



Northwest Florida  
AIDS/HIV Consortium

## *The Official Newsletter of the Northwest Florida AIDS Consortium Summer 2017*



### **OPENING NOTES**

Here we are in the heat of summer after all that rain! Hope everyone has had a chance to enjoy our beautiful beaches. There's always a lot going on this time of year so get out there and soak up some rays for a natural boost in Vitamin D. Just don't overdo it and be sure to drink plenty of fluids.

Our community calendar is up and running for the 2017 calendar year so be sure to check it out by visiting <http://www.noflacweb.org/calendar->



For those who have yet to attend a NoFLAC meeting, we would like to encourage you to get involved. Our next meeting will be held July 20th at the UWF Archaeology Building, 207 E. Main Street, in Downtown Pensacola. Our contact information is always posted on the back page of the newsletter so don't hesitate to let us know if you have any questions!

### **A NOTE FROM THE HAPC**

This is a very exciting time for our program with many upcoming changes and improvements that will better align ourselves with the HIV/AIDS Section of the Bureau of Communicable Diseases, Florida Department of Health Plan to Eliminate HIV Transmission and Reduce HIV-related Deaths. The four key components of this plan consists of the following:

- ⇒ **Test and Treat**
- ⇒ **Antiretroviral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and non-occupational post-exposure prophylaxis (nPEP)**
- ⇒ **Routine HIV and STI screening in healthcare settings/targeted testing in non-healthcare settings**
- ⇒ **Community outreach and messaging**

We continue working toward the Test and Treat model by streamlining entry into care for people newly diagnosed with HIV. The purpose of Test and Treat is to eventually eliminate HIV/AIDS, if everyone is tested regularly via routine testing and all infected persons are put on antiretroviral therapy (ART).

We are currently seeking a consumer willing to volunteer as an Area 1 for the Florida Comprehensive Planning Network Patient Care and Prevention representative. This role entails two annual trips to attend Planning Group meetings usually held in Orlando to meet with members of the state HIV office and other representatives across the state. Most travel costs are covered by Ryan White Part B funds. If you are interested or would like to know more about this position, please call or email me before 8/31/17!! 850-595-6500 ext. 1500.  
[deborah.carty@flhealth.gov](mailto:deborah.carty@flhealth.gov)

Lutheran Services is also moving forward with their Clinical Quality Management Plan which involves the Consumer Advocacy Group. We need volunteer members of this group to help us identify issues, problems and ideas for improvement in your Ryan White service delivery. This is your opportunity to give back and make things better! Please contact James Talley or myself if you are interested in being part of this group or would like to learn more.

## ONE STEP CLOSER TO A HEALTHIER OKALOOSA

*Written by: Aaron Hill—Senior Health Educator at DOH-Okaloosa*

The backbone of any effective program is planning and program design which utilize evidence-based recommendations and input from internal and external stakeholders. Coupled with strong leadership and vision, no challenge is too big to overcome and no hurdle is too tall to leap. Okaloosa County has undertaken an endeavor which will be no small feat. Lynn Wadsworth, RN, Executive Health Nursing Director, and Lani Birchett, Public Health Services Manager, under the direction of Karen A. Chapman, MD, MPH, DOH Director are creating an exciting new HIV Testing and Linkage Outreach Program in Okaloosa County! They have hired a Senior Health Educator who will develop, coordinate, implement, and track testing efforts; **and are now in the process of interviewing and hiring two Licensed Practical Nurses for the program.** New energies are circling around the Health Department and the creative juices are flowing! Our thinking caps are on as we are now creating an action plan with feasible, measurable deliverables to be executed within specified timeframes. With the end result of testing and treating those most at risk for HIV in Okaloosa County guiding our steps, we are so excited as we move **one step closer to a healthier Okaloosa!** Image from [www.gettyimages.com](http://www.gettyimages.com)

Suggestions and advice are welcomed and should be directed to Aaron Hill at [aaron.hill@flhealth.gov](mailto:aaron.hill@flhealth.gov).



