

Alert

Metropolitan Drug Commission

Strengthens Families. Protects Lives.

Annual Youth Summit breaks down stereotypes, gives back to community

The 2008 Knoxville Youth Summit, Knoxville's premier event for youth, by youth, took place April 5 at West High School. Hosted by the Metropolitan Drug Commission and the Knoxville/Knox County Mayors' Youth Action Council (YAC), the annual event offered a unique opportunity to empower youth to use their voices and talents to make a positive difference in the community.

Mayor Bill Haslam kicked off the event with over 200 students in attendance. The theme for the 2008 Youth Summit was *Tied Together!*—referring to the common bonds all teens share. The goal of this year's summit was to break down stereotypes between schools and foster a greater sense of community within Knox County.

"The Youth Summit was very fulfilling," said **West High School** senior and YAC member **Martha Myers**. "Those who attended came up with some awesome ideas leading towards more diversity and understanding relationships within Knox County's high schools."

Students participated in roundtable discussions to brainstorm ways to break down stereotypes not only in their own schools, but also among the different schools in Knox County.

Evaluations of the event were very positive with 97 percent of participants saying they learned how they can make a positive difference, 95 percent saying that they became more aware of community needs and 93 percent saying they were now more aware of how stereotypes affect people in our community.

Other activities at the Youth Summit provided an opportunity for youth to learn about community needs through hands-on service. One group of students assisted people in need at the Second Harvest Grocery Giveaway. In less than two hours students and volunteers provided over 300 families with food. "Distributing food to Knoxville citizens was very rewarding," said **Layla Husain**, senior at **South Doyle High**. "Everyone smiled and was very grateful."

Other service projects included making gifts for patients at **East Tennessee Children's Hospital**, cleaning up the **Third Creek Greenway**, and making ribbons for **Child and Family Tennessee's** child abuse awareness events. All together, the participants at the Youth Summit completed over 800 hours of service to the community.

Special thanks to Metropolitan Drug Commission **Board of Directors** members **Sheriff Jimmy "J.J." Jones**, **Councilman Marilyn Roddy**, **Tim Wright** and **Don Wake** for attending and supporting the 2008 Youth Summit.

Youth Summit participants got down and dirty cleaning up the Third Creek Greenway.



Victor King, a student at Austin East Magnet High School, facilitated a roundtable discussion about combating stereotypes at the 2008 Knoxville Youth Summit.

PRIDE Teams wrap up successful school year

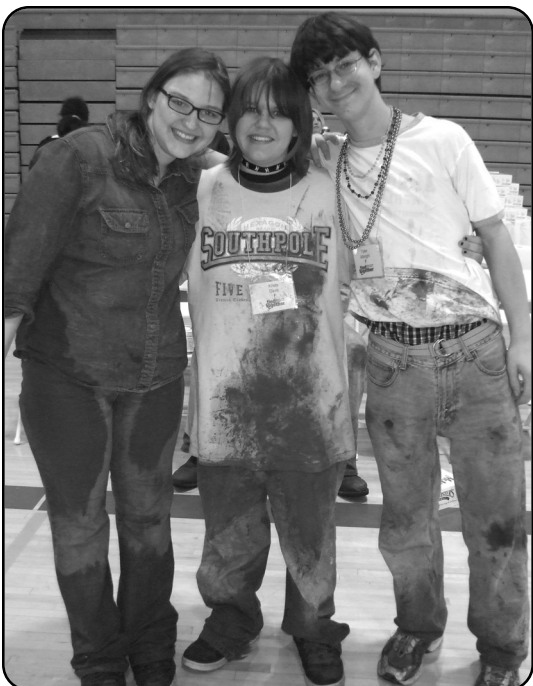
The Metropolitan Drug Commission's PRIDE Teams at **Fulton** and **Powell** High Schools have had a very busy year. Each team educated their peers, community members and parents about the dangers associated with alcohol and other drugs. The teams made presentations to younger children, passed out literature at school, volunteered for Baptist Hospital's Race Against Heart Disease, hosted an anti-tobacco "Kick-Butts" day event, walked in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade, participated in the 2008 Knoxville Youth Summit and spent time with seniors at Hillcrest.

Fulton PRIDE Team members also attended the 2008 PRIDE World Drug Prevention Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. For 31 years this conference has provided a forum for thousands of youth from around the country to gain knowledge and share ideas in order to fight underage drinking and drug use. This year's event offered over 80 workshops that were filled with exciting, fun and educational information to promote healthy lifestyles, good choices and positive involvement. PRIDE Team members were challenged by leading experts and dynamic speakers who introduced innovative ideas for them to bring back to our community. Fulton's PRIDE Team hopes to implement a number of these new ideas for spreading their positive message in the coming year.

