



# Tennessee Public Health Association Newsletter

[www.TNpublichealth.org](http://www.TNpublichealth.org)



## President's Message

Ami Mitchell  
President, 2015-16

There will be several people who will have trouble believing this statement, but as I write my first newsletter message as TPHA President, I find myself at a loss for words! Yes, I know it is hard to believe that I am struggling to find something to say. It doesn't happen to me very often and usually the only time it does is when I am feeling overwhelmed. So let me begin with saying I am overwhelmed! Being elected TPHA President is a great privilege and I do feel an overwhelming sense of responsibility to serve this wonderful Association in a manner that will honor those who have served before and encourage all those who continue to work so hard to make TPHA all that it is. Thank you for this opportunity to serve in this way.

I know I am not alone in the "feeling overwhelmed" category today. I have a favorite saying that is a quote from John Wesley. I have had a poster of it framed and hanging over my desk for years. It states, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can." This saying defines public health for me. For those of us in public health there is really no limit to the opportunity for meaningful work. This includes the work we do in clinics, labs, offices and class rooms as well as in communities and state and national platforms. We are some busy folks and when we do our job well, people are healthy and prosperous. This is a very gratifying pay off, but one that typically does not come with a great deal of accolades or headlines. So, I want to make sure that I use part of my space here to express appreciation for the public health workforce. I am convinced that there is not a

a more dedicated, qualified and hard working group of professionals in existence. Thank you for inspiring each other to continue to protect, promote and improve the health of all in Tennessee.

As you read the pages of this newsletter you will see the evidence of this hard work and success of many of the individuals who make up the body of the Tennessee Public Health Association. I hope you take some time to review the 2015 TPHA Award winners and read all the great articles that have been submitted from across the state. I promise you will have a bolstered sense of pride and energy when you take in all that has been and is being accomplished. It's, well, overwhelming!

**The Tennessee Public Health Association  
extends a very special**

**THANK YOU**

To the  
**Tennessee Department of Health**  
and

To the following organizations for supporting the  
2015 conference and other public health activities  
throughout the year

TPHA Gold Agency Membership

**LIFEPATH**

Tennessee Public Health Training Center

UnitedHealthcare

TPHA Bronze Agency Membership

Belmont University

College of Health Sciences and Nursing

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee

Pfizer Vaccines

## FOCUS ON PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES

### Jackson Men's Health Summit Raises Awareness for Men's Health

*Submitted by: Mike Leventhal  
Executive Director, Tennessee Men's Health Network*

The month of September has been recognized as Prostate Cancer Awareness Month and Tennessee Men's Health Network (TMHN) hosted the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Jackson Men's Health Summit to raise awareness for prostate cancer and other critical men's health concerns. Around 50 attendees (mainly men) gathered at LIFT Wellness Center to hear from experts regarding the importance of regular exercise, tips on proper nutrition, disease management, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Urologist Tim Davenport, M.D. of The Jackson Clinic was the featured speaker and hosted an interactive presentation on prostate health, including prostate cancer, prostatitis, and benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH).

"Its TMHN's mission to host programs such as the Jackson Men's Health Summit to make families aware of the health needs of men and boys, explains Mike Leventhal, Executive Director of TMHN. "Tennessee men live shorter, less-healthy lives than women. It is critical for families to be mindful of a man's specific health needs as we age and the importance of living a healthy lifestyle, especially regular physician visits."

The Summit wrapped up with a discussion featuring Mike Leventhal and state Representative Jimmy Eldridge on ways to effectively advocate elected officials and policy makers. Everyone agreed that those that hold elected office need to hear from their constituents on the issues that are critical and directly affect people, especially healthcare related issues. Representative Eldridge urged those in attendance to make their voices heard, but do not wait until the General Assembly reconvenes. His advice is to reach out to your elected representatives "early and often" on issues that are important to you.

Events like this one have been hosted in Nashville, Memphis, Johnson City, and Jackson. TMHN is always interested in hosting similar events to raise awareness for men's health in your specific region. Please contact Mike Leventhal, [mikeL@menshealthnetwork.net](mailto:mikeL@menshealthnetwork.net) if your region/county would be willing to collaborate with us to provide positive health education and promotion for males within the community.

### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

*Submitted by: Rebekah English, Committee Chair*

**Active 886**

**Life 149**

**Total 1,035 individual members**

**Agency Membership 121**

**Winner of \$50 for new member drawing: Claudia Lopez**

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## 2015 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Submitted by: Carrie Thomas, Chair, 2015 Awards Committee

### R.H. Hutcheson, Sr., M.D., Award



With over 40 years of public health experience, this year's RH Hutcheson Sr. MD award recipient is a career public health nurse with genuine concern for patients, staff and her community. Over the course of her long career, she has graciously served Public Health and her community in a variety of roles and is tirelessly committed to providing patients and staff with a quality standard of holistic care. The nominee also worked for Mountain States Health Alliance Ask-A-Nurse for more than 20 years and has served as a Red Cross Volunteer Nurse in Disaster Health Services and was even recognized for her outstanding leadership.

In addition to her daily responsibilities, she also contributes to the development of the future public health workforce by serving as a preceptor for Masters Level Nursing Students, always encouraging them to pursue a career in Public Health. Her work with students has resulted in the recruitment and retention of countless nurses in the region. She is well respected by her colleagues and some noted that she has a true "public health heart", striving to serve her employees and clients with the best possible care and provision of resources. This year's recipient has worked with many community organizations to assure that Public Health functions are a viable component of the overall healthcare picture. She has worked hard to develop relationships and partnerships to encourage a collaborative effort to accomplish many health care objectives. One example is the close working relationship that she has developed with city and county school officials to plan and implement school located flu vaccine clinics. Compassionate, Dedicated and committed to the community, this year's recipient is very deserving of this award.

