



THE HOPE DEALER

Newsletter of the Faith-Based Initiative

By Sarah Mays

Thank You For Following Us!

The Office of Faith-Based Initiatives is proud to bring you our monthly newsletter. It is our hope to keep you informed, educated, and up-to-date on events, trending topics, and important information in the treatment, recovery, and substance abuse world! We appreciate all of your support for our work and for taking time to read our newsletter! We want to make sure you are getting the information you need. If you have any specific requests on things you would like to see in our newsletter, please e-mail those to Sarah Mays at sarah@jemprevent.org



Coordinator Spotlight

Jeremiah Lovelady, CPRS
Region 1 Lifeline Peer Project Coordinator



Jeremiah has worked for Insight Alliance as the Region 1 Lifeline Peer Project Coordinator since July 2022. Prior to this position, he worked for ReVIDA Recovery Centers as Program Director and Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS). The CPRS training provides state certification for individuals who offer direct peer-to-peer support services for individuals who may be living with mental health issues, substance use disorders, or co-occurring disorders. Jeremiah continues to develop additional skillsets to assist individuals with behavioral health issues and to provide education and understanding within the communities in North East TN to reduce the stigma that serves as a barrier to seeking help. He is in long-term recovery from co-occurring disorders and is passionate about helping others break the chains of substance use disorder and other mental health issues. Jeremiah resides in Jonesborough, TN, and is the proud father of two boys 23 and 19 and a sweet young lady who just turned 11.

Fun Fact: "I am a 45 yr. old man who loves to ride my one-wheel. It started out as a joke about me being a big child in a 45 year old body. But now it is one way my daughter and I bond. She loves to ride as well. Also a fun fact that always brings a smile to my face is that, as a Coordinator, public speaking is a large part of my job. But, I am terrified of public speaking! It literally paralyzes me! But when it comes to sharing about recovery and helping others find their recovery light, God seems to remove that fear and allows me to be a voice for Him. I find that so fascinating and comforting. Like my granny used to say, 'God is still in the miracle business.'"

Faith-Based Initiative Goals:

- Connect individuals struggling with mental health issues and/or substance use to treatment.
- Facilitate understanding of what treatment and recovery are.
- Increase knowledge of what mental health issues and substance use are.
- Spread awareness of the Faith-Based Initiative certification and its requirements.
- Understand the continuum of care and collaborate with it.
- Help groups understand and implement the best practice model.
- Promote and improve effectiveness of the faith-based initiative and how it connects the community with recovery and support services.

Coordinator Q&A

- * Let our Faith-Based, Lifeline, and Hybrid Lifeline Coordinators answer your questions about different recovery, treatment, and substance abuse topics!
- * E-mail questions to sarah@jmplprevent.org and look to future articles to see the answer to your questions!

Huge thanks to Dianne Sherrod, Region 6 South Lifeline Peer Project Coordinator and ROPS, for answering this month's questions!

Q: What is some advice you would give someone who is trying to begin their journey to recovery?

A: When I went to my first meeting, the lady I eventually picked as my sponsor told me "the only thing you have to change is everything." She was right. Addiction is the same for everyone when you consider the obsession of the mind combined with the physical allergy that causes the cravings; however, your path to recovery is your own. Some people may find it through a 12-step program, others find it in church or Faith-Based programs but one thing is for sure, if you have this thing and you find your way to recovery, its imperative that you share it with another. Self-sacrifice and helpfulness to each other is the secret handshake of recovery.

Q: What has been the most rewarding part of this role/career?

A: Sharing my story to help others find their truth. Seeing the light in their eyes return. Watching families regain their loved ones to be good fathers and mothers and daughters and sons. Taking them to get their driver's license or helping them get their GED or enroll in college. Attending their graduations from recovery courts or treatment programs. Watching them go on to serve their community working in treatment or the court system. There are so many reasons this is the best job in the world, but working one on one with someone just like me.... well, that's the bright spot of my life.

3. What are the most concerning things those using substances should watch for right now?

The drug culture today isn't what it was 20 years ago. People aren't given a chance to "reach their bottom." There's no time to experiment with substances. Substances today are synthesized in a lab, not grown in soil or extracted from poppy seeds. Even the drug dealers don't know what they are selling. The horrifying fact is that many young people lose their life to overdose on the first use. Most of those who have lost their lives to overdose, used their last time thinking it won't happen to me. I encourage families and especially parents to take advantage of training opportunities offered by our team and TDMHSAS to learn all they can about the disease of addiction and warning signs in their children and loved ones. Only through education and awareness can we truly fight the deadly effects of this crippling drug epidemic.



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Upcoming Events

West Tennessee

- **Black AIDS Awareness Day**, Tuesday, February 7th, 2023, 4-6pm, Contact Lincoln Coffman for more details
- **Tea Time Talking** - Feb. 14th and 17th, 10a-12p, contact Sarah Mays at sarah@jmplprevent.org for location details.

Middle Tennessee

- **Franklin County Prevention Coalition's Community Resource Fair**— Thursday January 26th, 2 -6pm, 900 South Shepherd St., Winchester, TN 37398
- **Trauma Informed Church**—Handle With Care Training - Feb. 11th 8a-12p, Contact Will Taylor for details

East Tennessee

- **Grundy Community Training Series**—The Belief System, Monday, Feb. 6th, 6-7pm, 67 Old State Highway 56, Coalmont, TN 37313
- **East TN Opioid Conference**, February 23rd, 9a-4p, The Venue at Lenoir City, visit metrodrug.org/etoc to register. Deadline Feb. 16th.
- **Hope In The Grit**, March 28th, 2023, 7pm, 517 Union Ave, - Reach out to Ashlee Crouse for more details!