



A Message from Commissioner Williams

Happy New Year! Of course with it hot enough to bake cookies on the sidewalk, it doesn't really feel like New Year's, but in state government, it is a brand new year. That means new funding, new programs, and new opportunities to serve the Tennesseans who so desperately need our talent, expertise, and resources. In this time of new beginnings, my wish for us all is an opportunity to recharge and reconnect with our **why** – our motivation for doing this life-changing work. Whether it's a personal calling, a legacy from a loved one, or satisfaction of a job that makes a difference, knowing why we do this work is key to success and fulfillment at the end of the day.

Blessings,

Marie

Planning and Policy Council Recognitions & Transitions



The June Statewide Planning & Policy Council meeting was a time of recognition and transitions. Outgoing council chair Albert Richardson was recognized with a certificate of appreciation by Commissioner Williams for his service and commitment.

Albert is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Cocaine and Alcohol Awareness Program, Inc. (CAAP, Inc), one of the largest Behavioral Health providers in the State of TN, and is the Chief Executive Officer for Tri-State Community Health Center (TSCHC). Albert has been a member of the TDMHSAS Statewide Planning and Policy Council for thirteen years, and he will continue to serve on the council after his term ends. The department is grateful to Albert for his commitment and all he has done to better the lives of the Tennesseans we are blessed to serve!

TDMHSAS Statewide Planning and Policy Council New Appointees



The incoming chair of the TDMHSAS Statewide Planning and Policy Council is Rikki Harris. Rikki is currently the Chief Executive Officer for TN Voices. Paul Fuchcar, will serve as the Vice Chair of the council. He is currently the Executive Director of the Council for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, Inc. Their appointments will run through summer 2025.

Suicide and the Black Church Conference



The 10th National Suicide and the Black Church Conference was held June 14 and 15 in Memphis, Tennessee. It was a blessed gathering of passionate individuals with their sights set on a critical issue that we know impacts too many families, congregations, and communities. This year's theme was "Anchored in Hope". [Click this link for more information on the conference and more photos.](#)



Project AWARE Profile

Mental Health Promotion in Tennessee High Schools



Project AWARE is a school-based mental health program for select high schools in Tennessee. TDMHSAS in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education offers this program in 7 rural school districts. Participating students learn about mental health, how to access school-based services, and how to offer assistance to others. We talked with several students about what they have learned through Project AWARE, how they've grown, and how they will use this experience in the future. Connect with the department and our full array of youth and young adult mental health programs at this link: www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/children

2023 Crisis Services and Suicide Prevention Conference



The 2023 Crisis Services and Suicide Prevention Conference was held on June 22. More than 220 people gathered both in-person and online for a day of learning, sharing, and encouragement. The Office of Crisis Services and Suicide Prevention and conference planning committee also took time to honor several outstanding individuals and organizations with awards. Congratulations to all!

- Mobile Crisis Services Award: Allison Parker – Youth Villages
- Crisis Call Center Excellence Award: Centerstone
- Community Stabilization Services Award: Shirton Transou – Pathways
- Community Stabilization Services Award: Julie Tina Adams – Frontier
- Crisis Call Center Excellence Award: James Reed – Memphis Crisis Center
- Distinguished Service Award: Ben Harrington – Mental Health America-East Tennessee
- Distinguished Service Award: Sherry Randles – Centerstone
- Mobile Crisis Services Award: Pathways
- Crisis Services Excellence Award: McNabb Center
- Suicide Prevention Excellence Award: Caitlin Ensley – Mental Health America-East Tennessee

Tennessee Represents at National IPS Conference



Tennessee was well-represented at the 2023 International IPS Learning Community Annual Meeting, May 23 and 24, 2023 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Topic areas included personal recovery stories, new research findings from learning communities, mental health and vocational rehabilitation partnerships for IPS, serving individuals with justice involvement, and international updates. At the conference, TDMHSAS Director of Wellness and Employment Mark Liverman was surprised with an award for his work. Learn more about Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Supported Employment in Tennessee at this link: [TN.gov/behavioral-health/ips](https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/ips)

Tennessee Opioid Abatement Council Town Hall Meetings

The Tennessee Opioid Abatement Council is hosting Town Hall meetings in each of the Grand Divisions this summer. All Town Hall meetings will be in-person.

Middle TN – Murfreesboro

Date: Wednesday, July 26th

Time: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Location: Murfreesboro Police Department, 1004 North Highland Avenue,
Murfreesboro, TN (Conference Room)

East TN – Cleveland

Date: Thursday, July 27th

Time: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Location: Cleveland Bradley County Library, 795 Church Street NE, Cleveland,
TN 37311 (Cleveland Bradley Community Room)

West TN – Dyersburg

Date: Friday, July 28th

Time: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Location: Professional Development Center, 305 College St., Dyersburg, TN
38024 (PDC Main Room)

For more information about the Opioid Abatement Council - visit: tn.gov/oac.
The website is the best way to stay updated on all updates and events. You
can click the image below to view or download a flyer about the town hall
events.