TPHA is pleased to announce that the 2015 R.H. Hutcheson Sr. MD award is presented to **Ms. Amanda McElyea**.

### Alex B. Shipley, M.D. Award



This year's recipient of the Alex B. Shipley MD award has been described as a public health professional who is dedicated to the health and welfare of women in East Tennessee. She has held several different roles during her public health career. As part of an effort to decrease the incidence of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome, she co-founded a successful Voluntary Long-Acting Reversible Contraception Clinic for at-risk women in her region. After just one year, it has reduced births complicated by NAS in this population and has become a model for similar programs throughout the state.

Additionally, she has developed excellent working relationships with community partners to promote awareness for cancer prevention through improved educational and screening opportunities. To say that she is passionate about public health would be an understatement. As one colleague noted, "the wonderful thing about her is that her energy is infectious, not overwhelming. She can motivate a team, get the job done, and still have time to comfort a client or coworker". She is an untiring advocate for public health – she continues to expose future family physicians to the option of a career in public health and due to her dedication, many are more likely to consider this as a career option. Her dedication and commitment are admired and respected by those she works with.

It is an honor to present this year's Alex B. Shipley MD award to **Ms. Danni Lambert**.

## Workgroup of the Year Award



This year's Public Health Work Group Award is presented to a group of public health professionals who are described as going above and beyond assigned tasks, taking personal risks to assure that others needs are met. In February of 2015, their skills were tested as their community was struck by a severe winter storm. Regional staff responded by traveling in dangerous conditions, assisted in managing a norovirus outbreak and managed shelter residents with various needs. They worked tirelessly to assure that those in need were served to the best of their ability, oftentimes going above and beyond everyday responsibilities. The region utilized 94 team members for 11 days working around the clock. The regional staff showed great dedication and responded without hesitation to the needs of their communities even when some of their homes and families were affected by the storm.

One letter of support states that the "selfless service to the citizens of Tennessee by team members exemplifies public health at its best." It is our pleasure to award the Public Health Group Award to the **Upper Cumberland Region Staff.**

## Public Health Worker of the Year Award



This year's public health worker of the year award is presented to someone described as a dedicated public health professional who is enthusiastic and compassionate about his role. During his 23 year public health career, he has held many important roles including community health services coordinator, emergency response coordinator, county director and regional epidemiologist. In recent years, this person has been instrumental in both measles and ebola outbreaks, always willing to take on extra work responsibilities and assist others. In April 2014, he led a team of medical providers who investigated a very detailed and complicated measles outbreak. He worked with numerous hospitals, medical clinics, health departments, and infection control departments, among others. He is quick to share his knowledge and communicate with community partners on new issues that develop locally.

In addition to his daily responsibilities, he is also a Baldrige examiner as well as a 20 year member of TPHA, serving on many committees. Colleagues are quick to describe him as a great example of what a public health worker should strive to be, citing that in his role as epidemiologist, they know their region is well protected, monitored and informed when it comes to Communicable Disease.

It is a great pleasure to present this year's public health worker of the year award to **Mr. Kevin Morris.**

## Partners and Leadership (PAL) Individual Award



Through his work with the judicial system, this year's recipient began to notice a pattern indicative of a growing public health problem, substance abuse. In an effort to address this issue, he co-founded the 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial Drug Recovery Court, State of Tennessee in 2009. Through this court, offenders are provided a quality therapeutic community that promoted positive change in criminal and addictive behavior for the purpose of transforming offenders into positive, contributing members of our communities. Additionally, he has provided instrumental leadership in the establishment of the 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial Recovery Services, Inc. which provides residential treatment for pregnant women in recovery. One letter of support notes that "he is a trailblazer among his judicial colleagues and is the first sitting judge to incorporate mandatory education on NAS and family

planning into sentencing for all drug charge defendants."

He has also been instrumental in the start up and sustaining of the Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome/Voluntary Long Acting Reversible Contraception program which began as a pilot process in 2013. Colleagues believe that "he is a true advocate for the babies and families that are impacted by drug abuse and addiction". Another supporter summarized it perfectly: "Our communities, region and state are stronger and more babies are born healthier because of his passionate commitment to our partnership and our mutual goal of eliminating NAS."

TPHA is pleased to announce that this year's Partnership and Leadership Individual award is presented to **Judge Duane Slone**.

## Partners and Leadership (PAL) Group Award



This year's Partner and Leadership group award is presented to a group comprised of community leaders and volunteers who work to steer financial support to charitable, educational, and scientific projects designed to improve community health. In the last two years, they have funded projects to provide medical transportation for veterans and counseling services for over 1500 veterans, soldiers and their families. In addition to funding projects that treat disease and increase access to care, the group has also established policies to fund projects addressing behaviors and wellness, awarding grants for community gardens and nutrition education projects.

Since 2009, this group has awarded 60 grants designed to improve health in Montgomery County that total over 4.8 Million dollars. Grant

recipients and community partners are highly complimentary, noting that this "philanthropic organization has truly set the tone for a happy, safe and healthy community" and that "while of course the funds received are the most important part, the leaders that head up this foundation are the very best the community offers – and are committed to seeing that these grants have a long lasting impact on the local community.

