

MTSU Center for Health and Human Services Newsletter



Advancing the health and well-being of Tennesseans through collaborative research and outreach projects, addressing health disparities, and promoting healthy communities



CHANGING LIVES

“NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD: INDEED, IT’S THE ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.”

— Margaret Mead, American cultural anthropologist

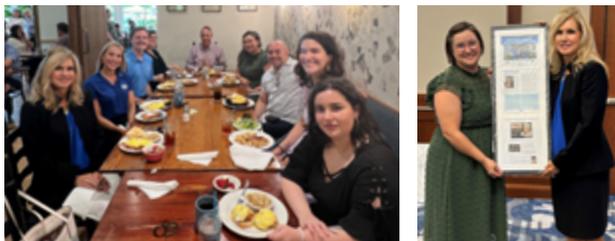
CHHS has had a productive summer with so much to share. Staff recently wrapped up development of the center’s next five-year plan, which includes more projects and research, more staff, more space, and the ability to serve more Tennesseans. Lytle House renovations are complete, with five new workstations to accommodate the center’s rapid growth, technology upgrades, and construction of an external storage facility. Staff were recognized at a celebratory luncheon in late June for the efforts of all in CHHS’ many successes and the lives touched undoubtedly by their work.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Summer Overview1
- Project Spotlight.....5
- Community Partner Spotlight9
- Campus Partner Spotlight.....9
- Blue Raiders Drink Up Water Refill Stations Map.....10
- Whom Do We Serve?.....12
- Project Updates13
- Staff Spotlight: Michael Ayalon.....23
- CHHS Staff and Faculty Partners.....26

SUMMER OVERVIEW *continued from page 1*

The CHHS team is eager to keep the momentum going with important work that is changing lives and, in some cases, literally saving lives. The [spring 2024 MTSU Research magazine](#) featured CHHS' Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) grant awarded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and its impact on those in Wilson County—the grant service area—including Lianne Harris, who was featured in the write-up and “is convinced that the grant saved her life.” Harris had lost battle after battle against meth and heroin and tried rehab several times without success. Because of the MTSU grant, she was able to get the treatment she needed and at press time of the feature story was on her way toward two years clean and sober. It is stories like Harris' that are great reminders to the CHHS team and to our supporters that the work we do is impactful—giving a face to the many reports and data that are compiled. CHHS looks forward to sharing impacts and outcomes from this and other projects in the quarterly newsletters as well as the launch of an annual report that is in the making.



Recent updates include:

- CHHS has continued to promote mental health awareness through its **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)** grant, including training using the evidence-based Mental Health First Aid curriculum at six other institutions across the state—Belmont University, Cumberland University, Columbia State

Community College, Rhodes College, Cleveland State Community College, and University of Tennessee Southern. Training continues to be offered off campus throughout the duration of the grant, which goes through December 2026. Details are provided later in this newsletter on how to request departmental training programs or to sign up for already scheduled trainings.

- CHHS co-hosted the **Middle Tennessee Opioid Abatement Summit** on June 7 **in partnership with the UT Institute for Public Service's SMART Initiative**, which led the summit. Representatives from 20 Tennessee counties and seven cities registered to attend the summit and included mayors, local elected officials, other decision-makers, and community organizations. Read more about the summit later in this newsletter.



- **CHHS Office of Prevention Science and Recovery** was invited by NewsChannel 5+ on May 22 to talk about the opioid epidemic and several new projects funded

by the Tennessee Opioid Abatement Council (see next bullet). The feature can be viewed at [How Can We Fight the Ongoing Opioid Crisis? \(newschannel5.com\)](https://www.newschannel5.com)

- CHHS began the recruitment process to hire two new full-time staff to support work of three projects submitted to the **Tennessee Opioid Abatement Council** totaling **\$9,181,073**; they were approved for Year 1 of funding with a contract that was effective July 1. The projects are each three-year projects and will support respite housing for those seeking opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment, expansion of recovery services, and infrastructure support for expansion

SUMMER OVERVIEW *continued from page 2*

of CHHS' [Office of Prevention Science and Recovery](#) to support additional OUD work across the state. Of note: **89% of the dollars will go toward direct services for those impacted by opioid use disorder.**

- CHHS secured a mobile treatment unit that will provide medication assisted treatment (MAT) for substance use disorder in a five-county rural service area with community partner Cedar Recovery as part of a recently awarded HRSA grant totaling **\$2,921,726**. This project launched Sept. 30, 2023, and will go through Sept. 29, 2025. The CHHS MAT Access Team continues to visit communities to introduce the grant and the services that will be available in their areas. To learn more about this project, please see the Summer 2023, Fall/Winter 2023, and Spring 2024 newsletters, as well as the project updates provided later in this newsletter.

- Office renovations added space for five new staff members as part of the center's continuing growth. The last phase of renovations includes an external storage facility.

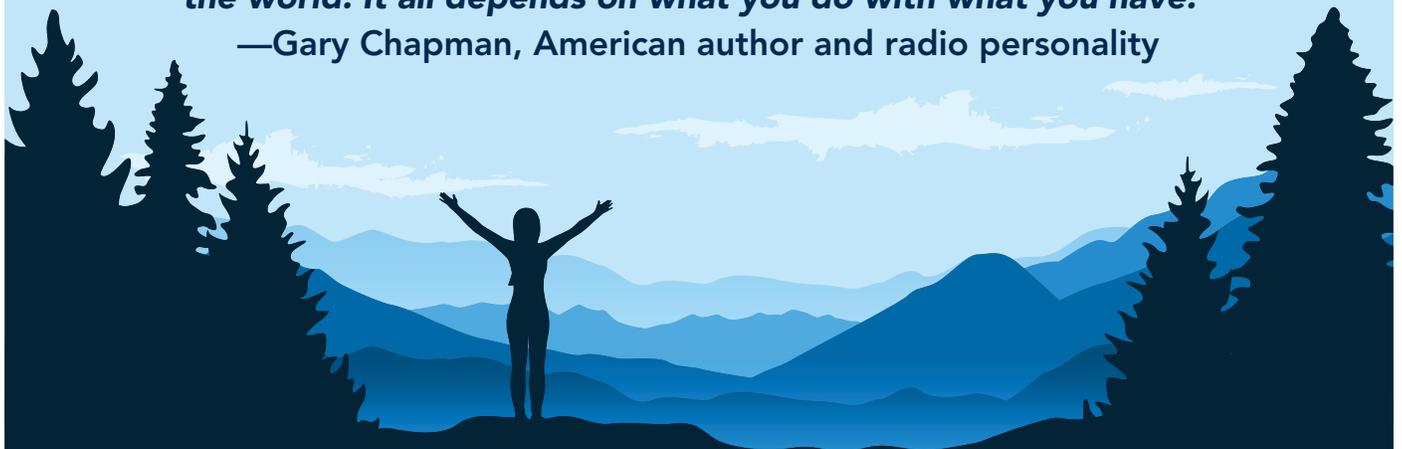
- CHHS successfully implemented activities and completed multiple deliverables of other research and outreach projects of the center, which are highlighted in this newsletter.

The center continues to seek funding and opportunities that support the health and well-being of Tennesseans while addressing Tennessee's most pressing public health priorities. Our gratitude is extended to all on and off campus who support the center's work and vision, including our University administration that has been so incredibly supportive. Thank you ALL.

CHHS continues to identify collaborators and partners both on and off campus to be involved in CHHS projects, programs, and research. To learn more about the center and its work to promote better health and well-being for all through its existing projects, programs, and research with local, state, and national reach, take a look at our [website](#), read more throughout this newsletter and previous editions posted on the website's [publications tab](#), and follow us on social media.