Be Part of the Conversation at
Tennessee Opioid Abatement Council

TOWNHALL MEETING

The Tennessee Opioid Abatement Council will be hosting Town Hall meetings in each of the Grand Divisions. All Town Hall meetings will be in person.

Middle TN: Murfreesboro



WEDNESDAY
JULY 26TH



6:00 PM - 7:30 PM



MURFREESBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT
1004 NORTH HIGHLAND AVE
MURFREESBORO, TN

East TN: Cleveland



THURSDAY
JULY 27TH



6:00 PM - 7:30 PM



CLEVELAND BRADLEY COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY
795 CHURCH ST. NE
CLEVELAND, TN 37311

West TN: Dyersburg



FRIDAY
JULY 28TH



6:00 PM - 7:30 PM



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
305 COLLEGE ST.
DYERSBURG, TN 38024

Congrats, LTC Griffith!



Congratulations to TDMHSAS General Counsel Zack Griffith! Zack was promoted to U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) on June 11 at a military ceremony attended by department leadership. In a special moment, Commissioner Williams pinned LTC Griffith with his new rank. LTC Griffith currently serves as Legal Advisor (JAG) to the Tennessee National Guard Joint Adaptive Battle Staff. His service includes overseas deployments to Afghanistan and Ukraine, both while working for the department. After the promotion ceremony, LTC Griffith said: "I'm so grateful to the Commissioner, our team in the Office of General Counsel, and all my colleagues at the department for their support during my deployments and years of military service. It has been such a blessing to continue my military service and know that things are well cared for back home. I also deeply respect the work our department does to support military members and veterans." The Griffith family's legacy of military service continues with Zack's son, U.S. Army First Lieutenant Talley Griffith who attended the promotion ceremony (pictured above, background). The younger Griffith served as an enlisted member in 2nd Ranger Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, and recently graduated West Point. He will soon join the 173rd Airborne Brigade and will be based in Grafenwöhr, Germany.

Welcome to Team TDMHSAS



Jonathan Adair has joined the Office of Housing and Homeless Services as a program manager! Jonathan received a bachelor's degree with a double major in Psychology and Business Finance from Clark Atlanta University and has a Master of Science in Counseling Psychology from Tennessee State University. Jonathan's most recent professional experience was as a Program Director for the Metro Public Health Department.

Welcome Katelyn Smith to the TDMHSAS Office of Licensure as its new Legal Assistant/Paralegal! Katelyn earned a MA in English from Western Kentucky University and Paralegal Certificate in 2022. She previously worked with the Tennessee Public Utility Commission. Katelyn enjoys reading, traveling, and listening to too many podcasts.



Nathan "Nate" Williams has joined the TDMHSAS IT team as a new Product Manager. In this newly created role, Nate will lead a team of IT support staff, IT training staff, and clinical application coordinators to support our existing electronic medical records/practice management system, myAvatar, and to implement new enhancements and features. Nate is a seasoned technology professional with more than eleven years of experience in the healthcare industry.



Moccasin Bend Celebrates Employees



Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute recently had its Employee Appreciation Week during May. The Retention and Morale Committee put in a lot of work and planning to pull off this event. There were dress down themes for each day, an ice cream event, donuts one morning, and a baked potato bar one day. The whole week built up to the big event on Thursday, there was a cookout set up in the large courtyard with food and games.

Coalitions in the Community



The Monroe County Prevention & Wellness Coalition, in collaboration with the county Mayor, Mitch Ingram, and community stakeholders, created the Monroe

County Opioid Advisory Council. The goal of their council is to ensure that the county's money received from Tennessee's opioid settlements is spent following remediation suggestions in ways that will best benefit the citizens of Monroe County now and in the future.

Shout Out!



Emad Michael was selected as Employee of the Year at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute. In his role, Emad has developed processes and software that have positively impacted the way MTMHI patients are served. His talent has helped employees work more efficiently, which in turn allows staff to provide better care to patients. Emad is a true testament to the growth potential at MTMHI and all of our Regional Mental Health Institutes! Emad started his career with MTMHI in 2008 as a Psychiatric Technician. He was promoted to Lead Psychiatric Technician in 2011 and then to HR as a Training Specialist in 2017. His passion and expertise for technology earned him a promotion to the Data department as an Information Resource Support Specialist 3 in 2018. Since that time, he has been promoted twice; to an Information Resource Support Specialist 4 in 2021 and then in 2022 to run the department as Information Systems Manager 1. Congratulations and thank you for your service, Emad!



