility in Chattanooga. The Next Door facility ministers to women who have been recently been released from jail or prison and is a unique collaboration between public and private sectors.

Commissioner Derrick Schofield of the Tennessee Department of Correction, Chairman Charles Traughber of the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole, and Commissioner Doug Varney of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health also spoke during the Grand Opening ceremony about the important work of addressing the needs of female offenders reentering the community. ■

HASLAM’S BUDGET AMENDMENT increases state funding of mental health services

Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam filed an amendment with the General Assembly that adjusted next year’s budget proposal to account for new estimates on increased state revenues. The supplemental appropriations amendment (SB2090/HB2139) included funding for programs not included in the governor’s budget proposal back in March.

“I am pleased that because of increased revenue collections my administration is able to make strategic investments in valuable programs to assist some of Tennessee’s most vulnerable citizens,” Haslam said. “This budget amendment improves our original proposal not only with funds for key projects and services, but we also continue to reduce spending and preserve our savings.”

The budget amendment provides the Tennessee Department of Mental Health with \$1.9 million in grant funds for uninsured inpatient mental health treatment services at several private psychiatric hospitals in East Tennessee.

“This budget amendment will help cover the cost of treating uninsured mentally ill patients locally rather than sending them to Lakeshore Mental Health Institute in Knoxville,” said Tennessee Department of Mental Health Commissioner Doug Varney. “Such funding will allow these private hospitals to continue to serve many uninsured residents closer to their homes and families.” ■

50 Years at Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute

In August of 1955, Governor Frank Clement received three letters of great importance to the Tennessee Department of Mental Health—one from the President of the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce; one from the County Judge of Hamilton County, and one from the Mayor of Chattanooga. Each had the same message:



“The governments of the City of Chattanooga and Hamilton County have jointly offered to the State of Tennessee, for the construction and operation of a new state mental hospital, clear title to a site located within Moccasin Bend of the Tennessee River containing between 800 to 1000 acres.”

“In addition, the City of Chattanooga has offered to provide adequate fire and police protection and make available the use of a modern sewage disposal plant. Hamilton County has offered to construct and maintain a modern access highway to the site.”

“If the State of Tennessee should accept this offer, the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce, through its Health and Sanitation Committee, will continue to exert its best efforts to stimulate and develop throughout the Chattanooga-Hamilton County area full community acceptance and support of the program of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health....”

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9TH ANNUAL TENNESSEE DISABILITY MEGA CONFERENCE



On June 2, Commissioner Varney participated in a Q&A roundtable discussion among a panel of experts as part of the 9th Annual Tennessee Disability MegaConference, which is the largest disability conference in the state. The panel included Commissioner Henry of the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Carrie Hobbs-Guiden, Executive Director of the Arc-Tennessee, Tom Hannon, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation for Tennessee's Division of Rehabilitation Services, and many other notable experts from across the state.

The goal of the conference is to bring together individuals with disabilities, family members, and professionals to share best practices, provide training, and inspire innovation among attendees.

Before an audience of several hundred, the panelists responded in detail to questions posed by conference attendees. Topics ranged from improving employment opportunities to better collaboration among government agencies and other service providers. It was an informative discussion and beneficial for attendees and panelists alike. ■

TDMH Housing Project is the focus of a story for North Carolina Public Radio



As part of a North Carolina Public Radio series on mental health issues in that state, TDMH's Creating Homes Initiative (CHI) was highlighted for its effectiveness in creating housing opportunities, including home ownership, for Tennesseans living with mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders. The story focused on Clinton Toy, who became a homeowner about 6 years ago and then enjoyed the longest period of his adult life without a psychiatric hospitalization. When his home was flooded in the historic Nashville flood of 2010, he suffered a relapse, but is now back at work and spoke in his now-repaired home about how keeping and taking care of his house motivated him to want to leave the hospital as soon as possible.

The story also described how over 9,800 housing opportunities have been created since Assistant Commissioner Marie Williams began CHI in 2000. This has been accomplished by leveraging over \$400 million from a variety of federal, local, private, and state funding sources. State mental health funds account for about \$25 million or 6% of that total. These community housing options have contributed to available beds across the state's Regional Mental Health Institutes despite reductions in the number of beds in these hospitals.