"Each person has the potential of making a positive impact on the world. It all depends on what you do with what you have."

—Gary Chapman, American author and radio personality



SUMMER OVERVIEW *continued from page 3*

Current Research, Projects, and Programs:

- Rural Communities Opioid Response Program Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Access
- Rutherford, Williamson, and Cannon Counties Opioid Abatement Services—Office of Prevention Science and Recovery
- Blue Raiders Drink Up: Healthy Choices for Healthy Students 2.0
- Infant Death Scene Investigation/Safe Sleep
- MTSU Mental Health First Aid
- Rural Communities Opioid Response Program Implementation Grant
- Safe Stars Evaluation
- Expansion of the MTSU Office of Prevention Science and Recovery, Recovery Respite Housing, and Recovery Infrastructure Support from Tennessee Opioid Abatement Funding

With our current and recent portfolio of research, projects, and programs that focus on substance use disorders, obesity and diabetes prevention, foods and agriculture, environmental health, and workforce development, we again express gratitude to our many partners who make our work possible as we make a difference in the lives of Tennesseans in initiatives that have state and national reach. CHHS looks forward to continuing to serve the public in these important areas as well as our campus community through our campus-focused grants and continues to identify collaborators and partners on and off campus to be involved in CHHS projects, programs, and research. Look for more updates via this quarterly CHHS newsletter, the CHHS website, and social media.

For those who are not familiar with CHHS, please take an opportunity to visit the [center's website](#) to read more about our work. Previous editions of the CHHS newsletter are available and include spotlighted research, projects, and programs, with additional information posted on the website.

Want to donate to further the work of MTSU's CHHS?

MTSU CHHS operates primarily through external funding. To continue our mission of promoting health and well-being for all Tennesseans and that of our nation, we need financial resources to continue our work. We operate from public and private grants as well as sponsorships and donations.

Please consider a donation of any size, which will go directly to CHHS.

Visit mtsu.edu/chhs, click on Donate Now, and specify that your donation is for CHHS. The site accepts MasterCard, VISA, and American Express.

mtsu.edu/chhs • Follow us on social media



Project Spotlight: Infant Death Scene Investigation and Safe Sleep

Since 2004, the MTSU Center for Health and Human Services has contracted with the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) to provide training for Tennessee's first responders—fire, police, and emergency services personnel—on infant death scene investigation (DSI). With support from University College, over 34,000 first responders have completed DSI training to meet requirements mandated by the state of Tennessee in response to the Sudden Unexplained Child Death Act. As part of this training, responders also learn about sudden unexpected infant death and infant safe sleep. MTSU develops all the training curriculum for this program and facilitates and maintains continuing education records for first responders. In addition

to the training, MTSU collaborates with TDH to host an annual Safe Sleep conference for public health professionals, home visitors, hospital staff, and human service professionals and Child Fatality Review training for all local members from the 34 Child Fatality Review teams.

This work is of great importance to the Tennessee Department of Health because it helps with educating professionals and community leaders to help reduce preventable child death. MTSU CHHS staff talked with our team of trainers involved in the DSI training program about why it's important, what motivates them to partner with MTSU and TDH in this endeavor, and how it is changing and possibly even saving lives.

“The MTSU DSI team is amazing, truly dedicated to saving lives, helping prevent loss, and supporting those who have experienced loss to find peace. First responders play a crucial role in the lives of those in critical emergency situations. The training facilitated by MTSU and the Tennessee Department of Health equips them to return to their departments and to teach their peers how to prevent many deaths in their community.”

— Mike Bryan, Fire Department Chaplain and MTSU Community Partner and Trainer



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT *continued from page 5*

**Danny Cupples, Critical Care Paramedic (CCP),
MTSU Community Partner and Trainer**



CHHS: How long have you been with the MTSU/TDH DSI project?

DC: This is Year 10.

CHHS: What inspired you to want to work with the MTSU DSI project?

DC: At the time I was holding a newly developed role as State Medicolegal Death Investigator, and one of my duties was to assist and develop training opportunities associated with death investigation. CHHS reached out to me and asked if I would be interested in joining the team. It's an honor when someone asks you to join their team, and I was very excited. My greatest inspiration is when I was asked to be a part of a training project that I have personally attended as a student and have always looked up to.

CHHS: Why do you feel this training is important for first responders?

DC: Calls involving pediatrics and infants are bad enough, but when a first responder responds to an infant death call, that intensifies the situation. When a first responder understands what goes on after they leave, it gives them a space in their minds to look at the scene differently, from a medical examiner's perspective. This gives them a sense of knowing their presence on the scene is valuable and the information gathered by them can help give answers as to the cause and manner of death of the infant. This project gives them the training and knowledge to help them gather crucial

information that would otherwise be potentially lost. This also gives them a sense of doing something when something can't be done.

CHHS: As a first responder, how beneficial do you feel the mental health and self-care additions to the MTSU/TDH training curriculum are to first responders?

DC: This part of the curriculum is invaluable. When I first started with the project, I realized the focus of grief support was more on families dealing with a tragic situation than self-care for the actual first responders. Don't get me wrong, it was there, but I felt like we needed more, so we began focusing on it near the end of the training. This seemed to be a success because of the response from the attendees. From my personal perspective as a first responder, we need this as part of the training.

CHHS: Do you have any personal experiences you would like to share as it pertains to first responders and mental health and self-care?

DC: My sister lost her infant son (Adam) to sudden unexpected infant death, and I have vowed to dedicate everything I do to his memory so that his short life on Earth will be a part of something to help others. Talking about his death and what my sister went through seems to hit home with many first responders attending the training. It puts things in a more personal perspective. Mental health and self-care are crucial in the first responder field. We, at the service I work for, are developing a peer support team to focus on mental health and self-care. As a first responder, I personally have lost close friends to suicide, and if there is anything we can do to prevent this from happening to another, I am all in! In my opinion, most first responders want information on mental health and self-care but are afraid to ask for it.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT *continued from page 6*

**Mike Bryan, Fire Department Chaplain, MTSU
Community Partner and Trainer**



CHHS: How long have you been with the MTSU/TDH DSI project?

MB: Since 2017.

CHHS: What inspired you to want to work with the MTSU DSI project?

MB: I was asked on short notice to fill in for one of the speakers who couldn't make it that year. I accepted the challenge with excitement and felt honored to be considered for the role. As I prepared for the topic, I called a friend who had lost her baby to what was known as SIDS at that time, to gain insights. Her story of loss and resilience was incredibly inspiring, and with her permission, I shared part of her journey in my talk. Additionally, I was deeply touched by the enthusiasm of the MTSU DSI team and attendees. The MTSU DSI team is amazing, truly dedicated to saving lives, helping prevent loss, and supporting those who have experienced loss to find peace.

CHHS: Why do you feel this training is important for first responders?

MB: First responders play a crucial role in the lives of those in critical emergency situations. This training facilitated by MTSU and the Tennessee Department of Health equips them to return to their departments and to teach their peers how to prevent many deaths in their community. They learn to care for patients both mentally and physically during crises and to maintain their own mental resilience throughout their rewarding careers, even while facing repeated tragedies like sudden unexpected infant deaths. This training is essential

for empowering first responders to make a lasting, positive impact.

CHHS: As a first responder, why is grief important to address in this training program—both with families and with the first responder?

MB: As a first responder, addressing grief in this training program is crucial for several reasons. For families, understanding and managing grief helps provide compassionate support during their most vulnerable moments, fostering trust and aiding their emotional healing. For first responders, learning to cope with grief is essential for maintaining their own mental health and resilience. This training will provide some guidance to help them continue to perform their duties effectively while processing the emotional toll of the tragedies they encounter. These are things they can also take back to their home agencies and help others learn to navigate these challenging experiences with empathy and strength.