**Aaron Hill** is Okaloosa's newest Senior Health Educator – SES. Aaron was the highest scoring candidate for the position and will serve as the HIV Outreach Team supervisor. He was selected for the position due to his years of supervisory experience, passion for volunteering and community involvement, and experience in HIV/AIDS study and analysis which have been demonstrated in published authored and co-authored articles.

Aaron Hill, a Virginia native, received a B.S. in Accounting and will complete his Master in Public Health degree in August 2017. He has called Pensacola, FL home since 2011. When he is not working, he enjoys exercising, trying out a new recipe, music, watching health related documentaries, and spending time with his family and friends.

**Lauren Shak** joined the Ryan White team in May 2017 as a Nursing Program Specialist. She has come highly recommended by her previous employers and was the top scoring candidate in an open competitive selection process. Lauren has proven to be an excellent nurse and is quickly learning DOH processes. She grew up in South Florida and loves going to Disney World. Lauren especially enjoys spending time with her husband and son.

**Sharlene Mosley** joined DOH Okaloosa in January 2017 with the Family Planning and STD clinic. Sharlene will transition into the Ryan White Nursing Program Specialist position in late July 2017. Sharlene has received only positive feedback from her co-workers and clients. Sharlene resides in Okaloosa County with her husband and son. She grew up in North Central Florida and enjoys shopping and sports. Her favorite team is Alabama. Roll Tide!

The Ryan White team feels extremely fortunate to have Lauren and Sharlene join our team and are confident that our clients will benefit from our new team members.

## OKALOOSA HEALTH DEPARTMENT WINS NATIONAL AWARD FOR HIV PREVENTION BEST PRACTICES

Okaloosa County Health Department received a national award for best practices in working to prevent HIV infections. The National Association of County and City Officials, or NACCHO, gave Okaloosa County health officials the 2017 Model Practice Award. It's for developing programs that demonstrate best practices in response to a critical local public health need.

In Okaloosa county, their award winning program is called "Integrating Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, or PrEP, Services into a Clinical Work Environment for HIV Prevention" program. By taking a pill every day, health officials say PrEP is proven to help prevent HIV among those at significant risk.

Out of more than 100 applicants, 41 local health department programs—including Okaloosa's—won the national award. To view a short video from Florida Health Performs, copy and paste this link: Florida Health Performs: Okaloosa County Award <https://youtu.be/oDFk88PtK-Y>

By [SASCHA CORDNER](#) • JUL 28, 2017 © 2017 WFSU

## FLORIDA SAPPHIRE AWARD



Butch McKay, OASIS Executive Director was named as a Blue Foundation of Florida Sapphire Award finalist at their annual symposium in Orlando. The following statements are from the program.

Butch McKay's leadership has resulted in consistent, effective, high-quality, comprehensive, compassionate, client-centered service delivery to people living with, affected by, or at risk for HIV/AIDS for nearly a quarter of a century. OASIS is a comprehensive AIDS Service Organization in the four county region of Northwest Florida,

a rural area with limited health care resources, especially for under served populations such as racial/ethnic and sexual minorities disproportionately impacted by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. His work is distinctive in its innovation, quality, accessibility, reliability, and scope. McKay's leadership and participation in the field of HIV prevention, care, and advocacy in Northwest Florida and beyond has resulted in lives saved, increases in longevity, improved HIV service delivery, increased awareness of HIV status, HIV infections averted, active engagement in advocacy, and legislative policy changes and improvements.

His recognition was rewarded with the presentation of a \$10,000 donation to OASIS from the Blue Foundation of Florida.





**Many people like you  
have been exactly  
where you are  
and are waiting to  
extend support and  
understanding.**

**An HIV+ Peer Navigator  
is available to help!**

Whether you need guidance in taking the next step or just a compassionate ear to talk to, a Peer Navigator is just a phone call away.

