MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE
ANNUAL REPORT FY2009

FY2009 was a year of success and transition for the Mental Health Association of Middle Tennessee (MHAMT). The executive committee of the board consisted of Katy Sheesley (President), Tom Ryba (Vice President), Ross Burden (Treasurer), Bama Estes Wood (Secretary), Paula Sandidge (Member Emeritus), and Debra Fish (Member At-Large). The torch was passed, as Dr. Tom Starling, the new President/CEO of the agency, succeeded Angie Thompson's 9 years of leadership. Various other changes afforded MHAMT to build upon past success with new ideas and new opportunities.

The TennCare Partners Advocacy Line (TPAL) touched over 21,000 Tennesseans in FY2009. TPAL helped callers understand their TennCare coverage for behavioral healthcare, as well as their rights and responsibilities. Staff explained TennCare policies and procedures, corrected coding and processing errors, reported systemic problems, identified contractual inadequacies, advocated to resolve issues, and secured services entitled to enrollees. We listened, we acted, and we advocated; and TPAL received a 92% favorable outcome for callers. In addition to phone advocacy, TPAL had direct contact with 2,040 consumers and providers in 18 counties through TPAL trainings, conferences, and exhibits. TPAL gives special thanks to AmeriChoice for its grant to further our outreach, advocacy, and educational efforts.

The Hispanic Outreach Program (HOP) had a successful year in outreach and education. Fifteen bilingual facilitators were trained under the Train the Trainer program for educational support groups for Hispanic women. Through Las Mujeres de Hoy, the needs of over 50 Hispanic women relating to depression, post-partum depression, family issues, and domestic violence were met on a weekly basis while also providing a safe place for their children. The support groups at Overton High School touched the lives of 75 students weekly. HOP is appreciative of its many collaborative partners: Legal Aid, St. Thomas Clinic, Metro Schools, Catholic Charities, Vanderbilt Family Pathfinders, Metro Police Department, Lutheran Services, TDMHDD, Rutherford County Health Dept, Alzheimer's Association, DCS, Nashville Child Alliance Center, Metro General Hospital, and many domestic violence shelters. Special thanks are given to the Memorial Foundation for its support of this program.

In September 2008, Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) celebrated ten years of suicide prevention in Tennessee with an awards dinner/symposium that was attended by 350 participants. SPAN founders Jerry and Elsie Weyrauch, TDMHDD Commissioner Virginia Trotter Betts, and Clark Flatt of the Jason Foundation received recognition, as did 31 founding members of TSPN. Four "Love Never Dies" memorial quilts have been developed. Walks, candlelight vigils, and other statewide events were held in September for Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. TSPN hosted "How to Save a Life: A Community Response to the Issue," Suicide and the Veteran Community," "Teen Suicide Awareness," "Blount County Concerned: A Public Forum to Address Upcoming TennCare Cuts for Those in the SSI Daniels Class," "Older Lives County: Depression and Suicide in Older Adults;" and TSPN led in the Fourth Annual Suicide and Black Church Conference, which had 350 participants. TSPN's effectiveness may be viewed through its website hits, distribution of literature, and exhibits. Through three quarters of FY2009, TSPN has distributed 27,963 resource directories, had 85,291 website hits, distributed 7,144 NSPL wallet cards (200 in Spanish), trained 9,627 Tennesseans in suicide prevention, and distributed 5,607 TSPN fact sheets.

The I. C. HOPE® "Don't 'Duck' Mental Health" program is a registered trademark of the Mental Health Association of Tennessee and winner of the Peter Drucker honorable mention award for innovative programming. Through the use of puppets, story telling, and crafts, children are taught about anger management, stress management, depression, and how to handle a bad day; and older youth are taught about body image, co-occurring disorders, and suicide prevention. Approximately 114,000 students, teachers, and other participants were touched by the I. C. HOPE® campaign in FY2009. Special thanks is given to many collaborative partners, including the Early Childhood Network, TSPN, Middle TN Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition, TN alternative schools, Metro Health Dept's division of Behavioral Health, Metro Nashville Schools, Fort Campbell Schools, Kid Power, Tennessee Voices for Children, TDMHDD, Friends of Warner Park, United Way of Metro Nashville, Fisk-Meharry HBCU Wellness Project, and the Adolescent Health and Young Adult Program.

