

DRUG-FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION

MEETING MINUTES

12-10-2024

INTENDED OUTCOMES OF MEETING:

Share status of community connections/meetings, upcoming events and build knowledge/capability.

AGENDA ITEMS:

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS: D-FAC Website: <https://www.drugfreeac.org>

The meeting of the DRUG-FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION was called to order at 4:00 p.m. on December 10, 2024, at UAM-CTC in person and on ZOOM by Eric Shoffner, Chair 2024/2025.

IN PERSON		ZOOM	
MSgt Josh Adams [Guest]	Mary Fleming [Guest]	Mike Neal	Joycelyn Pettus, DHS [Guest]
Tempest Alexander	Victoria Herrea	McKenzi Reynolds	Linda Rushing
Alexis Anderson [Guest]	Katie Hernandez	Arlyn Richards	
Christi Carter	Harry Hillier	Lisa Riels	
Janie Carter	Ephraim Johnson	Daniel Shelton, Jr.	
Ronnie Donaldson	Judah Morris	Eric Shoffner	
Avery Fleming [Guest]	Mandy Morris	Sarah Stagg	
Chase Fleming [Guest]	River Morris	Kristi Stocker	
Courtney Fleming [Guest]	Tank Morris	Liz White	
Don Paul Fleming [Guest]	Chief Johnny Oliver	Johnna Young [Guest]	

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Noting a correction needed in the first paragraph to change September to November, minutes from the November 12, 2024, meeting were approved as corrected with Eric initiating the motion and Mike Neal following with a second. The motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/INTRODUCTIONS: The Region 4 Partnership for Success Director Tempest Alexander introduced her colleague, Alexis Anderson. Mandy Morris introduced her guests: Don Paul, Courtney, Chase, Avery, and Mary Fleming who are a Home-School family. Mandy also introduced her older daughter, Johnna.

NEW MEMBERS: Youth Sector Leader, McKenzie Reynolds (McKenzi is an 8th Grade student at Hamburg Middle School and was introduced to the membership by Coordinator Lisa Riels.)



REPORT ON

NOVEMBER/EARLY DECEMBER EVENTS:

November 6-7, 2024 Annual Overdose Summit sponsored by Arkansas Attorney General's Office, attended by Chairman Eric Shoffner and DFC Coordinators

Coordinators Lisa Riels and Liz White reported on activities with student leaders in both schools and visited the Healing Waters Ministry in Shannon Hills where items were donated by Robert Holt for a Christmas Nursing Home community service project by student prevention leaders and door prizes for the annual Christmas meeting.

December 4, 2024 Thirty-one students and 12 adult sponsors/volunteers delivered Christmas gift bags filled with candy/snacks, lotions, pens/memo pads to the Stonegate and Nightengale Nursing Homes in Crossett. Students were received with great appreciation and excitement from residents. Administrators and caregivers explained opportunities for further service to the students. Afterwards, students were rewarded with pizza and snacks at the University of Arkansas at Monticello College of Technology-Crossett. While at UAM-CTC, Ms. Teresa Tolliver told students about the Career Pathways Program that could benefit their parents in attending college.

DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS: Program presenters are needed for 2025! Please let Mike and your Sector Leaders know if you are feeling like it is your turn to express why your sector is important to the work of the D-FAC Coalition!

COALITION SECTOR	REPRESENTATIVE
Youth	McKenzi Reynolds
Parents	Mandy Morris
Law Enforcement	HPD Chief Johnny Oliver
Education	Tracy Streeter
Businesses	Kristi Stocker

Media	Dennis Maxwell
Youth-Serving Organizations	Roshunda Davis Johnson
Faith-Based Organizations	Ronnie Donaldson
Civic & Volunteer Groups	Sherri Maxwell Hendrix
Healthcare Professionals	Dr. Barron Griffin
State, local & tribal agencies	Sharron Mims
Treatment	Yolanda Johnson-Martin

