President's Message from Haley Colvin

Fall is my favorite time of the year. I love the crisp morning air, beautiful colors painting the landscape across Tennessee, football Saturdays, and Thanksgiving. This season of change also leads us toward the end of a year and hopeful promise of things to come. As I sit here writing my first President's message and reflect on this year’s TPHA Annual Conference, I cannot help but feel so incredibly blessed to have the opportunity to serve alongside and learn from the best of the best public health professionals each day! Many thanks to Megan Quinn and Christian Williams who spearheaded the Program Committee this past year and gave us such a diverse and engaging host of speakers from whom we could glean knowledge and share experiences. I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Cathy Taylor for leading the charge for TPHA this past year. Thank you for teaching me, sharing with me, and being a confidante.

The 2018-2019 Board and Executive Committee led an effort to thoroughly review TPHA and begin the process of revitalizing TPHA from a foundational standpoint. The 2019-2020 Board and Executive Committee will be working diligently to accomplish the tasks outlined over the course of the previous year which we feel will benefit TPHA and its membership exponentially in the years to come. This will enable TPHA to move forward as a leading organization in Public Health.

I look forward to our time of serving together during this season of change and progress for TPHA. I hope you are as excited as I am about the future of this great organization!

All My Best,
Haley Colvin, MA, RD, LDN, CLC

Another Successful Educational Conference Etched in the Annals of TPHA History

Kim Harrell, Executive Director

Almost 600 came from near and far to the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs Hotel and Conference Center during September 11-13 for TPHA’s 76th annual educational conference. This year’s theme, Managing Change: Opportunities for Public Health Impact, encompassed a wide range of challenging issues and meaningful solutions presented by experts from within Tennessee and beyond. Keynote speaker, Dr. Gloria Wilder, started off the three-day event moving the audience to tears while talking about poverty and economic segregation in healthcare using her own personal story growing up in Brooklyn NY as the backdrop. Plenary speakers Robert Childs and Donnie Varnell shared lessons learned from a project in North Carolina that has successfully reduced drug overdoses through harm reduction and law enforcement partnerships. Interwoven throughout were 28 workshops that addressed issues like ACES, addiction, obesity and physical activity, infectious diseases, cross sector collaborations and community resiliency among others impacting public health in Tennessee today. Closing out the conference was plenary speaker Dr. Kathy Pearson whose entertaining presentation on leadership in times of uncertainty left us all with new tools and techniques to use going forward as we navigate these challenging times.

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On September 12, 2019, health educators traveled to the annual Tennessee Public Health Association Conference in Franklin, Tennessee to receive recognition for their groundbreaking grass roots initiative to change school board drug-testing policies in West Tennessee.

Using the Collective Impact strategy, the initiative began in 2018 with a committee of regional health department staff along with other regional stakeholders and led to the "Athletes: Keeping Them in the Game Opioid Summit in June 2019; the first of its kind in the state. The purpose of the summit was to raise awareness of the increased incidence of opioid misuse among athletes. The targeted audience was 100 coaches, athletic directors and other school personnel. This was not an easy task given that schools were on summer recess. However, health educators wear several hats and one that they wear well is making one-on-one contact with community partners. As a team, not only did they exceed the targeted number, but on the day of the summit, they worked together to assure that all summit details were carried out in grand fashion.

Prior to the summit, only one county in the region had a school-based mandatory random drug-testing policy for athletes. As a follow-up to the summit, six counties are now pursuing school-based drug-testing policy change. It has been said that health problems begin and end in the community. The 2019 Public Health Group Award is one indicator of the meaningful work accomplished by a dedicated team of health educators in West Tennessee.
Soda-Free Summer in Robertson County
Submitted by Olivia Spooner, A&P Coordinator

The Robertson County Health Department hosted the third annual soda free summer this past summer. The challenge encouraged everyone to be "soda free" for the months of June and July, while focusing on living a healthy lifestyle and drinking lots of water. With obesity, diabetes, and heart disease on the rise, it’s important that we make a change today. Sugary drinks are the #1 added source of sugar in our diet. By making the pledge to drink water instead of soda, you are decreasing your risk of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and oral health problems.

We had a total of 281 Robertson County residents take the challenge at being soda free. Through community support and donations, we were able to host an end of summer party at the local YMCA for all who participated in the challenge. Those who were successful got a chance to win some awesome prizes. We are thankful that this soda free summer was another success and look forward to hosting a fourth year!

