

First Responder Appreciation Week: Showing Thanks and Appreciation Year-Round

The week of September 20 - 26 was the statewide celebration of First Responder Appreciation Week, which is a time to thank first responders for their care and compassion when responding to overdoses and administering Narcan to save lives.

First responders bring help and hope year-round, so the ADAMHS Board wanted to find a way to keep the thanks going all year-round too! This year, we created a [calendar](#) that includes a collection of thank you messages from individuals in recovery from substance use disorders who wanted to thank first responders for saving their lives and helping them reach recovery. First Responders throughout Cuyahoga County received calendars in the mail. You can also view and share [this video](#) of the thank you messages.

At the ADAMHS Board, we know that treatment works and people recover. First responders often don't get to see the outcomes for the individuals they've helped. We hope these thank you messages bring encouragement to first responders across the county and let them know how valued they are by individuals in recovery. Over the next year, we hope the messages of thanks and appreciation give first responders renewed hope and compassion to do the challenging work they do every day.

This project was made possible by a mini-grant from the [Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities](#) (OACBHA) and a donation from the [Academy of Medicine Education Foundation](#) (AMEF). AMEF is the charitable arm of the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio (AMCNO). AMEF's mission is to enhance health care through education of the medical profession and the community at large.



Meeting with OhioMHAS to Discuss Suicide Prevention Efforts

In August, a group of staff members and suicide prevention partners met with individuals from the **Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services** (OhioMHAS) to talk about what we are seeing locally related to suicide and what suicide prevention efforts are in place.

ADAMHS Board staff shared with OhioMHAS that so far in 2020, Cuyahoga County has had less deaths by suicide than last year at this time by about fifty percent. However, in the past three months, calls to the crisis hotline have increased from approximately 1,200 calls per month on average to about 1,600 calls per month on average. State Epicenter data shows that over the last eight weeks, an average of 26.3 individuals have presented to local hospitals for suspected (not confirmed) suicide attempts each week. The Medical Examiner's data also shows a slight increase in deaths by suicide for August and the beginning of September. OhioMHAS, the ADAMHS Board, and its partners in suicide prevention have agreed to keep a close eye on data, and support one another through the mental health impact of the pandemic.

Raising Awareness During Recovery Month and Suicide Prevention Month

Recovery Month and Suicide Prevention Month are more important than ever, and the ADAMHS Board is working on a few efforts to support both of these awareness initiatives. The Board is working with the **Healing Communities Study** on an MAT stigma-reduction campaign, which will showcase individuals in recovery living their best lives (*see example image below*). We are working to collect



a few stories from individuals in recovery to use as part of this campaign. The ADAMHS Board is also working with Eaton again to promote suicide prevention and mental health awareness, including doing a QPR training for their staff. Resources were shared throughout September in email updates and on social media.

ADAMHS Board Hosted Its Strategic Planning Summit

The ADAMHS Board of Directors approved a contract with **RAMA Consulting Group, Inc.** to work on the ADAMHS Board Five-year Strategic Plan. As part of the planning process, a virtual Strategic Planning Summit was held via Zoom on August 31, to gather input from internal and external stakeholders. During the Summit, stakeholders built upon recommendations from the local needs assessment, and shared thoughts about the organization's priorities and strategic direction. Thank you to everyone who participated in the summit!

2020 Community Plan

Each ADAMHS Board is required by Ohio law to prepare and submit to OhioMHAS a community mental health and addiction services plan for its service area. The plan is prepared in accordance with guidelines established by **OhioMHAS** in consultation with Board representatives. A Community Plan approved in whole or in part by **OhioMHAS** is a necessary component in establishing Board eligibility to receive State and Federal funds and is in effect until OhioMHAS approves a subsequent Community Plan. You can view the Cuyahoga County community plans [here](#).

ADAMHS Board Invites Partners to Join the Work Group to Eliminate Structural Racism in Behavioral Health Care

On June 24, the ADAMHS Board of Directors passed **Resolution No. 20-06-01 declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis**. The ADAMHS Board will work with its partners to plan immediate, short term and long-term goals for eliminating structural racism in the behavioral health community by upholding the recommendations in the resolution. We invite all of our partners to join us in developing the strategic plan for addressing racism and implementing solutions to eliminate structural racism in behavioral healthcare. The first work group meeting will be held virtually on October 5 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. Registration is required, [click here to register](#).

Cuyahoga County's Overdose Fatality Review Committee Puts Recommendations into Action with Trainings for Judges, Attorneys and Drug Court Professionals

The **Cuyahoga County Overdose Fatality Review Committee** is facilitated by the **Cuyahoga County Board of Health** and the **Medical Examiner's Office**, and held in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders including the ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County, the justice system, law enforcement, hospitals, children and family services and local providers. During case reviews, the group looks for trends and opportunities for intervention and prevention of fatalities from drug overdoses. (continued)

"Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you."

– Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Former Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, 1933 – 2020

(*OD fatality review continued...*) One trend the group found is that Black/African American individuals who died by overdose have justice system involvement, but not often with drug or other diversionary courts. The group wanted to create environmental change by educating judges, attorneys and drug court professional about disparities in drug court referrals and inclusion. In response, the ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County sought and was awarded funding from the **Ohio Overdose Prevention Network** to host two separate trainings for this target audience.

The first training, *Opioid Overdoses Are on The Rise But African Americans in Drug Court Are Not*, was held on August 25, to bring light to the barriers for inclusion in diversion courts and solutions to address those barriers and ensure equitable access to drug court for all populations. The training was presented by **Guy Wheeler** and **Darryl Turpin** of **Pinwheel Group**, who have decades of experience working with drug courts and treatment engagement for communities of color.

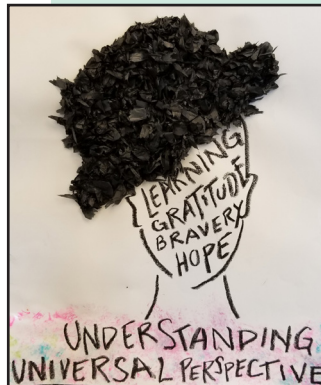
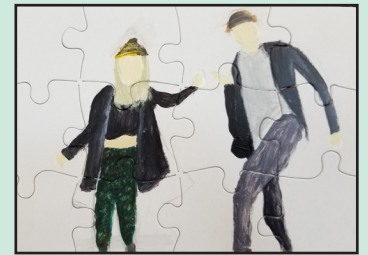
On September 15, **The National Association of Drug Court Professionals** hosted the second training on implementing their *Equity and Inclusion Toolkit* to ensure best practice standards in specialty dockets, like drug court. Racial disparities in drug and other treatment courts continues to be a challenge as it relates to access, engagement, retention, and service delivery. The *Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards* state that citizens who have, "historically experienced sustained discrimination or reduced social opportunities because of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, physical or mental disability, religion, or socioeconomic status receive the same opportunities as others." This session explored how a drug court and the attorneys who refer to it can ensure equivalent access, retention, treatment, incentives and sanctions, dispositions, and provide team training on specific issues.

The incredible community collaboration in Cuyahoga County makes trainings like this one possible. The **Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association** sponsored CLEs to get attorneys and Judges involved. Community stakeholders continually put the well-being of Cuyahoga County residents first by coming together to address the opioid epidemic from all angles. In these efforts, we find successes we never thought possible, and lives are saved because people are connected to treatment. Let's continue to come together to address disparities and substance use disorders head on.

Training Update

ADAMHS Board virtual trainings are in full swing! Between May and August, 48 virtual trainings were held serving 1,144 individuals. Fall training institute workshops are starting, and the full list of virtual trainings being offered can be found [here](#).

In the [July Recovery in Action newsletter](#), we shared that, in partnership with **Cuyahoga Community College Public Safety Division**, the ADAMHS Board and other partners presented to the **Cuyahoga County Council's Public Safety Committee** about a countywide police training initiative. Since then, the proposal has been accepted. Training starts this month, and will include a series of modules related to community policing; Law Enforcement's Role in Mass Gatherings, Protest & Riots; Law Enforcement Reform; An Introduction to Understanding Bias; Introduction and Overview to Blue Courage: The Heart and Mindset of the Guardian; and, Profiles of People in Crisis: Communication and De-escalation Parts I and II. The ADAMHS Board and **NAMI Greater Cleveland** are co-presenters for the Profiles of People in Crisis section.



Staff Updates



We welcome **Heather Hall** who joined the ADAMHS Board staff on August 3 as the Administrative Assistant II for the Clinical Unit. Heather was looking for a career change when she came across this position with the ADAMHS Board. It is a challenging time to start a new job, but Heather assures us that she and her dog Lulu (pictured left) are very much enjoying working from home. Heather looks forward to learning the ins and outs of the Board,

and also perhaps working in the office at some point! You can reach Heather at hall@adamhsc.org.

LaVedia Smith, BSN-BC, Adult Clinical Utilization Review Specialist, retired from the ADAMHS Board in September. We wish her the best in her retirement!

Virtual Client Meetings

The ADAMHS Board hosts monthly virtual client information meetings. In August, clients heard from the **MetroHealth System** about taking care of your mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic; ways to recognize symptoms, triggers, and how to support oneself while isolated. At the August meeting, clients also heard about how to complete the Census, how to register to vote and options for how to vote. At the September meeting, representatives from **May Dugan Center** and **University Settlement** shared information about community food pantries.



