



North Alabama Mental Health Coalition
August 8, 2023

Attendees (in person):

David Battle (Partnership for Drug Free)
Rudolfo Chavez (SVDP)
Akeem Davis (Huntsville Hospital)
Amy Gillott (Decatur West)
Tennille Harkins (Downtown Rescue Mission)
Stephanie Jennings (Best Life Recovery)
Michael Mathis
Judith Moon (NAMI)
Mark Prescott (NAMI)
Dustin Spires (Madison Fire)
Don Webster (HEMSI)

Jennifer Blazer
Kayron Clay (Serenity Communities)
La'trisha Coats Fletcher (DHR)
Kelli Glass (Wellstone)
Traci Harris (Elm Foundation)
Tammy Leeth (Wellstone)
Cheryl McClendon (Wellstone/WES)
Jan Neighbors (HAPC)
Julie Schenck-Brown (Huntsville Police)
Jenny Stang (Alabama Lifespan Respite)
Mack Yates (SVDP/VOP)

Darlene Burton (Salvation Army)
Gina Cushing (Our Place)
Jennifer Geist (First Stop)
Kelly Goff (ADMH)
Daelyn Houser (Wellstone)
Mary Elizabeth Marr (Thrive Alabama)
Tealacy Mitchell (Thrive Alabama)
Mia Pile (Pain Unwasted)
Ashley Smith (Salvation Army)
Randall Stanley (NACH)

Welcome and Introductions

Introductions are important because you need to find out who you need to talk with.

Mia Pile – Oakwood University

Mia Pile, Mental Health Instructor and Speaker, shared with the group about an upcoming conference at Oakwood University called “Healthy Head and Heart”. The conference will be held on Sunday, August 20 from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm at the Oakwood University Church – Family Life Center.



Mack Yates – SVDP / VOP

Mack Yates, NAMHC and SVDP Chairman, discussed the much-needed new pediatric psychiatric unit under construction at Wellstone. The estimated completion date is Summer 2024. Mack also shared that Decatur West’s pediatric psychiatric unit has grown from 12 beds to 48 beds.

Gina Cushing – Our Place

Gina Cushing shared information about Our Place, a drop-in center for adults with mental illness. Their hours of operation are Monday-Thursday, 10am-4pm. Our Place, financed by the Alabama Department of Mental Health, provides a safe place for mentally ill adults to socialize with their peers. Other services include educational classes, recreational activities and lunch. All services are free of charge. More details can be found on their website at <https://www.ourplacehsv.org/>.

Mark Prescott – NAMI Huntsville

Mark Prescott, Executive Director with the Huntsville chapter of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) reviewed NAMI Huntsville's programs. NAMI provides advocacy, public awareness, and education/support. Mark highlighted their 5 main programs, all of which are free of charge: 1.) Family-to-Family; 2.) Family Support Group; 3.) In Our Own Voice; 4.) Connection Recovery Support Group; and 5.) Peer-to-Peer. Details can be found on their website is <https://namihuntsville.org/>

Mary Elizabeth Marr – Thrive Alabama

Mary Elizabeth Marr, CEO of Thrive Alabama, stated that Thrive Alabama is a federally qualified healthcare center that provides a range of services including primary medical care, behavioral health, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS prevention/testing, and community education. Thrive Alabama is located in several locations throughout north Alabama. They hope to break ground soon on a new 72,000 square foot facility. Thrive Alabama's website is <https://thrivealabama.org/>.

Traci Harris – ELM Foundation / Community Connections

Traci Harris, Case Manager with the ELM Foundation, mentioned that the August Community Connections meeting will focus on Mental Health. She invited all to attend. Here is the link to more information: <https://www.elmhsv.org/events/august-community-connections-meeting-mental-health>.

Next Meeting
Tuesday September 12, 2023
11:00 am at Wellstone