The series closed with Louetta Hix*, Consumer Housing Specialist in Nashville, describing the importance of supportive housing in her personal recovery. In the broadcast, she stated, “If you had told me (in 1994) that I would ever have (a full-time job and) a home of my own that I owned, I wouldn't have believed you, and it would've scared me to death. But I had other people who held hope for me. When you can't hold it for yourself, someone can hold it for you. The mental health system's responsibility is to hold hope for people who cannot hold it for themselves.” You can read segments of the story at <http://wunc.org/programs/voices/mental-health-disorder/>

**Louetta Hix is the brain-child of Art for Awareness, hosted annually by TDMH and MTMHSAC. Her creative concept and promotion of the consumer arts program has been recognized nationally and by the Governor's office.*

My Health, My Choice, My Life Featured at SAMHSA Forum

Three Consumer Leaders from Middle Tennessee recently represented the *My Health, My Choice, My Life* program at SAMHSA's 1st Annual Consumer Leadership Forum in Washington D.C. on July 7-8. The theme of the forum was "Leadership for the 21st Century and Beyond" which provided opportunities for leadership



development, skill building, networking, and peer-to-peer learning across Mental Health Transformation Grant projects. The three Consumer Leaders who attended the forum were Middle Tennessee's two Peer Wellness Coaches, Centerstone's Michael Beadle and Michelle Roller, and Ed Rothstein from Volunteer. ■

Grant Lawrence named Director of Communications for TDMH

Grant Lawrence, a Franklin, Tennessee native, serves as the Director of Communications for the department. Lawrence is a 2007 graduate of Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL (BA in English Literature and History) and spent two years teaching in Chicago and Guatemala City, Guatemala respectively. He most recently served as a legislative assistant in the Tennessee General Assembly. Contact him at Grant.Lawrence@tn.gov or at (615) 532-6597. ■



Art for Awareness...cont.

have participated in previous Art for Awareness events, spoke about the surprise of finding their work had value as people sometimes purchased their pieces. Most who participated live on fixed incomes and are able to obtain supplies through art classes offered by the peer support centers in their towns. In order to help them obtain more art supplies, Jerry's Art-A-Rama and Plaza Art of Nashville contributed more than 100 door prizes, including everything from watercolor sets and sketch books to brush sets and three dimensional models.

The works brought that day were on exhibit in the Legislative Plaza hallway through mid July. From this exhibit, 15 works will be selected to hang in a rotating exhibit of consumer art for one year in the Tennessee Department of Mental Health's Third Floor Conference Room. In addition, all of the works presented in the plaza exhibit will be placed in an online TDMH gallery at www.tn.gov/mental/ in August.

For more information about the works and the Art for Awareness program, contact Lorene Lambert in the TDMH Office of Communications at (615) 253-4812 or at Lorene.Lambert@tn.gov. For more information about other mental health recovery exhibit locations in Middle Tennessee via the Transforming Lives Through Art program, contact the MTMHSAC at (615) 463-6665 or email janebaxter@comcast.net. ■

50 Years at Moccasin Bend...cont.

Although the letter contained just four paragraphs, it was the climax of many years of planning and development of programs for persons struggling with mental illness in the Hamilton County area. Although the community benefitted from the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Guidance Clinic as well as a new psychiatric wing of Baroness Erlanger Hospital, the people of Chattanooga also saw a need for a larger mental health complex. At that time they were being served by Eastern State Psychiatric Hospital in Knoxville (now Lakeshore Mental Health Institute). Eastern State served 37 counties and over 40 percent of the State's population. The residents of Chattanooga saw the need for a new hospital in East Tennessee and were willing to make great sacrifices to get such a facility.

One piece of land lay untouched, a wide bend in the form of an Indian moccasin in the Tennessee River, an area containing over 1,000 acres of rolling farm and woodland, untouched by commercial and industrial encroachments, yet immediately across the river from the city of Chattanooga. The size of that site, its union of rural and urban advantages in a readily accessible suburban location, and the privacy afforded by its natural water boundaries, combined to meet every requirement the community had established.

In donating this site, the governments and citizens of Chattanooga and Hamilton County offered one of their most prized real estate assets to the higher service of mankind.

This is the background for what was then know as Moccasin Bend Psychiatric Hospital. In 1961, a modern 150-bed facility opened to serve as an intensive treatment hospital serving 19 counties. Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute was dedicated on May 26, 1961, and officially opened to receive patients on July 5, 1961.

Fifty years later, the staff and friends of Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute collaborate again with the Chattanooga community to commemorate the hospital's golden anniversary. The planned celebration seeks to include many of the former staff who dedicated their careers to serving persons with mental illness at Moccasin Bend, as well as revisit the Institute's "roots" for newer friends and employees. The half-century legacy of the hospital is a springboard for state-of-the-art services and treatment for Tennesseans in southeast Tennessee for many years to come. ■

Suicide and The Black Church Conference Is A Beacon of Hope

Studies in recent years show that African-American males, between the ages of 18-35, are among the fastest-growing population at risk for suicide. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia, reports that more African-American women attempt suicide, but more of their male counterparts actually succeed. In response to this alarming set of statistics, Dr. William M. Young and co-founder and Pastor, Dianne P. Young, of the Healing Center Full Gospel Baptist Church, began a conference five years ago to address the fact that the African-American community often continued to say that blacks did not commit suicide.