It is a great pleasure to announce that this year's Partner and Leadership Group Award goes to the **Clarksville-Montgomery County Community Health Foundation**.

## Distinguished Service Award



The TPHA Distinguished Service Award is selected by the TPHA Board of Directors and is presented to an individual who has made significant contributions to the Association.

This year's recipient has been a member of TPHA for 11 years and has been active in numerous committees, including serving as Chair of the Silent Auction Committee for the past six years. All monies raised through the annual silent auctions go to fund scholarships and she works tirelessly to encourage donations to increase the number awarded each year. She is very persuasive and has even been known to get SEC coaches to sign items to

increase their value!! During her tenure as Silent Auction Chair, over \$29,000 has been raised for scholarships.

TPHA is very proud to present the 2015 TPHA Distinguished Service Award to **Evelyn Vaillencourt**, Epidemiologist in the Upper Cumberland Region.

## Poster Presentation Award



Matt McDaniel, TPHA President, presents the award for Outstanding Poster to Gererosa Kakoti, PhD, Tennessee Department of Health for her poster:

“Location Matters: Differences in Birth Outcomes between Rural and Urban Mothers”

## SECTION AWARD WINNERS

### NURSING SECTION AWARDS



Shown on the left is Kathy Nelson, recipient of the Nursing Section Award for Excellence in Nursing Administration. On the right is Renee Demonbreun winner of the award for Excellence in Nursing, Direct Nursing Service.

Kathy Nelson is currently serving as the Regional Nursing Director for the Tennessee Department of Health's East Region comprised of 15 counties in East Tennessee. She started her public health nursing career as a Public Health Nurse 2 in January 1999 and worked in this capacity for four years until her promotion to Nursing Supervisor in May of 2003. Kathy was again promoted, to the position of Regional Director of Nursing in April of 2012, where she has consistently embodied excellence in public health nursing administration. Her superior nursing practice and judgement, organizational skills, character, dedication and passion for nursing practice have set her apart at the state level as well. For these reasons, Kathy is a role model for public health nursing across the state and is a frequently consulted resource among her DON peers.

Renee Demonbreun, APN, Rutherford County Health Department, not only offers a plethora of knowledge to anyone who is willing to listen, but genuinely cares about each patient and individual interaction. Renee remains up to date regarding all clinical knowledge; her love however resides in Women's Health/Family Planning. Renee

goes above and beyond patient care as she extends her clinical experience and knowledge to all clinical staff, regardless of obstacles. Renee is an unspoken hero as she very rarely acknowledges her contribution to our state. She remains active in the military community, the healthcare community, and the local community. Renee deserves the Direct Nursing Service award as she continues to practice as a Role Model practitioner. Renee encourages, supports, and assists in the bettering of all patients, clinicians, and communities effortlessly.

### HEALTH EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

**Rutherford County Health Department Health Educator LaShan Dixon** received the 'Health Educator of the Year' award at the Health Promotion sectional meeting at the TPHA Conference. Presenting the award is Suzee Sanders, Section Chair.

Dixon has contributed toward several grants the health department has received including the Workplace Fitness Mini-Grant, Partners in Faith and Health with Minority Communities grant, Public Health: Partnering to Promote Primary Prevention with Minority Communities grant and the Tennessee Tobacco Settlement grant.



### Nutrition Worker of the Year Award

Haley Colvin, MA, RD, CLC, is a Registered Dietitian serving Franklin and Grundy counties and is the Designated Breastfeeding Expert as well as providing nutrition services for WIC. In 2013, she became a Baldrige examiner and has assisted in writing the Level 1 and Level 2 applications for Grundy County. The Level 3 application was completed and submitted in July 2015. Additionally, Haley developed a customer satisfaction card for all patient visits in Grundy County which was also adopted by the Statewide WIC Workgroup for testing in two other locations.

In 2014, Haley received the SERO Heroes Above and Beyond award. She has been described as an employee who is always willing to assist in whatever is needed from clinic overflow to PPI projects to giving her room key (TPHA) to a BF mom to nurse her infant! She truly exemplifies a team player.



### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SECTION

#### Hall of Fame Inductees



Lowe Wilkins accepts the plaque recognizing Dr. Monroe T. Morgan as a 2015 Hall of Fame inductee from Mark Houser.



Charles Wood, accepts the plaque recognizing his 2015 induction into the Environmental Hall of Fame from Mark Houser.



Accepting the Hall of Fame plaque recognizing Sammy Smith as a 2015 Hall of Fame inductee is Carter Garner.

### ENVIRONMENTAL SECTION AWARDS



ETSU Department of Environmental Health received the 2015 Educator of the Year presented by the Tennessee Environmental Health Association. Mark Houser presents the award to Dr. Tricia Metts, Associate Professor.



Henry Fitzhugh is the 2015 recipient of the Lynn B. Hearn award. Larry Manis presents the award to Pamela Wilson who accepts the award for Mr. Fitzhugh.

## PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE AWARDS

### 20 YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

The following individuals were recognized for 20 years of service to public health: Bradley G. Dodd, Pattie J. Kiddy, Lori J. Lemaster, Robbie L. Robertson, Mica L. Rudd, Diana L. Saia, Melissa D. Wolford, Judith Ann Woodward

### 30 YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Individuals receiving recognition for 30 years service were: Helen S. Brakebill, Charles L. Hamilton; Connie S. Ingram, Belinda Johnson, Leanne K. Kelley, Leann W. Neal, Terri R. Thacker and Pamela M. Warren.