Congratulations to Martin Clausius on his promotion to **Chief Warrant Officer 4** in the U.S. Army Reserve. CW4 Clausius is the Officer in Charge of Network Operations under the 84th Training Command, Fort Knox, Kentucky. Mr. Clausius leads a 4-man team and assists with unit training that deals with Information Technology and Staff Inspections for day-to-day activities. In addition to his military service, Martin is the Information Resource Specialist 3 at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute.



Congratulations to Scott Lee on receiving his Bachelor of Science in Information Technology from the American Military University in Charleston, West Virginia! Scott is the Information Resource Specialist 4 at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute.

If you'd like to "shout out" to a TDMHSAS colleague, please send an email to Kearston.Winrow@tn.gov. Tell us who you'd like to recognize and why.

Save-the-Dates

Planning and Policy Council Meetings

Adult Committee

Wednesday, July 12, 2023
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. CST
TDMHSAS
Conference Room 339, 6th Floor
Andrew Jackson Building
500 Deaderick Street
Nashville, TN 37243

Region VI

Tuesday, July 11, 2023
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. CST
Pathways
238 Summar Drive
Jackson, TN 38301

Region III

Thursday, July 13, 2023
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EST
AIM Center
472 W. MLK Blvd.
Chattanooga, TN 37402

Region VII

Tuesday, July 25, 2023
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. CST
Church Health
1350 Concourse Ave., Suite 142
Memphis, TN 38104

To verify the schedule and plans for future meetings, please visit the department website at these links:

[Statewide & Committee Meeting Schedule \(tn.gov\)](#)

TDMHSAS is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from TDMHSAS programs, activities, and services. To request reasonable accommodations or modifications, please contact Amy Holland at amy.holland@tn.gov at least 10 business days prior to the meeting. Requests for accommodations or modifications made after the deadline will be honored to the maximum extent feasible, but it may not be possible to fulfill them.

2023 Tennessee Peer Conference

Tennessee
CFSS

Tennessee
CYAPSS

Tennessee
CPRS

SAVE THE DATE

We are excited to announce the first Tennessee All Peer Conference! Please join us as we celebrate
The Power of Peer Support
August 17-18, 2023
Murfreesboro (in-person or virtual)
This conference is for all peers in Tennessee!

TN Department of
Mental Health &
Substance Abuse Services

Tennessee
Certified
Peers

Resources

In the event of a mental health emergency ...

STATEWIDE
CRISIS LINE
HELP IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS
855-CRISIS-1 TN.gov/CrisisLine
855-274-7471 

For questions about addiction treatment/referrals ...



TN
REDLINE 
1.800.889.9789
CALL OR TEXT 

  

To talk with a TDMHSAS Consumer Advocate ...

Need help with mental health or substance use services?

Call the TDMHSAS Office of Consumer Affairs and Peer Recovery Services

HELPLINE

1-800-560-5767

We can help with:

- finding mental health and substance abuse resources in your area
- questions about insurance
- finding housing options
- communicating with mental health and substance abuse providers
- questions about the Certified Peer Recovery Specialist program
- filing a complaint



We are available

- Monday through Friday
- 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. CT
- Closed on state holidays



Department of
**Mental Health &
Substance Abuse Services**

OCA.TDMHSAS@tn.gov | [TN.gov/behavioral-health](https://tn.gov/behavioral-health)



OUR MISSION: CREATING
COLLABORATIVE PATHWAYS
TO RESILIENCY, RECOVERY & INDEPENDENCE
FOR TENNESSEANS LIVING
WITH MENTAL ILLNESS AND
SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

OUR VISION:

A STATE OF *RESILIENCY, RECOVERY, AND INDEPENDENCE*
IN WHICH **TENNESSEANS**
LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS
AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS **THRIVE**

AS A DEPARTMENT, WE VALUE:

CUSTOMER FOCUSED:

An unwavering commitment to keep patients and those who serve them at the forefront of every decision.

INTEGRITY:

Honesty and truth in all we do.

INSPIRED PURPOSE:

The call to action in service of a cause greater than one's self.

EXCELLENCE:

The highest standards for services, efficiency, and conduct.

COMPASSIONATE

AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP:

The commitment to make effective decisions and inspire others through active listening and empathy.

SOLUTIONS AND OUTCOMES-ORIENTED:

The commitment to positive outcomes and meaningful changes in response to the critical needs of the Tennesseans we serve.

PARTNERSHIP:

Beyond teamwork, collaboration based on mutual success to the benefit of the Tennesseans we are blessed to serve.

We hope you've enjoyed this issue of the Update! If you have news to share (a story idea, accomplishment, provider news, etc.) or if you'd like to be added to the distribution list, please email: the Office of Communications at OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov.

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