

## November Meeting Summary: The Opioid Abatement Fund in Anderson County with Ebony Capshaw

11-24-2025 at The Clinton Community Center

Ebony Capshaw, Anderson County Commissioner for District 6, presented an informative summary of the Opioid Abatement Fund in Anderson County – where the money came from and where it is going.



Of the total \$50 billion dollars in the settlement fund, from drug companies and pharmacy chains, Tennessee was awarded approximately \$1 billion dollars to be spent over the next 18 years. The counties are all vying for a piece of the \$1B pie, with priority going to counties such as Anderson County with higher than average use and overdose statistics. The money is to be spent on prevention and remediation, with yearly applications (including a plan for the money) and year-end reporting mandatory.

In 2019, the last year of rolled-up statistics, there were 46 opioid related deaths and 81 overdoses (costing a total of \$399,000 for those hospital stays). There were 7 prescriptions for opioids per 10 county residents. 9% of Anderson County

adults were uninsured, compared to 6% in the top US counties.

Each county can determine its own award process. Some counties award to large established organizations over multiple years. The Anderson County Commission established an ongoing committee to oversee awards and distribution. Anderson County awards funds to smaller projects (\$60,000 maximum award) and for a single year at a time. The hope is that having more organizations working toward the goal in their own ways will make a larger impact overall for Anderson County residents.

There were 15 awards totalling \$425,000 in the first award cycle (2025), and the outcomes from those programs will, in part, determine the total award available for 2026. There is also a portion of the total award retained by the county for county remediation programs.

Ebony talked the group through the application process – a thorough, competitive, and transparent process. Stumbling blocks for some of the applicants were documenting the

plan of how the money would be spent, how they would measure the outcomes, and then reporting on those outcomes. The funds should also supplement the organization's existing funding, and cannot be used for administrative or indirect organizational costs. The application window for the 2025-2026 cycle is closing on December 15, 2025.

Ebony M. Capshaw is an Oak Ridge native and Anderson County Commissioner. She is a 2025 Girls Inc. of Oak Ridge Bold Award winner, Leadership TN Next Class IX graduate and 2024 Emerge America Signature Bootcamp graduate. She is a seasoned leader who is passionate about driving positive change through effective leadership and has successfully led diverse teams toward achieving shared goals. Whether it's guiding projects in a corporate setting or steering volunteer efforts in local organizations, she consistently prioritizes clear communication, empathy, and a results-oriented approach.

Capshaw has experience in many roles focusing on policies and procedures with application, inventory management, automation, and data management with CVS Health, Cardinal Health, and the University of Miami. She also serves as an advisor and training coordinator with local colleges' pharmacy students and Co-Operative Education high school students. Ms. Capshaw also serves on the Free Medical Clinic of Oak Ridge Board of Directors, Anderson County Democratic Women's Club Executive Board, RAM Clinic volunteer, TCCA Emergency Services committee, Youth Leader at Greater Warner Tabernacle AME Zion Church, and East TN Regional Medical Reserve Corps volunteer. She has previously served in many roles such as TNDP State Executive Committeewoman, Child Advocacy Center of Anderson County, TN Board of Directors, Roane State Community College Pharmacy Technician Program Advisory Board member, 2nd Vice President for the Knoxville NAACP, TN State Conference NAACP Executive Committee Member-At-Large, and ran as a 2018 Anderson County Trustee candidate. Capshaw is passionate about educating and exposing youth to HBCUs and STEM opportunities. She enjoys reading, traveling, ballroom dancing, and cooking. She believes in living her CAU mottoes every day by having a "Culture for Service" mindset and "I'll Find a Way or Make One" attitude.