The Metropolitan Drug Commission coordinates and sponsors students from Knox County to attend the conference annually. Other generous supporters, including the **Fulton High School Alumni Association**, **Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth** and **Preferred Care at Home**, made it possible for these students to attend the conference.



Members of the Metropolitan Drug Commission's PRIDE Team at Fulton High School attended the 31st World Drug Prevention Conference in Cincinnati, OH.



Coalition reaches out to students at Richard Yoakley School

The Metropolitan Drug Commission's **Drug Free Communities Coalition** has recently focused efforts toward **Richard Yoakley Alternative School**. Richard Yoakley School serves young people from all middle and high schools in Knox County. More than 60 percent of the student population at Richard Yoakley School is there due to drug related offenses. The Metropolitan Drug Commission partnered with the school to provide arts therapy, incentives for good behavior and grades, and academic and job readiness programs. The following is just a brief summary of the programs from the past school year.

Reading Tutors

This spring, the local **FBI** partnered with the Metropolitan Drug Commission to recruit, train and match tutors with students at Richard Yoakley School who read below grade level. Reading levels at Richard Yoakley School are a big concern with nearly two-thirds of the student population considered to have some form of a learning disability.

Special thanks to the following reading tutors from the **FBI**— **Stacie Bohanan, Wendy Bost, Colin Duffy, Alicia Harper, Ed Herbst, Pete Kersh, Mitzi Lavonis, Patti Mash, Keith Paul, Stephanie Rader, Charlene Walker, and Missy Wells.**

Career Exploration

Also this semester, the Metropolitan Drug Commission piloted the *Directions* Career Exploration Program with three classes at Richard Yoakley School. Each week juniors and seniors explored subjects related to finding, securing and keeping a job. Additionally, local business leaders shared their occupations and answered student questions.

The program was divided into three sections: (1) *Roadmaps*, which presented the students with a variety of career options and the skills needed to secure employment; (2) *Roadblocks*, which addressed the obstacles and challenges that could inhibit achievement of goals; and (3) *Destinations*, which helped students determine their personal path to

success. Upon conclusion of the program each student set personal employment or educational goals and developed a plan for achieving those goals.

Special thanks to the following career exploration volunteers: **Anita Blatnik**, Knox County Health Department; **David Brace**, City of Knoxville; **Deniese Brooks**, Cherokee Health Systems; **Nathan Brown**, Unarmed Merchants; **Sgt. Tammy Chaney**, Knoxville Police Department; **Gerry Eastman**, Joseph Construction; **Jafar Fleming**, Knoxville Police Department; **Ricky Gallaher**, Knoxville Police Department; **Claire Gillespie**, Gillespie Imports; **Steve Gillespie**, Gillespie Imports; **Buddy Harrell**, City of Knoxville; **Elizabeth Hickey**, Tennessee School of Beauty; **Cynthia Hudson**, Knox Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Initiative; **Stephanie Jones**, CAC Workforce Connections; **David Kitts**, Knoxville Police Department; **Michelle Love**, UT WAVE; **Brian May**, Heart of Knoxville Career Center; **Jon Minnick**, Junior Achievement of East Tennessee; **Lynn Moore**, CAC Workforce Connections; **Judy Roitman**, Knox County Health Department; **Jodi Schwartz**, CAC Workforce Connections; **Brenda Tate**, Heart of Knoxville Career Center; and **Mahasti Vafai**, Tomato Head.

Art Outreach

Metropolitan Drug Commission volunteers met monthly at Richard Yoakley School to reward students who consistently displayed positive behavior and progress toward academic goals. The students were given an opportunity to participate in arts and crafts projects, not otherwise available at the school. Over the year, the number of students eligible to participate increased by more than 200%.

Special thanks to the following arts therapy program volunteers: **Stacie Bohanan**, FBI; **John Brummette**, UT SEE Center; **Sgt. Tammy Chaney**, Knoxville Police Department; **Kristen Darden**, Bradford Health; **Annette Long**, Project Grad; **Michelle Love**, UT WAVE; **Destiny Moore**, Project Grad; **Andrew Parrott**, New Perspectives; **Keith Paul**, FBI; **Gene Rosenberg**, Traveling Trunk; **Marsha Sparks**, Knox County DA's Office; **Dorothy Ware**, Child & Family TN; and **John West**, Bradford Health.

Impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes more likely to have prior DWI

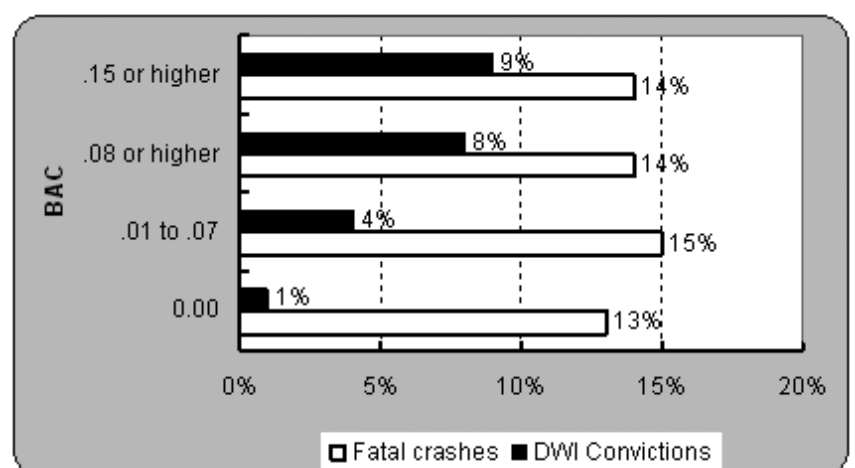
According to a report recently published by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, 13,470 people were killed in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes, which accounted for 32 percent of all motor vehicle traffic fatalities in the United States in 2006. While crashes were down slightly from the year prior, during 2006, an average of one alcohol-impaired-driving fatality occurred every 39 minutes.

All 50 states have laws making it illegal to drive with a BAC (blood alcohol content) of .08 or higher. Most fatalities resulting from crashes involving impaired drivers in 2006 were occupants of the vehicle driven by the impaired driver (8,615 impaired driver fatalities, 2,429 fatalities of passengers riding with impaired drivers: combined 82 percent); however, 18 percent (2,426) of fatal crashes involving alcohol-impaired drivers were passengers of other vehicles or non-occupants.

Alcohol-impaired drivers (with a BAC or .08 or higher) involved in fatal motor vehicle crashes were eight times more likely to have a prior DWI (driving while impaired) conviction than drivers who had not used alcohol. (Graph shown below.) Of the drivers involved in fatal crashes, 55 percent had BAC levels at or above .15, nearly twice the legal limit.

These recent data provide evidence to support the argument for more aggressive treatment of first-time alcohol-related traffic violators. Increasing education and interventions among these violators could potentially save hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of lives each year.

Source: National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA), "Alcohol-Impaired Driving," *Traffic Safety Facts: 2006 Data*, March 2008.



MDC Partners with Bradford Health to host town hall forum on underage drinking

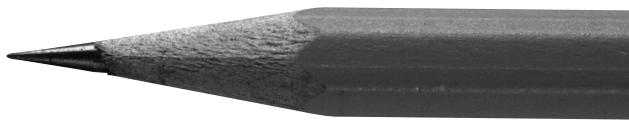
On April 5, 2008 Knox County joined hundreds of communities across the U.S. in discussing one of our nation's leading public health problems—*underage drinking*. **Bradford Health Services** partnered with the Metropolitan Drug Commission to host a Town Hall Forum on Underage Drinking as part of the 2008 Knoxville Youth Summit. Students attending the Youth Summit participated in a focus group to address the problem of drinking at school events and on school property. Specifically, these teens identified when and where underage drinking occurs, each school's role in preventing alcohol use, and the influence of parents, teachers and peers to reduce consumption.

The concerns that seemed to be most commonly expressed among the students included:

- Lack of awareness about school policies/penalties regarding alcohol on campus
- Inconsistency in enforcement of policies
- Quality and quantity of information conveyed in health classes regarding the harmful affects of alcohol
- Need for parents and schools to work together to send consistent messages about underage drinking
- Need for increased law enforcement patrols around school grounds both before and after school

After discussing the extent of the problem, the students developed recommendations for policies that would help to decrease the availability of alcohol and prevalence of underage drinking on school campuses. The students presented these recommendations to school board members **Robert Bratton** and **Dan Murphy** as well as other Knox County School officials including **Chief Steve Griffin**, Director of Security and **Russ Oaks**, Director of Public Affairs.

Test your Alcohol I.Q.



The average age for young people to start drinking these days is 13. Underage drinking continues to be a major problem across America, and researchers have now put a price tag on this problem. According to the data, the cost to society of underage drinking is:

- (A) \$13.5 billion per year
- (B) \$34.7 billion per year
- (C) \$62 billion per year

Underage drinking costs Americans \$62 billion every year in injuries, deaths and lost work time. The biggest costs are those associated with alcohol-fueled homicides, assaults, rapes and other violent crimes committed by underage people who have been drinking. The Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation estimates that every underage drinker costs society an average of \$4,680 a year. *The correct response is (c).*

Youth Action Council celebrates student representation with the Knox County Board of Education



Carol Ann Routh

The Knoxville/Knox County Mayors' Youth Action Council (YAC) recently celebrated the establishment of a position for a student representative to serve on the Knox County Board of Education. YAC members presented their proposal for youth representation on the school board in December and, after much work in outlining the job description for a student representative and details of the selection process, they were pleased with the school board's unanimous approval of this new position.