According to Dr. William Young, “In generations past, we didn’t resort to suicide—not like the alarming numbers we are seeing today, especially among our young people....The conference has raised awareness in our churches and community about this very disturbing issue.”



Photo by Dominique Talley

Scott Ridgway, Executive Director of TSPN (left), and Madge Tullis, Chair of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network Advisory Committee (right), pose with Pastor Dianne Young and Bishop William Young of the Healing Center as they are thanked for conceiving and hosting five years of conferences on suicide prevention in the African-American community.

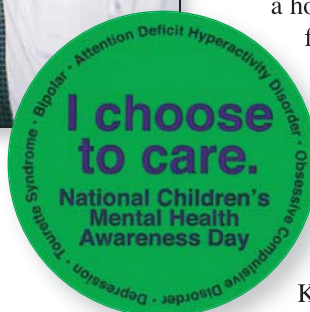
Although past conferences focused on suicide as “a silent storm,” this year’s fifth annual conference in June, hosted by UT-Memphis and the Healing Center, used the theme that “The Sun Will Shine

Again” to call attention to the positive steps faith based leaders are making in opening up church and community dialogue about suicide.

The Rev. Gerald Gurley, pastor of Atlanta’s historic Providence Missionary Baptist Church delivered the luncheon keynote address. TDMH Commissioner, Doug Varney, also spoke at the conference. Members of the department’s Clinical Leadership and Mental Health Services divisions, including Services’ Assistant Commissioner Marie Williams and Leadership’s Director of Education and Development Gwen Hamer participated in the conference. Lygia Williams, also of TDMH Mental Health Services, served on a SAMSHA panel and gave a presentation with conference youth that culminated in an entertaining presentation of hip hop lyrics. Dominique Talley, a leadership intern from Nashville, served as TDMH Conference assistant and photographer. ■



As part of National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day, TDMH employees were asked to wear green stickers which read “I choose to care.” Deputy Commissioner Bob Grunow is shown with former Communications Director Sarah Lingo and Medical Director Dr. Howard Burley.



On May 7, The Whole Kids Festival was held at the Bicentennial Mall as part of Children’s Mental Health Week, a nationally recognized and observed occurrence. For the last 11 years, a coalition of child serving departments, agencies, and other leaders in children’s mental health have planned to use a week in May to get information to the public about issues surrounding children’s mental health.

This year the coalition agreed on the name Whole Kids Festival and developed a logo to be used in the future to plan events for Children’s Mental Health week. The coalition felt this gave a unique identity to the planned activities in middle Tennessee. The event included entertainment by local youth, food vendors, a hot air balloon, face painting, games, and lots of fun for families and young people.

The festival also provided information about the health of the child for parents and care givers. The message that the coalition wanted to generate was that mental health and physical health are equally important to overall health. The Children’s Mental Health Week Coalition plans on repeating the Whole Kid Festival each year to celebrate Children’s Mental Health, reduce stigma, and increase awareness. ■

COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

John Arredondo Named Assistant Commissioner of Hospital Services

In May, the Department of Mental Health welcomed John R. Arredondo as the Department of Mental Health's Assistant Commissioner of Hospital Services.



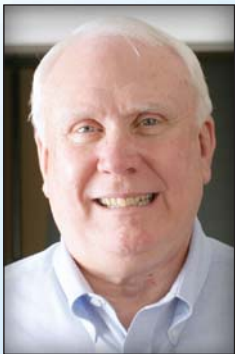
John R. Arredondo

The re-establishment of this assistant commissioner position within the department reflects Commissioner Varney's commitment to the delivery of quality inpatient services and effective management at our State regional mental health hospitals.

John's professional experience includes administering complex state government programs, business development in both the private and public sector, strategic planning, and problem-solving initiatives. He has accreditation experience with JCAHO and CARF standards, and management experience in corrections healthcare and hospital services.

John previously served as the Director of Institutions for the Texas Youth Commission as well as the cabinet-level position of Executive Director of the Arizona Department of Youth Treatment and Rehabilitation. More recently he has served as Director, Business Development Behavioral Health at Mountain States Health Alliance in Johnson City, TN, and as Director of Quality, Accreditation/Licensure at Frontier Health in Gray, TN. He holds a Bachelor's degree in sociology and psychology and a Master's degree in social work. ■

Mack Rhea Retires



Mack Rhea, a career state employee with 43 years of service, retired as Assistant Commissioner for Administrative Services for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health on June 14th. We appreciate all of his contributions to the department and the people we serve, and wish him well in his future endeavors. Upon Mack's departure, Deputy Commissioner Bob Grunow has assumed the responsibilities of that position. ■



UPDATE

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