CHHS: Do you have any personal experiences you would like to share as it pertains to first responders and grief?

MB: After 27 years as a first responder, I have many experiences and stories, but today, I'd like to share an observation I've made during this time. I've seen firsthand the impact on individuals who are not properly prepared for their roles. As first responders, we repeatedly face tragedy. While we diligently train for the physical aspects of our job and study, learn and demonstrate the procedures for mitigating critical incidents, we often neglect training our minds to process tragedy and build resilience against the trauma we experience. We can't unsee or undo what we've witnessed, but we can learn to live with it and use it as motivation to always take care of ourselves so we can continue helping others.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT *continued from page 7*

Sean M. Lester, B.S., D-ABMDI; Director of Medicolegal Death Investigations with the West Tennessee Regional Forensic Center, MTSU Community Partner and Trainer

CHHS: How long have you been with the MTSU/TDH DSI project?

SL: I gave my first training in 2007, so 17 years now!

CHHS: What inspired you to want to work with the MTSU DSI project?

SL: As someone who investigates infant and child deaths, I saw this project as an opportunity to emphasize to first responders the importance of their roles in sudden/unexpected infant/child death investigations.

CHHS: Why do you feel this training is important for first responders?

SL: It's important because it prepares first responders and death investigators for what they'll experience during an initial scene investigation. It defines and explains expectations based on particular roles, and it provides instruction regarding documenting their observations and concerns with photography and written reports.

What is a SUIDI form? Can you explain how training on the SUIDI form that is included in the DSI training ultimately impacts our local communities?

SL: The SUIDI form is a report completed as documentation of a Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Investigation. This form was developed by the Centers for Disease Control as the national standard for use in such investigations. The form is a comprehensive look into the life of an infant from the birth mother's pregnancy, labor, and

delivery, up to the moments leading up to the infant's passing. Granular demographic, medical, social, and environmental information is collected and recorded on the 15-page form via face-to-face interviews with caregivers and other witnesses. The investigator can also submit third-party records such as 911 call logs, EMS reports, Department of Children's Services history, and medical records. Investigators will also document and describe the infant's sleeping environment in detail, especially if bedsharing or unsafe sleeping is noted.

This report is initially reviewed by the medical examiner tasked with determining cause and manner of death. However, data from the SUIDI form is used by county and state health departments, as well as the CDC itself. Other federal agencies such as the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Consumer Products Safety Commission put our findings and observations to use in their investigations as well.

CHHS: Do you have any personal experiences you would like to share as it pertains to how SUIDI data has been or could be useful to local communities?

SL: I notice the PSA commercials and information posted in the baby aisle at grocery stores and in pediatricians' offices reminding new families of the importance of safe sleeping. I'm aware that some fire stations carry port-a-cribs and will give them to someone that needs one, even setting it up. All good examples of how important data is when looking for innovative solutions to complex problems.

Community Partner Spotlight: Infant Death Scene Investigation and Safe Sleep



The mission of the Tennessee Department of Health is to protect, promote, and improve the health and well-being of all people in Tennessee. Through the department's Child Fatality Review, data is collected on all child fatalities in the state, and local teams determine preventability of each death. This allows the department to be able to look at the data and present the information to a state level review team that consists of policymakers and state-level programs that can influence prevention efforts across the state. Child fatality and infant mortality are key proxy indicators

of the overall health of a community, and if deaths can be prevented, then an impact can be made on the overall health of those who live, work, and travel in Tennessee. The SUIDI/safe sleep program focuses on education through multiple programs and interventions.

Thank you, Tennessee Department of Health, for all that you do to support better health and well-being of all Tennesseans and for including MTSU as a training partner for first responders to support better data collection, infant safe sleep, and first responder mental health and self-care, especially if bedsharing or unsafe sleeping is noted.

Campus Partner Spotlight: University College



Since 2004, MTSU Center for Health and Human Services has worked collaboratively with University College to meet the needs of the Death Scene Investigation, Safe Sleep, and Child Fatality Review training programs

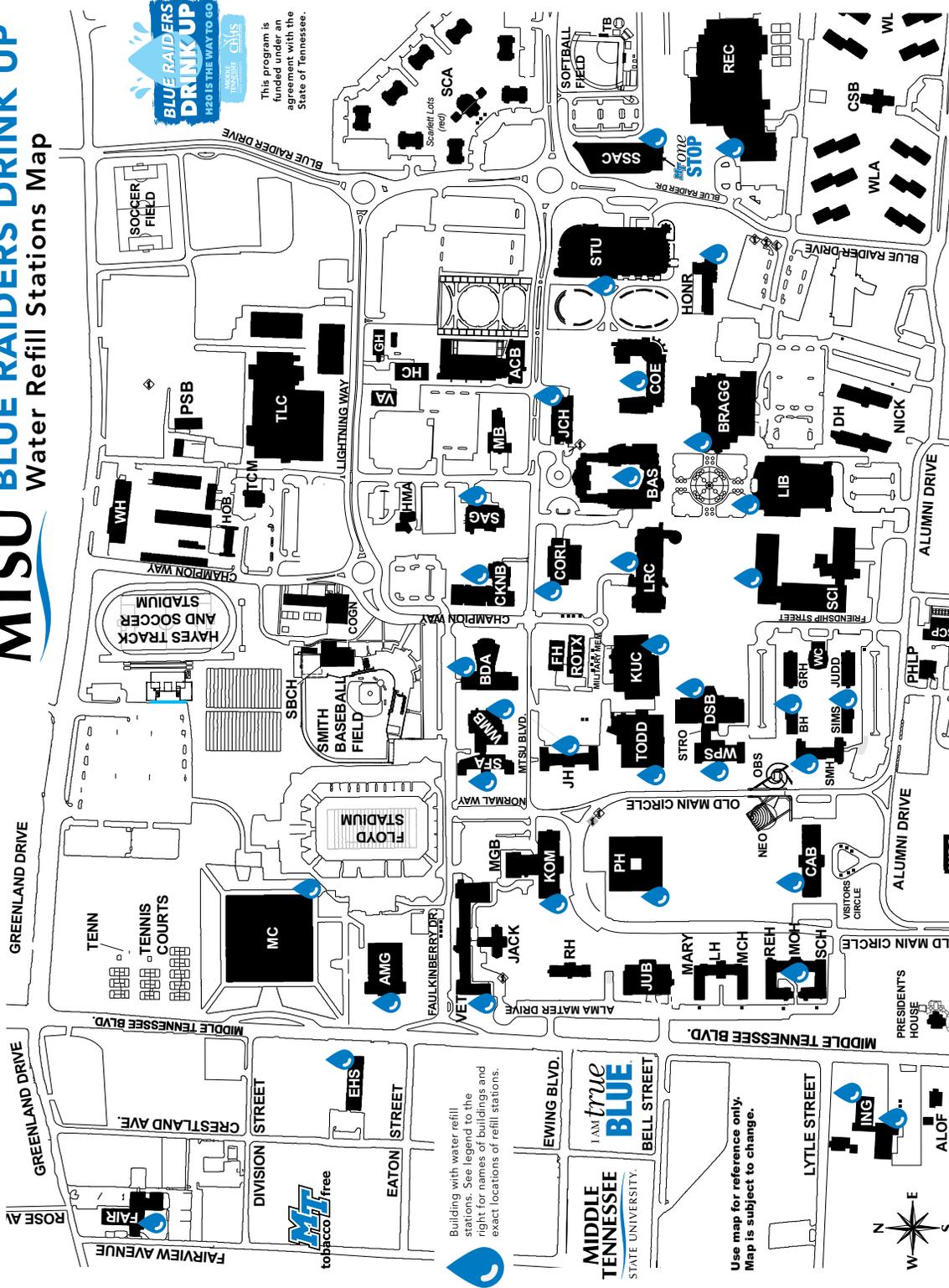
that are funded by the Tennessee Department of Health. The Death Scene Investigation training is for Tennessee's first responders—fire, police, and emergency services personnel—who are mandated by law to have annual training in infant death scene investigation. The Safe Sleep and Child Fatality Review conferences target public health, social services, and other human service professionals.

