

WAMH NEWS

WAMH & WAL-MART PARTNER FOR SUCCESS!

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Special points of interest:

- Parris—Barnes appointed to ARAC
- Andrea Cevasco, Ph.D.
- Peer Support
- Local Planning
- Well Wishes for Harrison Black

The Alabama Association for Persons in Supported Employment (AL-APSE) was formed to improve and expand integrated employment opportunities, services, and outcomes for persons experiencing disabilities.

Supported employment enables people with disabilities who have not been successfully employed to work and contribute to society. Supported employment focuses on a person's abilities and provides the supports the individual needs to be successful on a long-term basis.

Supported employment encourages the development and expansion of employment with supports through coordination,

collaboration, communication and choice by way of a team effort.

WAL-MART, DEMOPOLIS RECEIVES THE AL-APSE LARGE EMPLOYER AWARD 2007

The Large Employer Award is presented to employers with 25 or more employees. Wal-Mart was selected for outstanding achievement in enhancing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The management has been very supportive in making allowances in the schedules to meet the needs of

WAMHC consumers for assistance with transportation, scheduling and benefit issues.

Supported employment staff have been embraced and encouraged to have a very visible presence at the store in order to assist and train consumers to complete assigned job tasks and other responsibilities.

Doris Stephens, Personnel Director accepted the award. Ms. Stephens indicated, "Wal-Mart Demopolis Super-center appreciates the contributions of the individuals placed by the supported employment program."

PAT MOORE, ASST. DIRECTOR WAMH; NATASHA GRENE, JOB COACH; DORIS STEPHENS, PERSONNEL DIRECTOR; DEBRA MOORE, SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT COORDINATOR



PARRIS-BARNES APPOINTED HEALTHCARE COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR ON THE RURAL ACTION COMMISSION FOR REGION "6"

Kelley Parris-Barnes has been appointed Co-Chair of the Health Committee for the Rural Action Commission by **Governor Bob Riley**. Former **Senator Gerald Dial** serves as Executive Director of the ARAC.

The ARAC was formed to build upon the community-based model of the Black Belt Action Commission. The commission is charged with taking existing studies and creating new partnerships to implement actionable items that will improve the lives of our rural citizens. The commission's mission is to build collaborative teams to address key issues at the grass-

roots and policy level.

There will be eight active regional efforts associated with the ARAC and they will focus on measurably improving health care, education, economic development and workforce development in the various regions.

Parris-Barnes began working with Senator Dial and several other legislators at the beginning of the legislative session. Areas of concern were centered parity in healthcare between the rural and urban regions of the state. An acute shortage of Psychiatrist in the Black Belt region as well as RN's, LPN's, Social

Workers, Licensed Counselors, Licensed Therapist, telemedicine and IT capabilities were all topics of major concern. "I have great faith in Senator Dial's leadership and confident this will make a difference in Region 6", according to Parris-Barnes.

We are working on securing a Bristol-Myers Squibb pilot in the area; in the process we have developed partnerships with the University of Alabama; Auburn's Rural Studio, the University of South Alabama and have support for the development of a broader infrastructure for IT capability.



WAMH SUMMER CAMP A GREAT SUCCESS!

Special Thanks to:

Andrea Cevasco, PhD,
Asst. Professor of Music Therapy, U of A;

Anna Stephenson,
student volunteer;

Heather Thomas, U of A,
student volunteer



Kelley Parris-Barnes recently met with **Samory T. Pruitt, Ph.D., Vice President for Community Affairs** and a host of professors at the University of Alabama to explore projects which WAMH and U of A can form a collaborative partnership. The proposed Bristol-Myers Squibb project may indeed open a window of opportunity to establish some

sustainable projects that would improve the quality of life for citizens in our area.

Out of this process **Assistant Professor of Music Therapy, Andrea Cevaso, PhD.,** offered to provide music therapy with her graduate students to participants in WAMH's summer camps.

Anna Stephenson, and Heather Thomas, music therapy students along with Professor Cevaso, worked with children from age 8-14 in Hale and Marengo counties.

Music Therapy was presented to the children to help deal with stress, peer pressure and family conflict. **THANK YOU Andrea, Anna and Heather!**

AROUND THE HORN....

WAMH welcomes the return of **Barbara Ward** as an outpatient therapist in the Marengo office.

The staff in the Sumter county office would like to extend their sincere thanks to the staff of the Sumter County Health Department for assisting WAMH consumers with needed information and medication assistance. **DeLinda Lampley**
Doris Nix
Opelia Bush
DeAnn Flemings
Stacy Hill
Greg Dunn

Debor Williams
Johnnie Sanders
Wanda Atkins

Happy Birthday to the following staff: September
Claudie Allen 1; Rachel Coleman, 5; Rosanne Masse, 8; Bridget Charles, 11; Jenetta Mitchell, 18; Cynthia Washington, 2; Barbara Ward, 29; Cynthia Taylor, 29; Brenda Tucker, 30.

October:
Jeanifer Monghan, 2; Wymon Knighton, 3; Latoya Bates, 16; Marilyn Williams, 21; John Stephens, 22; Deborah Wilson, 23; Lisa Armstead, 24;

Cheryl Moore, 25; Leon Hildreth, 25; Michelle Graham, 27; Angela Smith, 31; Valarie Walton, 31.

November:
Patricia Moore, 4; Terry Russele, 9; Sara Drinkard, 23; Mattie Killings, 29.
 HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Congratulations to **Tamekia Prince** on the birth of a healthy baby girl, **Hannah Alexia**, 5.9lbs. June 21.

Keep **Harrison Black** in your prayers for a speedy recovery from brain surgery.

Rules for being human:

You will receive a body. You may like it or hate it, but it will be yours for the entire period this time around.

Cherie Carter-Scott



The Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation will be funding positions across the state for Peer Support Specialist. These positions will reinforce the Recovery Based model of treatment adopted to empower consumers of mental health services to live and work in the least restrictive

PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST

community setting.

Each consumer sets his / her goals by exploring individual strengths and weaknesses and the Peer Support Specialist will assist in the development and acquisition of needed skills and resources to strengthen the stated goals. The Peer Supports Program will offer a



range of skill building and recovery activities developed and driven by consumers.

The Peer Support Specialist will be trained by consulting staff from the State Department of Mental Health and must pass a certification exam. Please contact your local office for an application or 334-289-2600X26



Consumers and stakeholders of mental health services in our five county are will be invited to participate in our area planning for services. Area planning in the past has been accomplished through

LOCAL PLANNING

town hall meetings and annual stakeholder surveys but this will be an exciting new process to get consumers, family members and stakeholders together from the entire coverage area.

The Department of Mental Health under the leadership of **Commissioner John Houston** has realized the importance of, and need to, project

capacity in the system down the road. They have also anticipated the hardship in rural areas concerning transportation and are prepared to offer stipends to relieve that burden on planning participants. WAMH's date has not been set but if you are interested in participating please call and let us know we will send the appropriate information and look forward to accepting your input!

1-334-289-2600 X 26

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Mental Health
Matters

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A GET WELL WISH FROM WAMH STAFF



The staff of WAMH were devastated to learn our good friend and long time co-worker (now director of St. Andrews in Birmingham), **Harrison Black** was diagnosed with a benign brain tumor and underwent surgery Tuesday, August 28. The surgery was a success; when the staff gathered for their agency cook-out; a call was placed to Harrison so everyone could wish him a speedy recovery. Harrison is home at this time and resting well. A HUGE GET WELL SOON FROM ALL OF US TO YOU!

Sincerely, WAMH Staff and Board