The Mental Health Association of Middle Tennessee is the Tennessee partnering agency for the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Outreach Partnership Program. This entitles the MHAMT to: 1) information on the most current developments on mental health research for dissemination to key state decision makers regarding mental health services and policies, 2) inclusion in a national meeting with NIMH researchers, and 3) provision of mental health informational materials for the community at large. The *J. Speed Thomas Mental Health Assistance Center* served 1,149 English and Spanish speaking callers by assisting them to identify needs and then guide them to the most appropriate resources. Forty-four mental health practitioners were trained on "How to Work with an Interpreter," and 59 foreign language or sign language interpreters participated in a two-day training to prepare for work in a mental health setting. The Tennessee Association of Medical Interpreters and Translators (TAMIT) featured our program for Mental Health Training for Interpreters program. Collaborating partners of the MHAC include the Alzheimer's Association, the AmeriGroup Behavioral Health Advisory Board, United Way of Metro Nashville and United Way of Williamson County. Special thanks for support are extended to the HCA Foundation, the Exchange Club, and MTEMC.

Tennessee Lives Count (TLC) project is a suicide prevention initiative aimed to reduce suicides and suicide attempts for youth ages 10-24 who are in the juvenile justice system, in foster care, or affiliated with other high-risk populations. The State was awarded another $1.5 million GLSMA grant, which MHAMT staff wrote and will staff for the next three years. In FY2009, TLC staff has made outreach to over 6,000 individuals through conferences and exhibits, been highlighted in 5 print ads and 6 television spots, and have trained approximately 4,500 adults in youth suicide prevention and early intervention. TLC is part of a PSA showing on Channel 4 WSMV, including an English version, a Spanish version, and one that featured Steve McNair and Commissioner Virginia Trotter Betts. Finally, the *Journal of Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* published a suicide prevention article with TLC findings that was co-authored by MHAMT, Centerstone, TDMHDD, SAMHSA, and CDC.

MHAMT's Aging Services programs help individuals diagnosed with dementia and their family caregivers. Run by a part-time director, programs include talking with your doctor, caregiver courses, support groups, in-home consultations, and long-term care in-services. There were 245 unduplicated calls and 42 home visits made this year. One dozen speaking engagements resulted in 185 individuals receiving education in 5 counties. Three "Just the Facts" courses served 45 lay caregivers. The program is grateful to the Greater Nashville Regional Council, Baptist Healing Trust, and the various churches and ALFs that support its services.

Besides the valued, award-winning programs, the MHAMT has become known for its signature events: Runnin' to Beat the Blues and Jammin' to Beat the Blues. The weather held off, as this year's 5K Run at Centennial Park hosted 492 participants and netted twice as much revenue as any previous races. The Jammin' event at the historic Ryman auditorium featured Vince Gill and friends: Rodney Crowell, Amy Grant, Jenny Gill, Joe Don Rooney, Lynn Marie, Dawn Sears, Tyler Bryant, Shaun Weaver, Al Anderson, and others. MHAMT is grateful to its many sponsors: AstraZeneca, Rolling Hills Hospital, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Janssen, HCA/TriStar, KidLink, AmeriGroup, KPMG, Northwestern Mutual Financial Network, Savina Creative, Dick's Sporting Goods, General Mills, State Farm, Sodexho, Kroger, Publix, Team Nashville, and the Athlete's House.

The nation's economic downturn did not leave MHAMT untouched in FY2009, as state contracts for program funding were decreased by $492,000, a loss that will impact operations in 2010. However, such changes serve as a catalyst for restructuring and repositioning, as MHAMT will focus on its core programs and services. The agency has plans to relocate its offices in FY2010, and there is a commitment to seek diverse funding sources in order to secure and grow MHAMT's future.

In closing, the MHAMT thanks its many collaborative partners, incoming and outgoing board members, the advisory committee, all funding partners, mental health providers throughout Middle Tennessee, our valued volunteers, and the many families and individuals we serve through our programs. Special recognition is also given to the 2008-2009 staff, who often work late nights and weekends in order to educate, serve, and advocate for others in Middle Tennessee.