Since the project began in 2004, University College has been an important partner in training over 34,000 first responders and more than 2,100 health, social services, and human services professionals through this training program. University College Associate Dean John Burchfield says, "University College is pleased to continue to be a part of this important work and to have been intricately involved in the development of training materials, curriculum, and in the delivery of this program, as well as handling all of the continuing education requirements. While these programs are not 'for credit' courses offered on our campus, they do target adult students, which is an area of importance to us as a college."

CHHS greatly appreciates the significant role University College has had in this project over the years.

Trying to drink more water? Here's a map of water refill stations on campus!

MTSU BLUE RAIDERS DRINK UP Water Refill Stations Map



CHHS installed 18 water refill stations across campus since 2019 and through June 2024 and distributed 8,681 water bottles to students. There were 190,411 water bottles saved to date. Water bottles will continue to be provided during 2022-2025.

MTSU BLUE RAIDERS DRINK UP

Water Refill Stations Map

*funded by Blue Raiders Up



AMG	Alumni Memorial Gym 1-First Floor, 3-Second Floor*	LRC	Ned McWherter Learning Resources Center 1-First Floor*
BAS	Business and Aerospace Building 1-First Floor, 2-Second Floor*, 2-Third Floor*, 1-Fourth Floor*	MC	Murphy Center 4-First Floor*
BDA	Boutwell Dramatic Arts Building 1-First Floor, 1-Second Floor	MOH	Monohan Hall 1-First Floor*
BH	Beasley Hall 1-First Floor*	PH	Peck Hall 1-Second Floor
BRAGG	John Bragg Media and Entertainment Building 1-Second Floor	REC	Health, Wellness, and Recreation Center 1-First Floor, 1-Second Floor
CAB	Cope Administration Building 1-First Floor, 1-Second Floor	SAG	Stark Agriculture Center 1-First Floor
CKNB	Cason-Kennedy Nursing Building 2-First Floor*, 1-Second Floor*	SCI	Science Building 1-Second Floor
COE	College of Education Building 1-First Floor	SFA	Saunders Fine Arts Building 1-Second Floor, 1-Third Floor*
COR	Corlew Hall 1-First Floor*	SIMS	Sims Hall 1-First Floor*
DSB	Davis Science Building 2-First Floor	SMH	Smith Hall 1-First Floor*
EHS	Ellington Human Sciences Building 1-First Floor	SSAC	Student Services and Admissions Center 1-First Floor, 1-Second Floor
FAIR	Fairview Building 1-First Floor	STU	Student Union Building 1-Second Floor
HONR	Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building 1-Second Floor	TODD	Andrew L. Todd Hall 1-First Floor*, 1-Second Floor
ING	Sam H. Ingram Building 1-Garage Level, 1-First Floor	VET	Voorhies Engineering Technology 1-First Floor
JCH	Jim Cummings Hall 1-First Floor*	WMB	Wright Music Building 1-First Floor, 2-Second Floor*
JH	Jones Hall 1-First Floor, 1-Second Floor*	WPS	Wiser-Patten Science Hall 1-First Floor
KOM	Kirksey Old Main 1-First Floor		
KUC	Keathley University Center 1-Second Floor		
LIB	James E. Walker Library 1-First Floor, 1-Second Floor		



Building with water refill stations. See legend to the right for names of buildings and exact locations of refill stations.

This program is funded under an agreement with the State of Tennessee.

I AM **trueBLUE**

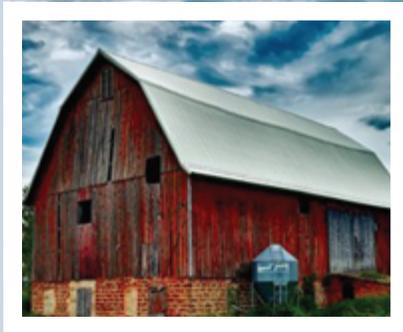
0324.41 / Middle Tennessee State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, disability, age, status as a protected veteran, or any other category protected by law. See our full policy at mtsu.edu/lec.

Follow us on our social media,
[@mtsu_chhs](https://www.instagram.com/mtsu_chhs) on Instagram and
[@mtsu.chhs](https://www.facebook.com/mtsu.chhs) on Facebook for events.

Whom Do We Serve?

The Center for Health and Human Services at MTSU facilitates, through strategic partnerships, collaborative public health research and outreach projects throughout Tennessee to address health disparities and promote healthy communities. Did you know that much of our work involves off-campus initiatives? One of the more common misconceptions about

CHHS is that we solely serve the campus community. While some of our efforts do focus on our campus, the majority of our work is done in communities across Tennessee, some of which serve as models for other states. Our projects have touched all 95 Tennessee counties, with some involving multistate partnerships and others having national impact.



CHHS Campus Resources

Ash Abro and Rose Chilsen, MTSU Dietetics graduates and former CHHS staff.



MTSU Mental Health First Aid

CHHS is offering MHFA training **FREE** to the campus community as part of a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Visit our [MTSU Mental Health First Aid website](#) to learn more.

More than 300 campus community members were trained in Mental Health First Aid in 2023 and more than 200 as of June 2024. We look forward to serving many more in the second half of 2024! In 2018–21, more than 1,100 were trained through MHFA. We will continue to serve the campus community with this evidence-based national program. We also have provided training to six college campuses across the state through this grant: Belmont University, Cumberland University, Columbia State Community College, Rhodes College, Cleveland State Community College, and University of Tennessee Southern.

CHHS is currently unable to offer an MHFA self-pay option to those not affiliated with our campus or another university. Community partners and outside organizations can find trainings available in their area (or virtual options) at the Mental Health First Aid website. For non-university partners wishing to have a training session just for their group, it may be worthwhile to use that tool and reach out to trainers in your area. [mentalhealthfirstaid.org/take-a-course/find-a-course/](https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/take-a-course/find-a-course/)

FOLLOW US and stay connected!

 @mtsu_chhs
  @mtsuchhs
  facebook.com/mtsu.chhs

Project Updates: Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Access Program

The MTSU Center for Health and Human Services' Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Access grant funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and in partnership with Cedar Recovery continues to move forward with the customized mobile unit, which will serve five rural Tennessee communities, delivered in June with patient services to begin this summer. The unit will provide quality patient care through an evidence-based approach to addiction recovery that combines medication assisted treatment, behavioral therapy, care coordination, and recovery support. Counties to be served are Giles, Hickman, Lawrence, Franklin, and Marshall. The MTSU CHHS MAT Access Team welcomed Cedar Recovery staff to campus in late June to celebrate the unit's long-awaited arrival. The mobile unit made an appearance with coverage from the MTSU media team.

Making communities aware of these services is critical to reaching those most in need. The MTSU team has been busy scheduling community outreach events and activities in several of the service areas, visiting Lawrence, Giles, Marshall,

and Franklin counties by the end of summer, as well as Maury and Lincoln counties, which are border counties of the service delivery areas.