### 40 YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Also recognized for 40 years service was Faye Barrett who was not in attendance at the annual meeting.



TPHA President Matt McDaniel presents Leslie Humphreys with her 40 year service plaque.



TPHA President Matt McDaniel presents Larry Manis with his 40 year service plaque.

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## REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Submitted by: Karen Lynn, Chair



Incoming President Ami Mitchell presents the President's Acrylic to Matt McDaniel, Immediate Past President, with thanks from the Association for his leadership during the 2014-2015 year.

**Karen Lynn, Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee announced the following election results for the 2015-2016 year.**

**President-Elect - Dr. Paul Erwin  
Vice President/East TN - Erica Wilson  
Vice President/Middle TN - Tammy Mansfield  
Vice President/West TN - Danna Taylor  
Board Reps/West TN - Emily Rushing  
Tyler Zerwekh**

**A complete listing of the Board of Directors,  
Committee Chairs and Section Chairs is  
available on the website at  
[www.tnpublichealth.org](http://www.tnpublichealth.org)**



Shown left to right: President Elect, Dr. Paul Erwin; West TN Board Rep Emily Rushing; West TN Vice President, Danna Taylor, President Ami Mitchell; Middle TN Vice President, Tammy Mansfield; and Immediate Past President, Matt McDaniel.

## REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

Submitted by: Glenn Czarnecki, Chair

### MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS:

Joe Covington, retired Director of Food and General Sanitation Division, died on January 22, 2015  
 Debbie Hinkle, retired PHOA, Sevier County Health Department, died September 8, 2014  
 Robert O. Ingraham, retired West Tennessee Dental Director, died December 24, 2014  
 Ronald King, DMD, retired dentist with Hancock & Hawkins County Health Departments, died March 6, 2015  
 Sarah R. Miller, retired Nurse Supervisor, Dyer County Health Department, died November 16, 2014  
 Dorcie Lee Yates, retired District Supervisor for Division of General Environmental Health, died June 25, 2015

### RETIREMENT RESOLUTIONS:

LaVerne Bawcum, RN, Jackson/Madison County Health Department retired July 31, 2015, after 37 years service  
 Patty Campbell, Nutritionist, Anderson County Health Department., retired July 1, 2015, after 36 years service  
 Elane Childress, RN 3, Gibson County Health Department., retired February 5, 2015, after 24 years service  
 Brent Hager, Bureau Director, Metro Public Health Department, retired February 20, 2015, after 45 years service  
 Chuck Hamilton, Acct. 3, Upper Cumberland Regional Health Office., retired May 9, 2015, after 30 years service  
 Lloyd Roberts, Pub. Hlth. Rep., Chattanooga/Hamilton Co. Hlth Dept., retired Feb. 17, 2015, after 35 years service  
 Marti Smith, Director, Admin. Serv., Chattanooga/Hamilton Co. Hlth. Dept., retired June 30, 2014 after 33 years service  
 Chris Taylor, Bureau Director, Metro Public Health Department., retired June 5, 2015, after 31 years service  
 Glenda Taylor, PHOS, Carroll County Health Department., retired Feb. 3, 2015 after 42 years service

## FUN AND FITNESS WINNER



Joey Smith, Chair of the Fun and Fitness Committee, presents the "coveted" Spirit Stick to the West Tennessee Region.



President Matt McDaniel shows off his beading handiwork with the shirt he decorated for the President's Reception.

## REGIONAL REPORTS

### KNOX COUNTY REGION

#### **Worksite Wellness: Setting Examples in Public Health**

Khrysta Baig, MSPH, RD, LDN, CHES, Nutritionist, Knox County Health Department

Worksite wellness is one way for public health establishments to transition from being agencies which promote health to being agencies that are an example of it. A good worksite wellness program addresses the policy, systems and environmental changes needed to promote health in the workplace. At the Knox County Health Department (KCHD), we use all three to encourage our employees to be well.

Policies give strength and form to our efforts. A healthy meeting policy establishes that foods purchased using KCHD or grant funds must meet certain healthful standards. A healthy vending policy reinforces our commitment to healthy eating by establishing that 100% of the foods stocked in our vending machines must be compliant with the policy's nutrition guidelines. It also establishes a routine for evaluating the machine contents for compliance and rectifying non-compliant items. Another policy allows employees to have a flexible work schedule, flexing up to 45 minutes per day with supervisor approval, so they can exercise at their convenience. This allows employees to attend a fitness class onsite, go to the gym or do other exercise when it is best for them. Employees who use active transportation, such as riding their bike or walking, to commute to and from work are able to flex their schedules, as well.

Systems changes have been made to encourage healthy habits and health awareness. At KCHD, three bikes, purchased with grant funds, have changed how some employees get to meetings. At the county level, employees who utilize our insurance are encouraged and financially incentivized to complete a health risk assessment (HRA) each year during their physical. This HRA gives employees and their medical care providers a yearly look at individual risks and a starting point for interventions.

Finally, we changed our environment to encourage physical activity and nutrition. Our fitness room includes weights, stability balls, bosu balls, resistance bands and other equipment. Employees can use exercise DVDs from our library to guide their workout. Point of decision signs encourage employees to use the stairs instead of the elevator. Workplace garden plots allow employees to be active while increasing their access to fresh produce. Recently, we have held two "salad swaps" where employees bring their favorite salad ingredients for a salad potluck. The salad swaps encourage employees to socialize and relax while getting them into the habit of using our indoor and outdoor eating areas.