The Metropolitan Drug Commission congratulates Ms. **Carol Ann Routh** of Central High School for being selected to serve on the Knox County Board of Education in 2008-2009. Carol Ann also serves on both the Youth Action Council and the MDC Board of Directors. *Congratulations Carol Ann!*

PRIDE students lead underage drinking prevention session with local 5th graders

In April, the Metropolitan Drug Commission's PRIDE Teams observed National Alcohol Awareness month with the program *Reach Out Now: Talk to a 5th grader about alcohol*. Fulton PRIDE members visited classes at Christenberry Elementary, while Powell PRIDE students worked with the 5th grade classes at Powell Elementary.

Each team conducted a lesson focused on increasing knowledge about alcohol's effects on development, while also equipping the children with a variety of ways to say "no". With help from the PRIDE Team members, the fifth graders were also given an opportunity to experiment with eggs and rubbing alcohol to see the effects of alcohol on a young brain. At the end of the session, each student received a packet of information to take home and review with their parents.

The Reach Out Now materials, provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and Scholastic, Inc., have been enthusiastically received by the Leadership to Keep Children Alcohol Free, a consortium of governors' spouses from states across the country who are helping to raise awareness of the underage drinking problem and encouraging use of the materials.



Powell High School PRIDE Team member Shannon Ingram leads students in an egg and rubbing alcohol experiment at Powell Elementary School.

Announcements

MDC in Action

From March 1, 2008 to April 30, 2008, the MDC serviced the community by providing:

54	Treatment Referrals
6,410	Prevention Materials & Resources
78,403	Website Hits

2007-2008 MDC Board of Directors

Randy Nichols, Chair
Dick Moran, Vice Chair
Suzan Puhl Murphy, Treasurer
John Gill, Secretary

Ashley Carrigan Terry Upshaw Morgan
Mike Fleming Pam Moultry

John Griess Dr. Roger Nooe

Hon. Bruce Guyton Chief Sterling Owen, IV
Charles K. Hannon, Jr. Mayor Mike Ragsdale

The Hargett Councilwoman Marilyn Roddy

Mayor Bill Haslam Carol Ann Routh

Shobhna Hassanadka P.D. Mark Stephens

Mary Lou Horner Commissioner Tank Strickland

Hon. Tim Irwin Donald B. Wake

Sheriff Jimmy J.J. Jones Dr. Donna Wright

Dr. Parinda Khatri Tim Wright

The 2008 session was a disappointing year regarding legislative action to combat drunk driving in Tennessee, mainly due to financial constraints. Proposed measures include bills that would have implemented an automatic license revocation program, a bill to crack down on multiple offenders, a measure to lower the extreme drunk driving level, a proposal to require mandatory interlock for certain offenders, and legislation that would have established a Drunk Driver Registry, similar to Tennessee's Sex Offender Registry.

Also, the House defeated legislation with a positive fiscal impact that would have created more flexibility with Tennessee's road money by closing the loophole in the state's open container law that allows drunk drivers to pass the bottle to a passenger in the vehicle.

There were 1,287 fatalities on Tennessee roads at last report in 2006, with 509 due to alcohol-related crashes, a 7.6 percent increase from the previous year. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among persons between the ages of 3 and 33, with 50% of the victims in alcohol-related crashes.

For additional legislative information, visit the Tennessee General Assembly website at <http://www.legislature.state.tn.us>.

(Reprinted with permission from the Office of State Senator **Jamie Woodson**. Announcement appeared in the May 29 issue of *The Woodson Weekly*. For questions, please contact Lee Harrell at 1-800-449-TENN, Ext. 11648.)

Metropolitan Drug Commission
P.O. Box 53375
Knoxville, TN 37950-3375
Phone: 865.588.5550
Fax: 865.588.0891

VISIT OUR WEBSITE for information about starting or maintaining a Drug-free Workplace Program; parent resources; treatment options; general drug descriptions, including warning signs and effects; and local and national research about drug use.

www.metrodrug.org

This project is funded under an agreement with TCCY



To submit an announcement or article to the *Metropolitan Drug Commission's ALERT*, please call (865) 588-5550.



Metropolitan Drug Commission
P.O. Box 53375
Knoxville, TN 37950-3375
Phone: 865.588.5550
Fax: 865.588.0891
www.metrodrug.org