A live treatment site is planned for Claiborne County, as well as the addition of methadone treatment for mobile unit services in Years 2 and 3 of the grant.



"Medication assisted treatment saves lives while increasing the chances a person will remain in treatment and learn the skills and build the networks necessary for long-term recovery."
—Michael Botticelli, Director of National Drug Control Policy

The MTSU MAT Access Team is pleased to be part of this potentially life-saving project in partnership with Cedar Recovery.



Office of Prevention
Science and Recovery

CHHS' Office of Prevention Science and Recovery

The CHHS Office of Prevention Science and Recovery has had a busy summer!

Updates include:

- The Rutherford Opioid Board (ROB) funded **17 projects** in the 2023–2024 fiscal year, allocating **\$927,953** toward them. The ROB has over **\$2,165,621** in funds to allocate for fiscal year 2024–2025 projects in Rutherford County.
- In fiscal year 2023–2024 the Office of Prevention Science and Recovery trained over **60 individuals** in how to apply for ROB grant funds and provided technical assistance to include evidence-based practices in ROB proposals.

- OPSR also assisted Cannon County in creating a grant application process to allocate more than **\$200,000** in funds to four community projects for fiscal year 2024–2025.
- The Middle Tennessee Opioid Abatement Summit gathered more **60 individuals from 20 counties and seven cities** across middle Tennessee to discuss best practices for addressing OUD in their communities with opioid abatement funds. More on the summit is included below.

Middle Tennessee Opioid Abatement Summit



INSTITUTE
for PUBLIC
SERVICE



In an effort to maximize the use of Tennessee's opioid abatement settlement funds, CHHS Office of Prevention Science and Recovery (OPSR) and the University of Tennessee's **SMART Initiative** recently hosted the Middle Tennessee Opioid Abatement Summit on campus, along with the Rutherford County Opioid Board. Stakeholders from over 20 counties and seven cities across the Midstate—including mayors, law enforcement, and representatives from prevention coalitions and abatement councils—registered for the one-day summit.

"We wanted to create a space where people who can make decisions in their county and in their city to gather together and talk about what's working, what challenges we have, what do we need help on, and what everybody else is doing," said

Chipper Smith, senior project coordinator in OPSR, who welcomed the crowd.

The SMART Initiative—SMART stands for Substance Misuse and Addiction Resource for Tennessee—guides community leaders in implementing evidence-based, cost-effective strategies that mitigate damage from substance use disorder and the opioid epidemic across Tennessee.

Jennifer Tourville, director of the initiative, presented numbers related to the onset of the prescription opioid crisis, sharing that in Tennessee there were more prescriptions written annually than the number of people in the state, with over 6 million prescriptions written each year for many years.

"We decreased the prescriptions, but overdose deaths increased," Tourville said, citing a recent

continued on page 15

PROJECT UPDATES *continued from page 14*

average of nearly 4,000 deaths annually. “These aren’t older people. These are young people. These are moms and dads, our kids, and our workforce.”

No population segment has been immune to the crisis. And since 2021, there have been a series of landmark settlements involving drug distributors, pharmacies, and manufacturers that have been identified as contributing to the opioid crisis.

The National Academy for State Health Policy estimates more than \$50 billion overall will be awarded to states as a result of these agreements, the second-largest public health settlement in U.S. history after the nearly \$250 billion tobacco master settlement of the 1990s.

The Tennessee General Assembly established the Opioid Abatement Council to decide how to distribute the over \$1 billion that will be coming into the state over the next 18 years from these settlements. In March, the council approved 116 grants to 85 distinct recipient agencies that will be funded over the next three years, equaling nearly \$81 million in awarded funds.

In 2023, MTSU’s Center for Health and Human Services and Data Science Institute launched OPSR to provide expertise and technical assistance to the Rutherford County Opioid Board, which facilitates the disbursement of local grant funding.

MTSU CHHS announced plans for three abatement council grants totaling \$9.1 million, including funding that will support infrastructure expansion for OPSR. Of the grant money, **89% will go toward direct patient services and treatment.**

“This will help MTSU reach out to other local governments and boards outside of Rutherford County, as well as provide support for abatement funding grantees,” said Cynthia Chafin, director of CHHS. “We want to be a resource and part of the solution to the opioid epidemic.”

The UT SMART Initiative is also supporting local governments by assisting with identification of funding strategies, developing plans for spending local settlement funds, creating processes for funding community organizations, applying for external state and federal funding, and monitoring program outcomes.

In addition to Rutherford County representatives, including County Commissioner Craig Harris, who has been instrumental in the fight against opioid addiction, the summit featured talks by Marshall County Mayor Mike Keny and Fredia Lusk, director of the Community Clinic of Shelbyville and Bedford County.

After the initial session, participants broke up into small gatherings of like-sized communities to share investment strategies, successes, and challenges. The final part of the summit focused on best practices for the coming year.

“This is all in an effort to heal our communities and we know names and faces of people who have been impacted by this disease,” Smith said.

For more information on MTSU’s Center for Health and Human Services and the Office for Prevention Science and Recovery, email Chafin at cynthia.chafin@mtsu.edu or visit mtsu.edu/chhs. Learn more about the SMART Initiative at smart.ips.tennessee.edu.



Chipper Smith, senior project coordinator in OPSR, speaks to participants at the Middle Tennessee Opioid Abatement Summit (MTSU photo by Nancy DeGennaro)

Wilson County RCORP Grant Update



The CHHS Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) implementation grant funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is now well into its third and final year with the grant wrapping up at the end of August 2024. Recently the team completed the last deliverables in the three-year work plan, which included introducing prevention curriculum in the Wilson County schools, launching an overdose data dashboard (OD Map), and hosting lunch and learns with multidisciplinary stakeholders in Wilson County about opioid use disorder and treatment.

- OD Map is up and running in Wilson County with Wilson County Emergency Management Agency overdose data, and the team is now working with partners to get the Wilson County Sheriff's Office, Lebanon Police, and Mt. Juliet Police on board.
- The MTSU RCORP team is meeting with Wilson County stakeholders to present on what CHHS does, review the RCORP accomplishments to date, and get buy-in for future partnership opportunities as well as coordination between these entities and MTSU.
- The Preventing Incarceration in Communities (PIC) Center continues to grow in Wilson County.

As of June 2024, there were **63 active clients in treatment; 91 people have graduated from the program, and we currently have a 67% success rate.**

- Plans are underway to provide Narcan and fentanyl test strips to New Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in Lebanon as part of a community and faith-based outreach.
- The MTSU RCORP team is developing a final sustainability plan this summer to ensure that the progress made in the areas of prevention, treatment, and recovery continues in Wilson County once the implementation grant is completed.
- The MTSU Wilson County RCORP project was accepted for presentations at the Tennessee Public Health Association's 2024 annual meeting as well as the American Public Health Association's 2024 annual meeting, the Rural Health Association's annual meeting, and its quarterly webinar series.

"I always knew we were making an impact in Wilson County through the work we were doing as part of our HRSA RCORP grant. It really hit home that we were when I read the interview with Wilson County resident Leeanne Harris, which was published in the [spring 2024 MTSU Research magazine](#). Harris is 'convinced that the grant saved her life,' after battling addiction to meth and heroin and trying rehab several times without success. Knowing that one of our projects here at MTSU has potentially saved someone's life is so very humbling. It reminds me that our work does make a difference—and sometimes in a big way."