Annual Healthy Kids Summit in Lawrence County
Submitted by Madison Toney, A&P Coordinator

The Lawrence County Health Department partnered with the Lawrence County Health Council and David Crockett State Park to sponsor the fourth Annual Healthy Kids Summit at David Crockett State Park on Saturday, September 7, 2019. The promotional event was held to educate, encourage, and provide information on healthy behaviors and local resources to students and their families. The event was open to kindergarten through sixth-grade students and their families. Over 240 students, family members, and volunteers were present. Informational booths and activities included representatives from the Lawrence County Special Olympics (Bocce Ball), Lawrence County Substance Abuse Coalition (drug safety), Lawrence County Health Department (school-based dental program and dental information), A Kid’s Place Child Advocacy Center (recognizing “tricky” people), and many more. Physical activity booths included “touch a truck,” obstacle courses, parachute run, inflatables, and badminton. Thanks to the generosity of multiple Lawrence County businesses, door prizes were given away and all students received tobacco education goody bags along with water bottles, lunch boxes, and jump ropes featuring #TNSTRONG.
Carter County launches Storybook Trail promoting family fun & literacy: 1,000 steps of engaging and interactive fun
Submitted by Kristen Spencer, Northeast Region

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation-Kids Count Data Center, 41.7% of youth in Carter County are obese, which is significantly higher than the national average. To combat obesity in Carter County, Grow Carter County, the Healthier Tennessee Community campaign, collaborated with the Carter County Health Department to unveil the Storybook Trail on December 5, 2018.

The Storybook Trail is an interactive trail that allows children and their families to read a story with engaging literacy stations along the way. A deconstructed picture book is assembled at each station containing multiple pages. Interactive books are rotated on a quarterly basis exhibiting elements of physical activity, health and nutrition. The mutual goal of the Storybook Trail is to increase physical activity among Tennesseans and encourage families to get moving, spend time together and read!

Northeast Region's Community Services Team taking a moment to enjoy the Storybook Trail. Pictured left to right: Terry Henson, Community Services Director; Jayne Harper, Health Council Coordinator; Ashley Davies, Healthy Development Coordinator

Physical Activity Clubs in Upper Cumberland
Submitted by Kayla French, Community Health Promotion Director

The Upper Cumberland Region has been moving with physical activity! Since August 2018, there have been 24 physical activity clubs with a total of 1,198 participants, 29,743.47 miles traveled, and 4,110 recorded minutes of physical activity. Physical activity clubs include adults and youth through programs such as Morning Movement, Walk with the Doc, and Focused Fitness After-School Curriculum incorporated into summer child care and after-school care programs. Upper Cumberland Health Educators were trained on the Focused Fitness After-School Curriculum in June, and plan to incorporate it with Physical Activity Clubs during the current school year.

The Upper Cumberland Region plans to continue increasing the number of new physical activity groups with the purpose of encouraging our communities to move. “We have been very excited to see participants join a physical activity group for their second or third year”, stated Kayla French, Community Health Promotion Director. After piloting in Fentress County, the staff will begin using EZ Scan®. Utilizing QR codes, the EZ Scan® manages outcome data for easier maintenance and retrieval. The Upper Cumberland team is excited to begin working with our students for a fun-filled, physically active school year!

DONATE TO THE TPHA SILENT AUCTION!

Contact Tatum Johnson at tatum.johnson@nashville.gov to donate or join the Silent Auction Committee.

All money raised from the Annual Silent Auction goes to the scholarship fund.
Staff in the East Region collaborated with the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network for the third annual “Speak Up, Save Lives” T-shirt and social media campaign. Friday September 27th, the TSPN urged state residents to speak up against the silence and stigma surrounding suicide. Participants, individuals as well as employees at participating organizations, were encouraged to wear their shirts (provided by the TSPN) and share photos across all social media platforms with the hashtag #SpeakUpSaveLives2019. It’s an easy conversation starter for people and is aligned with September, which is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.

Suicide prevention is an important issue and three of the Health Educators in the East Region are trained QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) presenters. There’s this misconception that if you talk about suicide or bring it up, it’s going to put the thought into someone’s head, and that’s a huge myth. More importantly, TSPN can help individuals find the fortitude they need to ask difficult questions because their experience has shown, and statistics back up, the fact that those questions are better asked before becoming rhetorical ones in the wake of a suicide. The idea is to spread a message of hope and remind fellow Tennesseans that suicide is an issue that deserves a conversation and a place at the table among other mental health issues.