PROGRAM: Chairman (& Pastor of Crossett Church of God) Mike Neal presented the December program representing the Faith-Based Sector and in honor of Christ and His birth that we celebrate at Christmas. Mike stated that two emotions strike him as part of the Christmas Story: Joy and Forgiveness. Joy and joyfulness because of the birth of the Savior of humanity. From Luke 2, he quoted the angels as saying of Jesus' birth: "will bring great JOY to all." Mike poignantly reminded us that not everyone is filled with the same joy or happiness during holidays because of losses of loved ones, desperate conditions or bad decisions. So, the other emotion he described was Forgiveness and how none of us deserve forgiveness, but that God provided for eternal forgiveness through his Son Jesus. In closing, Mike relayed a story written by Ernest Hemingway. Although accounts of the story vary, this is one version: *"In Ernest Hemingway's short story "Capital of the World," a Spanish newspaper, El Liberal, carried a poignant story about a father and his son. It went like this. A teen-aged boy, Paco, and his very wealthy father had a falling out, and the young man ran away from home. The father was crushed. After a few days, he realized that the boy was serious, so the father set out to find him. He searched high and low for five months to no avail. Finally, in a last, desperate attempt to find his son, the father put an ad in a Madrid newspaper. The ad read, "Dear Paco, Meet me at the Hotel Montana noon Tuesday. All is forgiven. I love you. Signed, Your Father." On Tuesday, in the office of Hotel Montana, police officers were called in to manage over 800 Pacos who showed up, looking for love and forgiveness from their fathers." We all want to be forgiven for our sins and mistakes. One account of the story stated that the "real" Paco did not show and ended up dying during bull-fighting training without reconciliation with his father. Mike stated that in our mission of substance use/abuse prevention, referral, and recovery, forgiveness is an important part of our work.*

AWARDS/RECOGNITION:

Members Recognized for Meeting Attendance and Event Participation: Christi Carter, Katie Hernandez, Jennifer Johnson

Outstanding Youth: Victoria Herrea

IT/Media Contributions: Dennis Maxwell (\$25,000 in-kind contributions for PSAs); Harry Hillier (Professional Publications-Welcome Guide and Brochure); Arlyn Richards (Zoom & Website management); Mike Neal (Facebook)

Business Contributions: Atwood's-Hot Dog Sale Cash Contribution; United Fund of Ashley County-Cash Contribution; Kristi Stocker (SE Insurance Co.)-Door Prizes & Events; Eric & Katrina Shoffner (Gammel's Pharmacy & Southern Spice)-Door Prizes & Events; Century Next Bank-Door Prizes & Cash Contribution; Robert Holt (Healing Waters Outreach Ministry/Shannon Hills)-Door Prizes; Harry & Cathie Hillier-Door Prizes & Events; Becky Hopper (Carlyne's)-Door Prizes; Gordon Strong (Cash Savers)-Discounts & Contributions; Nathaniel Brown (Brookshires)-Discounts & Contributions; Rawls-Campbell Realty-Door Prizes; Kirsten Mondragon (Key Florist)-Door Prize; Julie Roberson (Canfor Southern Pine)-Contributions for Youth Summit & Community Events; Tempest Alexander (Community Empowerment Council, Inc., Partnership for Success/Pine Bluff)-Mini-Grant Cash Contribution; Dr. Tracy Tucker (UAM College of Technology-Crossett)-Meeting Support; Hamburg First Baptist Church-Event Support; Mt. Olive Baptist Church-Event Support; Crossett United Methodist Church-Event Support; Ashley County Baptist Association-Donated Bibles for graduating senior youth members; Crossett & Hamburg Police Departments (Event Support); MSGT Josh Adams (Arkansas National Guard Counterdrug Unit)-Cash Donations; Hamburg School District & Crossett School District (Space, meeting time, event sponsorship, printing—too many things to list!)

A multitude of delicious food items and fun door prizes were enjoyed by all! Mike passed out words to Christmas carols, played his guitar, and the group sang *Silent Night* and *Away in a Manger*. It was a memorable meeting – the 3rd Annual D-FAC Christmas Celebration and a perfect drug-free gathering of family and friends.

In Kind Contributions: Coalition members were reminded to report in-kind service hours and donations to Janie Carter, Interim Treasurer.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at UAM College of Technology-Crossett

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 6 p.m. and minutes were submitted by Janie Carter.