—Cynthia Chafin, Director, CHHS

Safe Stars

Safe Stars is a collaboration between the **Tennessee Department of Health (TDH)** and the Program for Injury Prevention in Youth Sports at Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. Safe Stars' goal is to provide resources and opportunities for every youth sports league to enhance their safety standards. The criteria for achieving recognition as a Safe Stars league has been developed by a committee of health professionals dedicated to reducing sports-related injuries among youth.

Beginning February 15, 2023, MTSU Center for Health and Human Services has contracted with the TDH to evaluate the Safe Stars program. By the end of the project, CHHS will provide the state's Safe Stars team with expert recommendations based on survey findings, to facilitate improvements in reducing barriers to sports leagues' submitting applications to the program as well as recommendations on program feasibility.

Recent updates for the Safe Stars project include:

- At least three Tennessee youths have been saved because Safe Stars protocols were implemented involving automated external defibrillators (AEDs).

"By assisting the Tennessee Department of Health and Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt facilitate improvements in youth sports leagues applying to the Safe Stars program, we have an opportunity to positively impact short- and long-term health for youth participating in sports and, in some cases, even saving lives. Recently three lives were saved due to AEDs placed in accordance with Safe Stars guidelines."
—Michelle Sterlingshires, CHHS Safe Stars Project Coordinator

- Beginning in the 2024–2025 fiscal year, alongside modifying and continuing the evaluation of Safe Stars, CHHS also will be evaluating utilization of the CDC Pediatric mTBI (mild Traumatic Brain Injury) Guidelines.
- The mTBI evaluation will involve surveying a minimum of 500 health care providers per year, analyzing and reporting the results, disseminating data to stakeholders, and developing new strategies to present that data.

"You were born with the ability to change someone's life; don't ever waste it."

—Dale Partridge, pastor, author, evangelist

Blue Raiders Drink Up



Blue Raiders Drink Up (BRDU) program funded through the Tennessee Department of Health’s Project Diabetes Initiative entered its fifth year on July 1. This program

aims to educate students on healthy lifestyles through free cooking classes, free counseling with a registered dietitian and health coach, 24 educational events per year, the installation of water refill stations across campus, and the development of a Healthy Vending Machine Task Force.

Updates for Blue Raiders Drink Up include:

- BRDU has been at each CUSTOMS session, whether in person or as a resource in students’ incentive bags. These sessions help prepare new undergraduate students in making the transition

into the University. We always make it a priority to meet incoming students and connect them to the health and wellness resources that are free to them at MTSU.

- For the 2023–24 fiscal year, BRDU educated **1,600+ MTSU students** about healthy lifestyles and beverage consumption through multiple campus events.

- The number of water bottles BRDU has distributed to date for the current grant period is **8,681**. With our water refill stations that we have installed throughout MTSU’s campus in both BRDU 1.0 and 2.0, we’ve been able to save **190,411 plastic bottles!**

- Blue Raiders Drink Up will be participating in the Mental Health Wellness and Suicide Prevention Fair in the Student Union on September 10, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Stop by and say hello!

Free Cooking Classes!

Join us for a 4-week cooking class series hosted by Blue Raiders Drink Up! Learn to cook healthy food on a budget and participate in a grocery store tour guided by a registered dietitian.

Visit mtsu.edu/chhs for Fall 2024 dates!

Each participant that attends 3 out of 4 classes will receive a BRDU t-shirt, lots of kitchen utensils, giveaways and a \$100 Kroger gift card.



Stay up to date with the latest news and information by following us on social media!





True Blue Mental Health Awareness— MTSU Mental Health First Aid

We are pleased to share that MTSU Mental Health First Aid, offered at no cost to our campus community as part of our

mental health awareness training grant CHHS received from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), is going strong and demonstrating impact. This project provides opportunities to change lives through reducing stigma toward mental health and connecting members of our campus community with needed resources.

Updates and outcomes for MTSU Mental Health First Aid include:

In 2023 there were 236 referrals made to mental health services by individuals trained as part of the MTSU Mental Health First Aid training program. During the first two quarters of 2024, there were a total of 215 referrals.

To date, 75% of those participating in MTSU Mental Health First Aid training in 2024 completing pre- and post-tests demonstrated improvements in mental health knowledge, attitudes, and biases.

Over 200 people have been trained as Mental Health First Aid trainers this year at the time of this publication and are now equipped to recognize someone who may be having a mental health crisis.

Through a partnership with the Coalition for Healthy and Safe Campus Communities (CHASCo), we have had the opportunity to collaborate with leaders at other institutions who value the importance of mental health. Through our higher education consortium, we

are working with several state institutions to train college communities in Tennessee in Mental Health First Aid in 2024. Those institutions are Belmont University, Cumberland University, Columbia State Community College, Rhodes College, Cleveland State Community College, and University of Tennessee Southern.

We will engage and promote our True Blue Mental Health Awareness initiative and Mental Health First Aid trainings at MTSU’s Community College Partner Day and College of Media and Entertainment’s Student Health and Wellness Fair.

Studies have shown that MHFA training reduces stigma, improves knowledge, and increases first aid actions toward people experiencing mental health and substance use challenges. We now have registration open for training sessions this fall. Sign up for training and search for other trainings at mtsu.edu/chhs/MentalHealthFirstAid.php. We are constantly adding trainings to our website, or we are happy to schedule a selected date for your group, department, or class. Contact jill.thomas@mtsu.edu.

Upcoming Mental Health First Aid Trainings:

Training Date	Time	Type
Monday, Oct. 7	9 a.m.–3 p.m.	Blended, virtual
Thursday, Oct. 24	9 a.m.–3 p.m.	Blended, in-person
Saturday, Nov. 2	9 a.m.–3 p.m.	Blended, virtual
Monday, Nov. 18	9 a.m.–3 p.m.	Blended, in-person
Friday, Dec. 6	9 a.m.–3 p.m.	Blended, in-person

Mental Health First Aid Research in the United States



Mental Health
FIRST AID

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
MENTAL WELLBEING

Updated: February 2023

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a skills-based training that teaches people how to



identify



understand



respond

to signs and symptoms of mental health or substance use challenges in adults 18 and older and youth ages 12-18. [Global research](#) and [evaluation](#) of these programs have contributed to a robust evidence base, which is crucial to highlight strengths and gaps across the program and to inform future program developments.



Over the past decade, there has been a growing body of research on the efficacy of MHFA in various populations across the United States.

Overview

A total of **45** peer-reviewed articles have been published over the past **10** years.

-  **36** were empirical research studies.
-  **9** were scoping reviews, systematic reviews or meta-analyses which included studies from the United States.



mentalhealthfirstaid.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023.03.01_MHFA_Research-Summary_infographic.pdf



Findings from Adult MHFA Studies in the United States

Adult MHFA studies focused on a variety of populations and demographics, including:



Adults living in urban and rural areas ^{4, 5, 16, 19, 38, 43-44}



Students and higher education staff ^{16, 35, 39}



Medical professionals ^{3, 16, 36, 46-47}



Community-based workers ^{34, 39}



Refugee communities ^{36, 44}



Military communities ³³



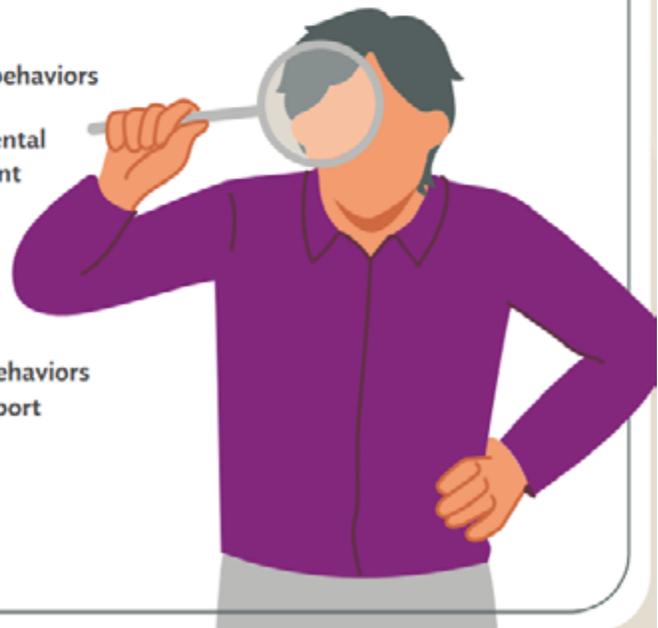
Church members and leaders ⁷



MHFA Instructors ^{19, 25, 31}

Adult MHFA studies tracked a variety of measures, including:

- Mental health literacy
- Confidence
- Self-efficacy
- Attitudes toward mental illness
- Stigma and empathy
- Course satisfaction
- Recognition of mental health issues
- Use of MHFA behaviors
- Seeking out mental health treatment
- Training engagement
- Identification of assistance behaviors treatment/support resources



Major findings for Adult MHFA

 FINDING:

Increased mental health literacy, including^{4, 7, 9-10, 12, 19, 24, 26-27, 32-33, 38, 42-43:}

- Knowledge of signs, symptoms and risk factors of mental health and substance use challenges.
- Ability to identify appropriate types of professionals and self-help resources for individuals with a mental health or substance use challenge.



 FINDING:

Increased confidence/self-efficacy and likelihood to help an individual in distress.^{4, 7, 12, 16, 26-27, 33, 38, 42, 44, 46}

 FINDING:

Reduced stigma and increased empathy toward individuals with mental health challenges.^{9, 16, 24, 27, 30, 43-44}



 FINDING:

Use of MHFA skills after training.^{39, 46-47}



 FINDING:

Increased likelihood to seek therapy or mental health care for themselves.³⁶

 FINDING:

Correct application of MHFA skills during a simulation.³⁶

CHHS Staff Spotlight: Michael Ayalon

This quarter CHHS is pleased to shine the spotlight on Michael Ayalon.

Ayalon has served the last 4.5 years as Wilson County Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) coordinator, an employee of CHHS and part of two Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grants that CHHS received to conduct a needs assessment and gap analysis in Wilson County and to implement the related workplan. Through these two grants, Ayalon has successfully coordinated local activities with other members of the MTSU team, DrugFree WilCo (a local coalition to reduce substance use and addiction in middle Tennessee), as well as other local stakeholders. Some of the areas of need identified have been addressed through the second HRSA grant, including Wilson County's first ever diversion center for first-time drug offenders, a jail based reentry transition specialist position, and trauma-informed drug prevention activities and education for Wilson County schools and businesses.

Ayalon is also a professional speaker, author, host of the Fraternity Foodie Podcast, and CEO of Greek University. He has headlined keynote presentations on over 200 college campuses in 35 states to help solve problems such as sexual assault, hazing, alcohol and drug abuse, and recruitment for college student organizations. As a speaker, he is able to take lessons learned from helping to build companies from startup to over \$25 million in annual sales, as well as best practices as the former executive director of Sigma Pi Fraternity with 120 chapters and over 100,000 members, to create dynamic, positive, and results-driven keynotes and workshops that transform people's lives.



The author of *From Letters to Leaders: Creating Impact on Your College Campus and Beyond*, Ayalon is a graduate of the School of Management at the University at Buffalo and has a master's degree

from Cumberland University in Public Service Management. He is currently in the Assessment, Learning, and Student Success (Higher Education) doctoral program at MTSU and plans to graduate in 2025.

Ayalon lives in Franklin with his wife, Jennifer; his son, Jacob; and his daughter, Rachel. Collectively, they serve the "king of the household" Klondike, a spirited and talented feline family member who graciously agreed to accept Cocoa, a later feline addition to the household who also exudes royal vibes. His personal interests include working out at the gym, reading, hiking, and seeing all the waterfalls of Tennessee.

Ayalon's favorite quote is: "Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy."

– Dale Carnegie

CHHS is grateful for Ayalon's contribution to the CHHS team over the last 4.5 years and anticipate future collaborations when the RCORP Implementation grant ends in August. We asked him a few questions as his work as Wilson County RCORP coordinator wraps up.

continued on page 24

CHHS STAFF SPOTLIGHT *continued from page 23*

CHHS: What are your thoughts as we wrap up the 4.5 year RCORP planning/implementation grants in Wilson County? What do you consider the biggest accomplishments with the RCORP grants?

MA: There are so many accomplishments to share! I'm most proud of helping to get the PIC Center (Preventing Incarceration in Communities) up and running in Lebanon, Tennessee. This diversion center allows for people who have first-time drug offenses and are nonviolent to get sent for local treatment instead of going to jail. Getting close to 100 graduates in the program and a 75% success rate is absolutely remarkable, and this helps people get back to work without a criminal record when they graduate. Also, providing transportation via Uber for people in the PIC Center to get to local treatment in our rural county was a big win, and many of the people in Wilson County who did not have access to health insurance were able to get funding for medication assisted treatment through this grant.

OD Map is certainly another highlight. In the past we would not have real time data on overdoses in various counties of Tennessee, we would just see the year end reports. Now WEMA (Wilson County Emergency Management Agency) is able to track in real time suspected overdose data across jurisdictions to support public safety and public health efforts to mobilize an immediate response to a sudden increase, or spike, in overdose events. As other law enforcement agencies are added to the system in the coming months in addition to WEMA, we will have a comprehensive dashboard of real-time data for all stakeholders to visually communicate between entities and ultimately address the opioid crisis in middle Tennessee.

Law enforcement training for Lebanon P.D., Mt. Juliet P.D., and the Wilson County Sheriff's Office

on medication assisted treatment was a very proud moment, as it helped to explain how we can reestablish normal brain function, reduce substance cravings, and prevent relapses for people with substance use disorder to manage their dependency and move toward recovery. Everyone in the community wants to increase safety and reduce overdoses, so hearing a law enforcement professional talk about real solutions gave us all hope that we could reduce overdose deaths, mitigate relapse risks, and increase treatment retention in our community.

Finally, Dr. Kahler Stone's research on reducing stigma has been extraordinary. After many billboards going up in the community, along with the great work in prevention and schools from DrugFree WilCo, to be able to prove with data that we are making an impact in lowering stigma is incredible. The reports that Dr. Stone was able to produce after two years of surveys showed more acceptance of treatment in our community, a better understanding of drug use, and a greater belief in the effectiveness of treatment. We're looking forward to the results of the stigma survey in Year 3 as we collect more data this summer.

CHHS: What has been the most meaningful part of being a part of the MTSU CHHS team for the last 4.5 years?

MA: The friendships, the laughter, and the collaboration with like-minded professionals. The entire staff at the Center for Health and Human Services are truly invested in promoting healthier communities in Tennessee. When you have a high quality staff, a unifying mission, great leadership from Dr. Cynthia Chafin, as well as amazing partners in the community who believe in you, we can accomplish just about anything together. Seeing the measurable results in our

continued on page 25

CHHS STAFF SPOTLIGHT *continued from page 24*

communities along with bigger grant opportunities coming to the Center for Health and Human Services every year has been very satisfying. As a team, we truly enjoy spending time together, and the results show.

CHHS: Please tell us more about your exciting journey into a doctoral program here at MTSU. What inspired you to enroll in this degree program?

