

Welcome-So very glad to be here! It's hard to believe that it has been almost a year since I have been with you all! I miss my daily visits to the City working with Sherry and our monthly coalition meetings together. Do know, I think of you all often and I am always ready to answer any questions Brooke or Natalie may have! My family looks back on our time with SCHEC with great memories. I will Update you a little about my family. Our family is living in El Dorado. Warren is the student and family minister at Immanuel Baptist Church. Tyler, Ethan, and Elise all attend El Dorado Public Schools. I am working part time at Elise's school, Hugh Goodwin Academy of the Arts doing some intervention work in 1st grade. I recently completed all necessary work for my recertification as Certified Prevention Specialist. I am working with the coalition in Union County as much as I can as a volunteer. I am sitting in your shoes now!

We have so much to look back on in the coalition tonight and you have so much to look forward to in the future!

Recently, My family and I were on our way to Colorado. I was flipping through some magazines and came upon an article in the April 2011 edition of Good Housekeeping. I came across an article called "15 shots killed Shelby Allen". As I read this article, it grabbed my attention. The article was about an underage girl that drank too much alcohol...in a friend's home...with the knowledge of the friend's parents. The case is still in court, but Social Host Law is a huge piece of it. There in the article, Arkansas was listed as one of the states with the law. I was filled with such pride, knowing the SCHEC played a very lead part in that law. It caused me to think back to the City of Waldron being the first in the state to pass the law. So very courageous of them! They were leaders in something no one else in Arkansas had been brave enough to do. We then had the great privilege of seeing it passed at state level. Wow! The phone calls and travels David, Randy, Sherry, and I would make across the state educating and sharing our experience in passing this law.

In October 2007, Scott County was awarded the Strategic Framework State Incentive Grant or SPF SIG for short. The grant was to address underage drinking. We were to measure it by age of first use, binge drinking, and past 30 day use.

When we were first awarded this grant, I remember some of the coalition members telling me, we want to use it to build a community center for youth to go to. These goals were soon changed when ADAP informed us that we would have to be strategic in our plans. By the way, in prevention, everything has an acronym. 😊

We would do assessment, planning, capacity building, implementation, and evaluation. All the while being culturally competent and working towards sustainability.

Oh the meetings and trainings I and other coalition members attended in Little Rock! At some point we should have bought a home to stay at! 😊

We began our strategic process with assessment and capacity building. The first meeting I attended had approximately 10-12 and I clearly remember no one in the room knowing what ATOD stood for! (Alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs)

By March of 2008, we were averaging 35-45 people with people actively serving on committees. One of those committees was the assessment committee. This committee worked hard to find the answer to But Why? And But Why Here? We took that information to the planning committee. That is where we began working on a strategic plan. A very long document, I would later refer to as a term paper or a dissertation... 😊 But within this document we laid out our plan. We had no idea what it meant or what we were even saying. It was like we planned before we ever understood what the words, terms, and plans meant. We began the implementation of that plan in August of 2008. We implemented Evidenced Based Programs in to the Waldron Middle and High School. A mass media campaign also began. We had a great media consultant, Debbie Findley. She directed us in

our Parents Who Host and FACE media such as billboards, television, radio, and newspaper. We also did yard signs, window clings, posters, banners, flyers, and T-shirts....lots of T-shirts. I jokingly asked Warren which SCHEC shirt I should wear tonight (get out stack-I brought 21 shirts 😊). More implementation consisted of educating parents about dangers of providing and the passing of social host laws. Educating students about dangers of underage drinking and creating a strong student group that would promote underage drinking prevention. This was done through the BADD group at the high school. These students became very strong leaders and had the privilege to attend Washington DC for the CADCA conference. Law enforcement was able to attend trainings in Fayetteville and across the US. These trainings gave law enforcement the education needed to feel empowered to enforce underage drinking laws.

We evaluated data....so much data. And during this all, we worked toward everything being culturally competent and sustaining the coalition.

Oh what sweet memories I have of the coalition and I am so very excited about the exciting things that are in your future. There were so many people I met in the community during this time. The coalition was also something that the community worked together on so well. All sectors were represented at almost every meeting. Elected officials, law enforcement, school district, colleges, the list goes on....

The town hall meetings: "Are you smarter than a middle schooler" and Football frenzy, graduation from National Coalition Academy, state awards given individually and as a coalition, local awards given. There has been so much success.

In my new community and across the state, when SCHEC is mentioned...immediately success is stated. I know with the help of the

PRC, Cindy Stokes and Kramer Bass, as well as determination of the SCHEC leadership...great things are in store.

I just want to finish up with some outstanding data.

Just listen to this :

According to 2007 data...31.6 of 10th graders reported binge drinking. In 2010, it decreased to 10.8 percent. A decrease of 66%.

In 2007 47.3% of 12th graders reported drinking the past 30 days. In 2010, it decreased to 27.0. Just a little shy of a 50% decrease.

The numbers have been steadily decreasing every year of the grant. Volunteer. Keep going. Use the training you have. Do it for the good of the students and the community. Don't stop. Prevention works.