If you are interested in making worksite wellness a part of your approach to improving health, we encourage you to start a wellness committee. If you are at a small worksite, meeting informally may work best. At a larger worksite, formalizing the committee with bylaws and clear leadership can be beneficial. Pick committee members who will be champions for the wellness cause and work to gain support from administration. As you roll out your initiatives, remember that employees should never be coerced into participating in a wellness program. Your institution can become an example of health by offering worksite wellness opportunities and encouraging participation.

Dr. Martha Buchanan, Director of the Knox County Health Department; Mark Miller, Deputy Director; and Dan Proctor, Graphic Designer



## EAST TENNESSEE REGION

### Morgan and Roane County Health Departments

Submitted by: Laura Conner, County Director



Morgan County Health Department, in partnership and cooperation with Morgan County Schools, Coordinated School Health (Director, Ms. Rosa Dotson) and students from the Career and Technical Center (Welding Instructor, Mr. Tim Steelman), are working to increase awareness of the dangers of tobacco use among youth in the community. In this two year classroom project partially supported by Tobacco Settlement Funds using the Michigan Model curriculum, students designed and constructed “Mr. Steelfeathers,” a 10 foot tall rooster who informs viewers that tobacco addiction is “nothing to crow about.” “Mr. Steelfeathers” feathers are made from smokeless tobacco cans that were collected by students. He is currently on display at the Morgan County Schools Central Office, but will soon be touring the county visiting each school and many

other community events. As he tours, students and health department staff will be providing tobacco education materials to educate the community about the hazards of all types of tobacco use.

Students recently entered this project into the Skills USA competition and were awarded first prize at the TVA & I Fair in Knoxville. They will advance to a regional competition to be held in Kentucky in the spring. We are very proud of these students and the hard work that they have put into this project.

## NORTHEAST TENNESSEE REGION

### Volunteer to Save a Life – A Naloxone Pilot Project

Dr. David Kirschke, MD, Medical Director, Northeast Tennessee Regional Health Office

Drug overdose death rates have more than tripled in Tennessee since 1999, and in 2009 drug overdose surpassed motor vehicle accidents as the leading cause of injury-related death in the state. Since then rates of drug overdose deaths, more than half of which are associated with opioid pain medicines, have continued to increase. Prescription opioid abuse has especially been a problem in rural counties in Northeast, where injection drug use – a risk factor for overdose – is increasing.

Until we are able to prevent or substantially reduce opioid abuse, harm reduction strategies can help prevent the most serious outcomes. In July 2014, Tennessee became the 18th state to pass a "Good Samaritan" law to increase the availability of the lifesaving medicine naloxone, which has been used for years by emergency medical personnel, to layperson. Key provisions of the law include granting immunity from civil suit to providers who prescribe naloxone to persons at risk for opioid overdose or those who might assist in the event of an overdose. Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) has information on the law and training available online (<http://tn.gov/health/topic/information-for-naloxone>).

However, because many patients, healthcare providers, and pharmacist may be unaware of the benefits of lay administration of naloxone or the provisions of the Naloxone Rescue Act, the Northeast Regional Health Office decided to pilot a naloxone education project, *Volunteer to Save a Life*, in one county. One of the first steps was reaching out to prescribers and dispensers through continuing education conferences. However, staff quickly learned that prescribers were confused about how to prescribe – naloxone comes in a variety of formulations and is administered by various routes (eg, intramuscular inject or intranasal). Also, because of the previous low demand, pharmacies were not likely to have naloxone in stock and were unfamiliar with the product. Therefore, staff have partnered with the East Tennessee State University (ETSU) Colleges of Pharmacy and Public Health, as well as local health departments, pharmacies, and drug coalitions, to produce educational materials specific to patients, healthcare providers, and pharmacists. There are plans to make these available online for use statewide.

Currently several developments related to dispensing are helping pave the way to more widespread access to this

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life-saving medicine. Northeast has, according to provisions in the Naloxone Rescue Act, established a standing order for naloxone at local pharmacies in the region. This enables persons who would benefit from having naloxone to obtain it without a prescription from a pharmacy familiar with the product. At the same time, a national chain pharmacy, CVS, has established a standing order for naloxone at all of its stores in Tennessee. Northeast will begin to distribute information about naloxone to any interested person who presents to the Carter County Health Department beginning in October and quickly disseminate the project to other counties.

It takes many partners for *Volunteer to Save a Life*, and hopes are the helpful educational materials produced by colleagues at the ETSU College of Pharmacy will soon be available on the TDH website for use statewide.

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## SOUTHEAST TENNESSEE REGION

### Increasing Vaccine Confidence in the Southeast Region

Amanda Goodhard, Assessment and Planning Coordinator, SERO

As part of the region's ongoing PPI effort, a group at the Southeast Regional Office is trying to increase the confidence their communities have in vaccinations. Since flu season is upon us, the group is focusing on flu vaccines as they pilot the program in Marion County. Throughout the planning phase of this project, staff from the communicable disease surveillance department has worked closely with the health educators in the region to make sure we can have an impactful program targeted towards teenagers and adults.