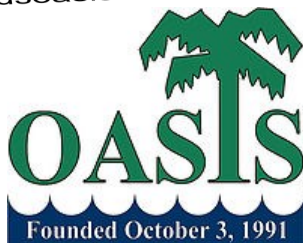
Peer Navigators specialize in providing support and information to newly infected HIV men and women, and also individuals who have dropped out of care. The Peer Navigator is a person living with HIV from the community and can assist you in working through the many complex issues you are now faced with including emotional support, disease self-management, transmission risk reduction and general information about leading full, healthy lives with HIV. Peer Navigators also work to empower individuals to keep appointments, pick-up medications and link clients to services.

#### **OASIS**

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[peernav@hivevolution.org](mailto:peernav@hivevolution.org)  
facebook @ aidsoasis



## INTRODUCING OUR PEER NAVIGATORS!



**Mark Curtis Jones** is the Peer Navigator for HIVEvolution. He joined the department in March 2017 and has 32 years' experience in the field of HIV/AIDS, Critical Care and Research, among others. Mark developed an interest in Peer Navigation after seeing the importance of having an experience Navigators guide patients and family through the entire process of diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up care to improve patient outcome and quality of life. He holds a Degrees from Emory University in Atlanta Georgia, Guption-Jones Funeral Services and Guption-Jones Mortuary Science in Atlanta Georgia. Mark was recognized by his peers as being a visionary leader and patient advocate. His goal is to eliminate barriers

to health care through Peer Navigation and assist patients at risk of being lost in the health care system from "falling through the the cracks" so that everyone, regardless of income level benefits from navigation.

**Shawna Sabino**, Peer Navigator at OASIS: My job as a Peer Navigator allows me to speak to each consumer privately. I can implement my many years of nursing and peer training to establish a trust that allows for honest communication. The value of having an HIV+ person who is healthy, working and cares about the welfare of a client is priceless. Many of the clients that I see have not spoken to another peer that understands the linkage programs available. I see this as a way to help the clients and engage them in staying in treatment. I can ask and receive honest answers when trust is there.

I refer clients to Case Managers for a myriad of services including dental, health, mental health and housing. I keep a list of community resources available to give to clients.

***See contact information on opposite page and talk to a peer today!***

Memorial Weekend Pensacola was an enormous success for HIVEvolution! Our presence on the beach was well received and utilized by the many people in attendance. This year we were very happy to receive promotional items from the Escambia County Health Department, Gilead Sciences and Avita Pharmacy that we could distribute to some very happy beach-goers. We had everything from drink koozies, beach spikes, and waterproof bags to totes, sunglasses, and playing cards, all of which were HIV prevention themed.



Of course, we had condoms as well and, as you may well imagine, they were very much appreciated. We were present on the sand from Thursday until Sunday from 10 until 4 everyday where we met many new people from all parts of the country, but we also met many locals who were just learning of our agency for the first time and who were very interested in accessing our testing services as well as a regular place to pick up condoms. Sunday night we were again fortunate to be the beneficiary of a wonderful show put on by The Armorettes Camp Drag Troupe out of Atlanta, hosted at The Cabaret in downtown Pensacola. If you do not know who the Armorettes are, they are a wonderful group of drag performers and a non-profit that have been a premier fundraiser for HIV/AIDS in the gay and lesbian communities in Atlanta and beyond while providing the absolute best in camp entertainment. They have raised over \$2.2 million for HIV/AIDS support services and we were lucky enough to have them come down and partner with us to help raise awareness about HIV/AIDS. Overall, a very wonderful weekend of outreach events!

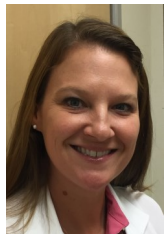
## **NEW FACES AT AHF IN THE PAST YEAR!**

### **Wesley Farr, MD, FACP**



Dr. Farr joined AHF Pensacola Health Care Center in October, 2016. He is a Board Certified Infectious Diseases Specialist who is very experienced in Primary Care Internal Medicine as well as HIV care. Originally from West Virginia, Dr. Farr completed his training there as well as in Tennessee and Colorado. He spent many years in the Navy prior to retirement from the Military. He has been a resident of Pensacola for many years as well. His CV is filled with awards, faculty appointments, and community service, as well as a long list of published scientific articles. Dr. Farr has demonstrated he is a kind and compassionate physician whose patients like him very much.