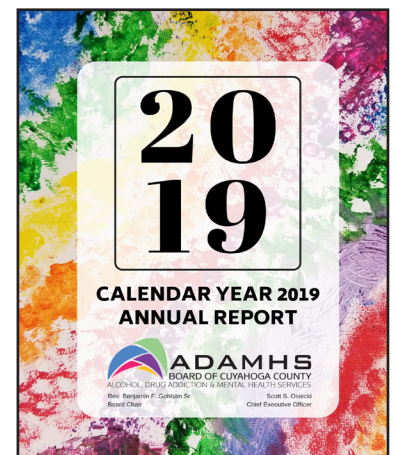
Monthly Virtual Client Art Display Program

The monthly art display program that showcases client artwork is now virtual! This month, we are celebrating Recovery Month with a virtual art display from **Far West Center's Art Helps and Heals (AHH!)** program, which uses art to support mental health recovery. To enjoy this month's art, [click here](#).

Annual Report to be Released at October General Meeting

The October 28 General Board Meeting will act as this year's annual meeting. At the meeting, held on Zoom, the 2019 Annual Report will be accepted. A copy of the annual report will be available on the ADAMHS Board website following the meeting.

The 2021 Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 10 of next year.



Community News

Hitchcock Center for Women Named New Executive Director

In August, **Jason Joyce** became the new Executive Director of **Hitchcock Center for Women**. Prior to joining Hitchcock, he served as the Chief Clinical Officer at **Recovery Resources**. Jason is the current president of the **Council of Agency Directors** and Subcommittee Chair on Addictions for the **Mental Health & Addiction Advocacy Coalition**. Congratulations, Jason!

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Congratulations to Megan Van Voorhis!

Former member of the ADAMHS Board of Directors, **Megan Van Voorhis** was selected by the City of Sacramento to serve as the Cultural & Creative Economy Manager following a national executive search process led by **Arts Consulting Group**. She began her new role in September. The Board and staff would like to congratulate Megan on this wonderful opportunity and wish her all the best in her new role. [Read more here.](#)

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MetroHealth Provides Life-saving Resources Through Mobile Unit

As the COVID-19 global pandemic continues in Cuyahoga County, so does the opioid epidemic. In March, when walk-in clinics closed, access to resources, especially for clients recently released from jail, became challenging. To make resources such as Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), Narcan, fentanyl test strips and sterile syringes more readily available, **MetroHealth** began utilizing a mobile unit.

In addition to supplies, the mobile unit offers valuable information and referrals for individuals ready for treatment. Hopes for the future of this program include access to antibiotics for wound care, peer support, HIV and HepC testing, Medicaid Enrollment, and the addition of another mobile unit that will be able to travel anywhere in Cuyahoga County.

The ADAMHS Board provides fentanyl test strips that are given away from the mobile unit. If your business or organization is interested in distributing fentanyl test strips, please contact [Beth Zietlow-DeJesus](#), ADAMHS Board Director of External Affairs.

The mobile unit is located at 3370 W. 25th Street and is open Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. [More information here.](#)



Register to Vote and Request Your Mail-in Ballot Early!

If you are not registered to vote, you can do so at this website: olvr.ohiosos.gov. The deadline to register is October 5. If you plan on voting by mail, consider requesting your mail-in ballot early. Mail-in ballots are due by October 31. Another option is early voting, which begins on October 6. The full voter timeline is below. More information can be found on the [Cuyahoga County Board of Elections website](#).

VOTER TIMELINE

- **Deadline to register to vote – Monday, October 5**
- **Deadline to request a ballot by mail – Saturday, October 31**
- **First mail-in ballots are sent out – Tuesday, October 6**
- **Early voting begins – Tuesday, October 6**
- **Early voting ends – Monday, November 2**
- **Election day – Tuesday, November 3**



443Vote.us for more info

Deadline to Complete Your Census is October 31



The deadline to complete the Census has been extended to October 31, 2020. If you have not already, fill out your Census today online at www.my2020census.gov or by phone at 844-330-2020. It takes only ten minutes to complete, and it impacts our community for the next ten years. Do your part today, and make sure your family is counted in the 2020 Census!

Are You Still Striving for Five?

Have you been keeping up with the Strive for Five Challenge? Remember to keep checking in with others by calling, texting or even sending a letter. Many people are still experiencing isolation, and checking in regularly can make a big difference.

Also remember to reach out if you need help. If you're experiencing stress or anxiety, you can call Cuyahoga County's 24-hour Warmline at 440-886-5950 to talk through things with a peer. You can also call the OhioMHAS COVID-19 Careline for emotional support at 1-800-720-9616.

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