The goal of this project is to not only educate community members but also for them to become advocates for vaccinations. One of the main aspects of this program is to work with students in the pilot county to help create an ad campaign to promote seasonal flu vaccination in the communities. The group will start by going in to the county high schools with an interactive presentation on seasonal flu to the students; the presentation will include facts about seasonal flu, herd immunity, and how the vaccine is made. Once the presentation is finished, the students will be challenged to come up with a creative and effective message, such as a meme, that can be used throughout the region not only in health departments but on social media as well. To increase student participation, the challenge will be between the rival high schools in the county. Once the students from each school submit their designs they will vote on which one they think is best. The winner will be chosen from the top designs submitted and voted on by students at all of the participating schools.

Once the pilot county has completed the program, the planning group will do an assessment to see how the program can be improved and expanded next year to include all counties in the region. The ultimate goal is for this to be an ongoing PPI project that involves students and other community groups and uses various marketing mediums to promote the flu vaccine and eventually other vaccinations offered by our county health departments.

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## MID CUMBERLAND REGION

Warner Reading Project

In December of 2014, the Mid-Cumberland Regional Office was looking for a PPI opportunity that would be impactful not only for the community, but the staff of the Regional Office. Sitting less than 5 miles away is Warner Elementary Enhanced Option School, a K-4 school in Metro Nashville. After reaching out to Warner to see how we could help, it was determined that the students could use our help in improving their reading abilities. After an eye opening presentation by several staff members of Warner, the MCRO staff was compelled to help.

In 2013-2014, Warner School did not make the benchmarks required for State testing. Their test scores in reading showed a downward trend. Many of the students begin school unprepared, usually 1-2 years behind the average student. If a student learns to read by the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, their life outcome is positively impacted. Individual attention is so important to children. Many of these children have a number of ACE's in their lives that can impact their abilities in school. ACE, Adverse Childhood Experiences, (child physical abuse, child sexual abuse, child neglect, or child emotional abuse) are the leading determinant of health and social well-being in our nation. Having a significant adult committed to helping individual students affects more than just reading scores.

In January, staff from the Mid-Cumberland Regional Health Office committed to helping Warner by

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participating in the reading clinic. Each week a tutor met with a student for 30 minutes to work on a specific reading plan following a 5-step evidenced based process. Each child began with a warm-up book and then progressed to a new book. After reading, the tutor evaluated the student's comprehension of the book. Students also worked on site words by playing games and re-writing specific sentences from the book. We had an overwhelming response to our call for volunteers. 35 Mid-Cumberland staff volunteered to participate in the reading program. Through the program we helped 22 first-third grade students enhance their reading ability. In an effort to evaluate the student's progress, each month students were tested to see if their reading level had increased. At the completion of the program, all students had progressed in their reading level after only 3 1/2 months.

Since the beginning of the program, the absentee rate for these 22 children decreased drastically. Many of the tutors have seen a positive shift in self-esteem among the readers. The success of this program was due to the commitment of our staff to each of the students. Each child looks forward to the time spent with the tutor each week. Not only are the students learning to read, but the tutors are making an impact in other aspects of their life. For this school year, 30 Mid-Cumberland staff have committed to working with 26 students. We hope to make a difference again this year!



## JACKSON-MADISON COUNTY REGIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

### *Break the Silence: Suicide Prevention Awareness*

Chelsea Brandon, BS, Community Health Development Program Director

The Jackson-Madison County Regional Health Department, West TN Regional Health Department, and the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network developed a suicide prevention campaign to raise awareness that is still much needed to reduce the mortality and morbidity resulting from suicidal behavior. In 2011, Tennessee's age-adjusted suicide rate was 14.6 per 100,000 people, translating into 938 reported suicide deaths. Encouraging people to change their perceptions and behaviors requires an approach to communication, education and awareness that goes well beyond simply posting signs or distributing brochures.

One of the major goals of the *Break the Silence for Suicide Prevention Awareness Campaign* was to strengthen communication, education, and public awareness efforts. Specific activities outlined in this goal included: Establishing education and public awareness programs Identifying core themes for education, awareness, and communication Strengthening information directed at target groups Developing mechanisms for dialogue and information exchange Establishing mechanisms to evaluate the impacts of communication, education and public awareness programs.

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We kicked off, Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, with digital billboard media campaigns. There were three billboards designed and ran on four digital billboards throughout Jackson-Madison County; each promoted the *National Suicide Prevention LifeLine* hotline number. The combined weekly impressions for the digital billboards were 221,009 with all four digitals running the whole month of September. The next media avenue chosen for awareness promotion was through magazine advertisement. We took one of the digital billboard designs and ran it as a magazine ad. The *Hey Ya'll* magazine was chosen, due to the fact that it was available in all West Tennessee counties and reached approximately 22,000 people. The effect will hopefully lead to a change in knowledge and attitudes related to suicide prevention awareness.

To impact a change in social norms, values, perceptions, and conversations we used social media as the marketing tool and sponsored a “White Out” Day for Suicide Prevention Awareness. On September 18<sup>th</sup>, we encouraged everyone to take a stand against the silence and stigma surrounding suicide across West Tennessee. The ways to take a stand included: wearing white, purple, or turquoise/teal; using these hashtags to join the conversation #EndSuicide2015 on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram; visiting [tspn.org](http://tspn.org) to learn more. We boosted this campaign by designing and distributing a thousand “White Out” Day awareness t-shirts throughout the Jackson-Madison County and West Tennessee regions, to encourage posting yourself promoting awareness through social media hashtags. We were able to measure the number of hashtags by purchasing the results through the social media outlets; there were 8,759 pictures with the #EndSuicide2015 hashtag posted. To aid in motivating positive actions and reactions from the community we contacted the *WBBJ News* station, which ran a segment in recognition of “White Out” Day. The segment ran twice on September 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> reaching 171,000 viewers. The final step in this awareness campaign was to assess and monitor the impact of behavior change and attitude in relation to suicide and suicide prevention. One way we plan to measure this is by the number of calls to the hotline.