MA: I really enjoyed working alongside the staff and faculty at MTSU over the last few years, and I had made a promise to myself when I was an undergraduate student that one day I would complete my doctorate. When I started to look around at various programs in the field of higher education, I noticed the program at MTSU on Assessment, Learning, and Student Success. I've always focused on college students in order to bring positive change, and I've always been passionate about alcohol and drug abuse prevention in this particular age group. When I spoke to Dr. Jim Rost, the coordinator of the ALSS program at MTSU, I felt that we were aligned in terms of our goals in higher education and had very similar philosophies. I enrolled in the ALSS program at MTSU the next day after a one-hour Zoom session with Dr. Rost. It has been an incredible experience so far, and I'm planning on defending in February of 2025. My dissertation is called "The Early Warning Signs of Hazing in College Fraternities and Sororities," and I'm so grateful that I get to work with Dr. Kim Godwin as my dissertation chair because she is so knowledgeable in the world of student affairs, fraternity/sorority life, and qualitative research. She is a great asset for the MTSU community.

CHHS: You have a son enrolled here at MTSU and a daughter soon to be a college

student as well. What's it like to have the majority in your household enrolled—or soon-to-be-enrolled—in college?

MA: Yes! My son is currently in the Data Science program at MTSU and recently finished his freshman year. He also received an internship in his first summer at MTSU, he's working for Dr. Keith Gamble at the Data Science Institute. My wife also took a course toward her M.B.A. at MTSU as well. We are a True Blue family, and we've all enjoyed our experiences with the professors on campus. Now my daughter is headed to Rice University this fall, so it will be somewhat challenging to have her so far away from home in Houston, Texas. However, we firmly believe in the benefits of higher education, and we all support each other in our academic pursuits. MTSU has been a place to grow and nurture our ongoing quest for knowledge and research in our family, no matter what our interests may lead to professionally.

CHHS: Do you see other opportunities to engage with CHHS post-grant?

MA: Absolutely. The Center for Health and Human Services at MTSU will continue to be successful and will grow substantially in the next few years. Also, grants from the federal government will continue to grow in the areas of substance use disorder and opioid use disorder. So, when the right opportunities emerge to engage with CHHS post-grant, we will be able to immediately find new ways to partner and bring the success that we have seen in Wilson County to other counties in the area, such as Williamson County or Davidson County as examples. We've already had other counties ask about replicating our efforts in their communities as well, so we are very open to those conversations and look forward to more partnership opportunities in the future.

CHHS Staff and Faculty Partners

The CHHS reports to David L. Butler, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Research at Middle Tennessee State University.

Director:

Cynthia Chafin, Ph.D., MCHES®
cynthia.chafin@mtsu.edu

CHHS Grant and Program Coordinators:

Sarah Gwinn, B.A.
 CHHS Pre-Award Grants Coordinator
 and Outreach Specialist
sarah.gwinn@mtsu.edu

Ron Cail, M.B.A.
 Post-Award Grants and Program Coordinator
ron.cail@mtsu.edu

Michelle Sterlingshires, M.S.
 CHHS Evaluator and Technical Writer
 Data Coordinator—Safe Stars, Mental Health
 First Aid, Blue Raiders Drink Up, Rural
 Communities Opioid Response Program MAT
 Expansion Project
michelle.sterlingshires@mtsu.edu

Program and Project Coordinators:

Michael Ayalon, M.S.P.
 Rural Communities Opioid Response
 Program—Implementation
michael.ayalon@mtsu.edu

Christina Byrd, M.P.H., CHES®
 Blue Raiders Drink Up: Healthy Choices for
 Healthy Students, Death Scene Investigation/
 Sudden Unexpected Infant Death, Rural
 Communities Opioid Response Program
 MAT Expansion Project
ctb4f@mtmail.mtsu.edu
christina.byrd@mtsu.edu

Jill Thomas, M.Ed.
 Mental Health First Aid
jill.thomas@mtsu.edu

Chipper Smith, M.P.H.
 CHHS Office of Prevention Science and Recovery
 Rural Communities Opioid Response Program—
 Implementation-Project Assistant
chipper.smith@mtsu.edu

Project and Student Assistants:

Hanan Baba
 Blue Raiders Drink Up Student Ambassador
hmb6c@mtmail.mtsu.edu

Maimoonah Dabshee
 Rural Communities Opioid Response
 Program—Implementation
mkd3r@mtmail.mtsu.edu

Kaitlyn Donovan
 Mental Health First Aid Student Ambassador
kad5f@mtmail.mtsu.edu

Chloe Keating
 Mental Health First Aid Student Ambassador
cnk3f@mtmail.mtsu.edu

Rin Kochenderfer
 Mental Health First Aid Project Assistant
lak3y@mtmail.mtsu.edu

Audrey Waite
 Blue Raiders Drink Up Student Ambassador
acw8b@mtmail.mtsu.edu

CHHS STAFF AND FACULTY PARTNERS *continued from page 26*

Grant Support Staff:

Sarah Nicolette
Blue Raiders Drink Up Dietitian
sarah.nicolette@mtsu.edu

Becky Figueroa, M.A., NBC-HWC
Blue Raiders Drink Up and Student Health
Services Health Coach
becky.figueroa@mtsu.edu

Lisa Sheehan-Smith, Ed.D., RD, LDN
Blue Raiders Drink Up Cooking Class
Dietitian
lisa.sheehan-smith@mtsu.edu

**MTSU Mental Health First Aid
Faculty Trainers:**

Mary Beth Asbury, Ph.D.
Department of Communication Studies
marybeth.asbury@mtsu.edu

Deborah Lee, Ph.D., RN, NBC-HWC
School of Nursing, NHC Chair of Excellence
deborah.lee@mtsu.edu

Seth Marshall, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
seth.marshall@mtsu.edu

**Other MTSU Mental Health First Aid
Trainers (non-faculty):**

Peyton Fortner
peyton.fortner@mtsu.edu

Project and Program Evaluators:

Angela Bowman, Ph.D.
Department of Health and Human Performance
angie.bowman@mtsu.edu

Keith Gamble, Ph.D.
Department of Economics and Finance,
and Data Science Institute
keith.gamble@mtsu.edu

Sara Shirley, Ph.D.
Department of Economics and Finance,
and Data Science Institute
sara.shirley@mtsu.edu

Jeff Stark, Ph.D.
Department of Economics and Finance,
and Data Science Institute
jeff.stark@mtsu.edu

Kahler W. Stone, Dr.P.H.
Department of Health and Human Performance
kahler.stone@mtsu.edu

Campus and Faculty Partners:

John M. Burchfield, M.B.A.
University College
john.burchfield@mtsu.edu

Richard Chapman, M.B.A., M.S.H.A.
Student Health Services
richard.chapman@mtsu.edu

Lisa Schrader, M.P.H.
Department of Health and Human Performance
lisa.schrader@mtsu.edu

“Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do.”

—Christopher Reeve, American actor,
film director, author, and activist

**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY.

I AM *true* **BLUE**.

0624-665 / Middle Tennessee State University does not discriminate against students, employees, or applicants for admission or employment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, age, status as a protected veteran, genetic information, or any other legally protected class with respect to all programs and activities sponsored by MTSU. Inquiries about Title IX can be directed to the Title IX Coordinator and/or the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. The Title IX Coordinator can be reached at Cope Administration Building 116, 1301 East Main Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37132; Christy.Sigler@mtsu.edu or 615-898-2185. The MTSU policy on non-discrimination can be found at mtsu.edu/iec.

Courtesy, permission and support provided by
MTSU Concrete Industry Management
and the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration

Published October 23, 2023