### **Angela Duncan, ARNP, MSN**



Angela Duncan Joined AHF Pensacola Health Care Center in September of 2016. She is dedicated to the treatment and care of patients with HIV and comes with five years of experience in HIV care, including Primary Care, with a clinic in Alabama. She sees patients in the clinic in Pensacola, as well as on the Mobile Health Unit in rural towns in Alabama and Florida. She is a member of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners and the American Academy of HIV Medicine. Angela's dedication comes through easily and her patients are very happy with their care.

### **Jennifer Cassidy, RN, Nurse Manager**

Jennifer joined AHF as Manager of the Clinical Team under Dr. Wade, in January of this year. She has several years of management experience, most recently at the Escambia County Jail. She has been tasked with streamlining the clinic flow and improving processes so that patients can have their needs met and providers can work efficiently. A fresh face with new skills is always welcome!

**AHF**

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## UPCOMING ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

### Upcoming NoFLAC Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended our last meeting in July! At our meetings we go over updates for all the organizations in our area and discuss any changes within the HIV/AIDS community. These meetings provide consumers a great opportunity to get to know their providers and to let their voices be heard. Our next one-hour meeting will be held at 11am on October 19 at UWF Archaeology Building on 207 East Main Street.



### Escambia County Night Clinic (Free HIV/Syphilis Testing!)

Come on out to FDOH - Escambia County to get your free, rapid Syphilis and/or HIV test so *you* can know your status. Testing will be available from 4:30pm - 6pm on Aug 3, Sept 7, and Oct 5.

### HIV/AIDS 500/501 Training Schedule

Are you a HIV tester/counselor in need of scheduling your next 500/501 update? The complete 2017 training schedule has been posted to the NoFLAC website.

Visit [www.noflacweb.org/calendar](http://www.noflacweb.org/calendar) to view all of the scheduled training dates and email Ken Griffin at [Kenneth.Griffin@flhealth.gov](mailto:Kenneth.Griffin@flhealth.gov) to register.

### Area 1 Community HIV Prevention Partnership Meeting

Please save the date and plan to attend the upcoming meeting of the Area 1 Community HIV Prevention Partnership meeting scheduled for Wednesday, August 16 from noon until 2:00 in the second floor classroom of the Florida Public Archaeology Network Building located at 207 East Main Street, Pensacola.

### Upcoming Awareness Days:

Sept 18 - National HIV/AIDS and Aging Awareness Day  
Sept 27 - National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day  
Oct 15 - National Latino AIDS Awareness Day  
December 1 - World AIDS Day

\*\* If you will be hosting an event or performing testing for these events please contact Loretta Turner at [Loretta.Turner@flhealth.gov](mailto:Loretta.Turner@flhealth.gov) for availability of brochures/incentives. If you're interested in partnering with the FDOH with HIV testing in the mobile unit, contact Ken Griffin at [Kenneth.Griffin@flhealth.gov](mailto:Kenneth.Griffin@flhealth.gov).

### OASIS Sept 15th-Sept 17th: Positive Living 20

The Positive Living experience is the backbone for the Positive Living Conference each year. As we prepare for Positive Living 20 we are mindful of our audience. We like to refer to the audience as our family because our ultimate goal is to bring people together to share and expand their knowledge and their contacts.

Positive Living provides a safe space to mingle, providing everyone who so desires an opportunity to engage in dialog and strategy building. It is all about empowerment and learning to build networks to strengthen each person's ability to tackle HIV/AIDS both personally and collectively.



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Submissions may be sent via email to [noflacinfo@gmail.com](mailto:noflacinfo@gmail.com).

**NoFLAC News staff reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and content.**