**CHATTANOOGA-HAMILTON COUNTY REGIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

**Mayors’ Smoke Free Community Initiative**

Cathy P. Cowart, Program Manager

Eleven Hamilton County Mayors joined together Monday, October 12, 2015, to launch a major health initiative designed to benefit every Hamilton County resident. All ten Hamilton County’s Municipal Mayors joined Hamilton County Mayor Jim Coppinger to launch a major “Smoke Free Community” initiative intended to improve



the health and economy of the entire county. The Mayors are asking citizens and visitors to not smoke in parks and public spaces, especially around children and those with health conditions that might be aggravated by tobacco smoke. “Tobacco still remains the leading preventable cause of death in Hamilton County,” says Hamilton County Mayor Jim Coppinger, the mayoral team leader of this health initiative, “More than 10 times as many U.S. citizens

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have died prematurely from cigarette smoking than have died in all the wars fought by the United States during its history. In Tennessee, 32 people die each day due to smoking.”

The Mayors’ initiative primarily seeks to eliminate exposure to second- and third-hand smoke. Second-hand smoke is from the smoldering end of a cigarette, pipe, or cigar and the smoke exhaled from the lungs. Third-hand smoke is the chemical and odor residue on a smoker’s hands, mouth, hair, clothing, car upholstery, pets, and furniture that is known to be absorbed, ingested, or inhaled by others. Third-hand smoke poses a health threat to nursing infants and children who are exposed.

Besides the health consequences of smoking and smoke exposure, tobacco-related medical expenses are an enormous financial drain on the area’s economy. The tax burden on Hamilton County residents funneled into governmental smoking-related expenditures is approximately \$1,100 per household, regardless of whether they smoke or not.

Tennessee is currently ranked 47th in adult smoking, ahead of only Mississippi, Arkansas, and Kentucky. Annual health care costs in Tennessee due to smoking are \$2.67 billion, and lost productivity due to smoking in TN is \$3.59 billion. By encouraging and supporting tobacco-free lifestyles and environments, the Mayors hope to improve the health of all our residents and begin to regain the dollars needlessly lost to tobacco-related illnesses.

Smoke free policies in places frequented by our youth are endorsed by the CDC as an effective means of youth tobacco prevention. Ninety percent of adult smokers had their first cigarette before the age of 18. Child development specialists stress the importance of modeling positive behaviors to youth as their primary way of learning. The more adults they see having fun and enjoying life without the use of tobacco or e-cigarettes, the more likely they too will adopt smoke-free lifestyles. In 2014, e-cigarette use (vaping) surpassed traditional cigarette usage among teens.

The initiative, which includes signs, billboards and benches, is financed by Tobacco Settlement funds and will not use any additional tax dollars. For more information, contact Janie Burley, Tobacco Settlement Fund Coordinator for the Health Department at 209-8182 or JanieB@HamiltonTN.gov. Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/mayorsmokefreecommunity>. #SmokeFreeHamiltonTN

## UPPER CUMBERLAND REGION

### Heart of the City Playground

Submitted by: Mindy Doyle, MPH, Regional Assessment and Planning Coordinator

In a combined effort to increase physical activity in children, the Upper Cumberland Regional Health Office and the Putnam County Health Department had over 50 staff members participate in the community led Primary Prevention Initiative to help construct the only all-inclusive, 12,000 sq./ft. playground built 100% by volunteers within a 90-mile radius of Cookeville. The playground is handicap accessible and utilizes unique poured surfacing for mobility-impaired children and those using adaptive equipment. It is located in the “heart” of the city of Cookeville, just outside of the town square.



Shown are (from left to right) Geetha Natarajan (Nutrition Director, Upper Cumberland Regional Health Office), Keri Coburn (Upper Cumberland Regional Health Office Clinic Director), and Kim Nash (Licensed Practical Nurse II).

## WEST TENNESSEE REGION

Submitted by Chanda Freeman, WTO Health Promotion Coordinator

### Gibson County Community Health Council Works To Initiate Tobacco Free Polices To Prevent Secondhand Smoke Exposure In City Parks.



According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 32.3% of children are exposed to second hand smoke, which can trigger severe asthma attacks and can put a child's life in danger. Additionally, 2014 County Health Rankings show that 30% of adults who live in Gibson County smoke compared to an overall state rate of 23% of adults who smoke. Members of the Chronic Disease Sub-Committee, a subgroup of the Gibson County Community Health Council, came together to discuss ways that they could enact tobacco policies in outdoor facilities in the county. The group worked to assess current tobacco policies in public places and learned that a public park could not be deemed "smoke free," but local governments did have the authority to designate smoke free areas within city parks.

Health council members then worked to draft and adopt a resolution that they could share with local government officials. Throughout the summer, members of the County Health Council presented a "voluntary tobacco free zone resolution" to eight city council boards in Gibson County. Health Council members asked City Council Boards to pass the resolution and to post #CHOSENOTTOUSE signage in city parks to encourage visitors not to smoke in or around areas where children are at play. Utilizing Gibson Council Health Council Tobacco Settlement Initiative Funds, the health council provided cities with three signs to post in park areas where children play. To date, 7 of 8 cities have adopted "Tobacco Free" resolutions and have posted signs. One city does not have a park, but is in the planning stages of developing one. The tobacco free areas are a part of planning for the new park.