Speak Up | Save Lives
Submitted by Diana Saia, Tobacco & Health Promotion Director
The amount of work that is required prior to and during the conference is something very few people truly understand unless they are on one of the committees associated with TPHA’s signature event. Planning began soon after last year’s conference when Program Committee Chair, Megan Quinn, and Co-chair, Christian Williams, organized a team of TPHA members to determine the theme for 2019. Once determined, the theme drove a frenzy of activities such as selection of topics, securing speakers, artwork and production of conference materials – and this was only the pre-conference work done by the Program Committee!

Meanwhile, four very painstakingly objective and time-consuming processes were underway. Carrie Thomas and her Scholarship committee were soliciting and vetting scholarship applications, Jennifer Valentine and her Awards committee were doing similar work to determine annual awards winners as was Kimberly Glenn and her Poster committee to select poster abstract submissions for display at the conference. Dana Mulcahy and her Continuing Education committee were gathering speaker information, completing applications and seeking approval from the accreditation organizations used by TPHA to offer CEUs/CNEs/CMEs at the conference.

Managing income and expenses is an important element to conference planning efforts as well. Tatum Johnson and her Silent Auction committee along with considerable contribution from the Regional and Metro Directors secured donations for the Silent Auction, which netted more than $5,500 this year for TPHA’s scholarship funds. Chelsea Ridley, Sponsorship and Exhibits chair, and Kim Harrell tag teamed on soliciting sponsorships and exhibitors bringing in more than $21,000 to offset conference costs, and Ami Mitchell and her Arrangements committee deftly minimized conference expenses while orchestrating details behind the scenes making the conference go as planned and seemingly without effort.

No matter how well planned the conference is, “game day” always has its risks requiring a team onsite to deal with the unexpected as they arise. When not addressing the various and sundry needs of speakers, Megan Quinn and Christian Williams clandestinely moved from room to room loading power point presentations and otherwise ensuring that all was in order for their team of facilitators to begin workshops on time. LeeAnne Kelley and her Registration committee members, aka the Enforcers, remained onsite the entire time putting together attendee packets, checking folks in, registering walk-ins, updating databases and supporting the other committees’ requests as needed.

Finally, no TPHA conference recap is complete without mention of Thursday night’s Fun and Fitness activities. Game of Thrones, the theme selected by avid fan and TPHA President Cathy Taylor, required neophyte Joey Goss to take a crash course in all things GOT. Joey must have taken Cersei’s words to Ned Stark in season 1 to heart – “when you play the game of thrones, you win or die” – because he and his committee members seemed to have taken a do or die approach given the outrageous creativity on display that evening. All participating teams appeared equally inspired. Hmmm, it makes one wonder what kind of work TPHA members would be doing if not in public health.

More than 100 members worked to make this year’s conference a resounding success. Join me in applauding their efforts and thanking them for their great work. While you’re at it, please consider joining us next year.
Annual Award Winners

Pictured with TPHA President Cathy Taylor and Health Commissioner, Lisa Piercey

RH Hutcheson Sr MD Award Winner Gail Harmon with son Xavier and nominator Melissa Davis

Public Health Group Award Winner: West Region Health Educators, with Myrtle Russell

PAL Group Award Winner Loudon County Juvenile Services Tobacco Program, with Teresa Harrill

Alex B Shipley Award Winner Rebekah English, with Dr. Alisa Cade

Public Health Worker Award Winner Laura Conner

Doris Spain Distinguished Service Award Winner Dr. Cathy Taylor

PAL Award Winner Shawn McDowell with Catherine Sedergren
Poster Winner Muna Muday for her work with Jaquelyn Favours, on *Addressing Access to Healthcare with a Collaborative Approach to Standardize the Community Health Worker Profession in Tennessee*

Keynote Speaker: 
Dr. Gloria Wilder

Franklin’s Mayor: 
Dr. Ken Moore

Please send comments, corrections, submissions, and queries to savannahcmorrow@gmail.com
Thank you, Exhibitors!

Great Job, Students!
GAME OF THRONES

Winter is Coming…
Get your Flu Shot!

Spirit Stick Winners: Central Office Team