According to the CDC, exposure to secondhand smoke causes disease and premature death among nonsmokers. There is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke and even brief exposure can cause immediate harm. Studies have shown that "tobacco free" laws that prohibit smoking in public places like bars and restaurants help improve the health of workers and the general population. Some improvements in health outcomes, such as reductions in hospital admissions for heart attacks, begin to be realized shortly after the laws take effect.

Lastly, tobacco control laws and other government policies aim to prevent people, particularly children and youth, from starting to use tobacco; they help people quit using tobacco products; and they reduce the harmful effects caused by tobacco use. The Gibson County Community Health Council is well on their way to having "Tobacco Free" zones in every city park in the county.

### Tennessee Teens Talk Tobacco (T4) launched in fall of 2015

On September 18, 2015, health educators and community partners from across West Tennessee came together for the Tennessee Teens Talk Tobacco (T4) adult facilitator training. T4 is a program designed by health educators and prevention experts throughout the state to train teens as peer educators on tobacco cessation and initiation. Research suggests that people are more likely to hear and personalize messages, and thus to change their attitudes and behaviors, if they believe the messenger is similar to them and faces the same concerns and pressures.

The T4 curriculum was designed on the well researched premise that trained peer educators are a more credible source of information for some youth than are adult educators. Research conducted by the organization Advocates for Youth ([www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)) also suggests that trained peer educators are often more effective in some educational roles because they communicate with their peers in readily understandable ways, and they serve as positive role models while dispelling misperceptions that most youth are engaging in risky health behaviors. Thus, peer education draws on the credibility that young people have with their peers, leverages the power of role modeling, and provides flexibility in meeting the diverse needs of today's youth.

The September training, facilitated by Jaclyn Franks, Health Educator (Obion and Weakley counties) and Weakley County Prevention Coalition Director Bethany Allen, provided a comprehensive peer to peer tobacco education program for use in local communities and focused on teaching the adult facilitators the basics of the T4 program including tobacco facts, lesson plans, and activities that adults could use when working with peer educators.

Teens have the potential to impact and change health for future generations. Through the use of the T4 program in Tennessee, teens are equipped with information to teach their peers and younger students to abstain from tobacco. For more information on how to get involved in T4 activities going on in your county, please contact [Jaclyn.franks@tn.gov](mailto:Jaclyn.franks@tn.gov).



## SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Janet McAlister, Assistant Regional Director

### Maury County Community Garden

Maury County Health Department WIC Nutrition Educators Merrill Shumate and Krystle Stanley partnered with The Family Center to help with their Community Garden. Merrill and Krystle planted okra, zucchini, yellow squash, peas, cucumbers, tomatoes and lettuce in the raised garden boxes. The Family Center Community Garden project also had the assistance of a local church group and a few community volunteers. The garden is open 24/7 and is available for everyone in the community to enjoy! The garden is within walking distance of many homes in downtown Columbia.



A great big thank you to the Maury County Department of Health for partnering with the family center and our community garden.



The project will continue on as Merrill and Krystle and other health department staff will help weed and water the garden and also assist with classes held at The Family Center this summer providing recipes, along with canning and freezing instructions for the garden produce. A recipe box will also be stationed at the garden for community members to access for help in preparing the produce. And, even more assistance will be provided by the Farmers Market vendors who will come by the Family Center after the Farmers' Market closes each day (3 days a week) and leave their unsold or un-wanted produce for pick up by the community!

### Giles County Primary Prevention Initiative

On Thursday, October 15, Dr. Dreyzehner visited with staff at the Giles County Health Department to hear more about their involvement with Primary Prevention Initiative activities throughout the county. Health Educator Savannah Jenkins, Jada Helums, RN, and Office Assistants Charlotte Kennedy and Dara Crabtree presented information about health department projects over the past year including Breast Health, Breastfeeding, Child Health, Distracted Driving, New Century Fitness, Concussion Education, Safe Sleep, Senior Citizen Health, Substance Abuse, Tobacco Education, Tobacco Free MMC! and Worksite Wellness.

The Martin Methodist College (MMC) initiative or Tobacco Free MMC! involved team members surveying college faculty and students about their position on becoming a tobacco free campus. A sample tobacco free policy and educational presentation was shared with school administration and the health department partnered with Healthier Giles Board to share information with other agencies in the community. Health department staff saturated the community with tobacco prevention messages including distributing awareness materials and red ribbons to over thirty local businesses for Red Ribbon Week, partnering with Giles County High Student Council for the Great American Smokeout and working with community partners to promote Through With Chew and Kick Butts Day. Martin Methodist College has announced it will become a tobacco free campus effective January 1, 2016.

Staff also presented details about their newest project with Friends of the Growing Tree, a local day care provider, called SHAKE TEAM or Shape Healthy, Active Kids Early Through Education And Movement. Monthly activities focusing on healthy habits such as Oral Health, Nutrition, Physical Activity and Hygiene are led by members of the health department team in separate sessions with all children.



In closing, Dr. Dreyzehner congratulated all staff members on being named the 2015 Small Local Health Department of the Year by NACCHO. Staff were appreciative of the time spent sharing their project details with Dr. Dreyzehner and his team.