

20
years



OPERATION
UNITE

HOPE



Report to the Kentucky General Assembly
FY 2022-23



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Purpose

We create hope and change the culture.

Vision

Operation UNITE is a collaborative model striving to prevent abuse of drugs and facilitate recovery.

Mission

We create strategic partnerships.

We provide leadership.

We promote education.

We coordinate treatment.

We support law enforcement.

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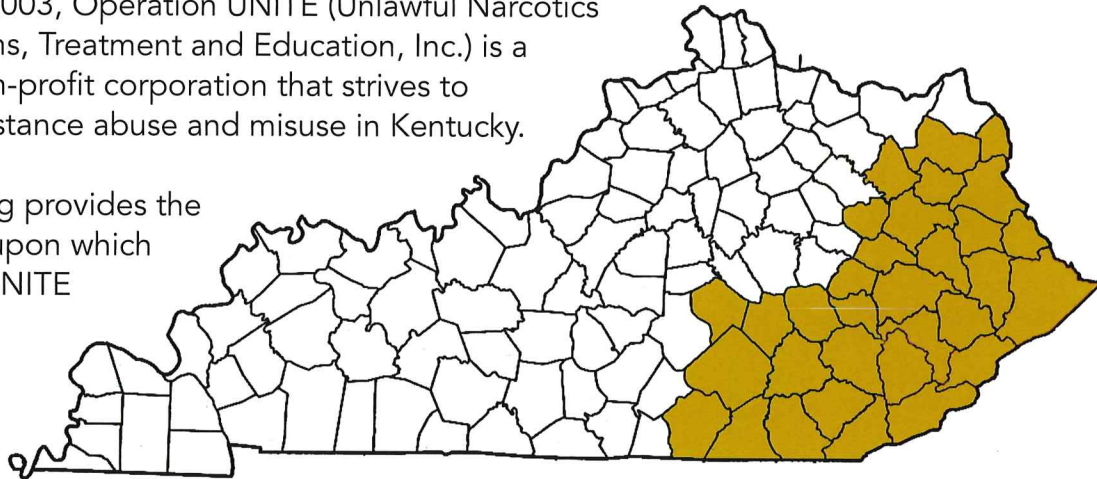
Operation UNITE (Unlawful Narcotics Investigations, Treatment and Education) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that strives to combat substance abuse and misuse in Kentucky.

Collaborative efforts maximize impact

Partnering for progress

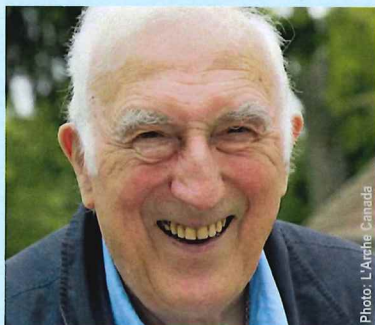
Created in 2003, Operation UNITE (Unlawful Narcotics Investigations, Treatment and Education, Inc.) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that strives to combat substance abuse and misuse in Kentucky.

State funding provides the foundation upon which Operation UNITE operates. Additional resources obtained through grants, individual contributions, and corporate donations fund many of the law enforcement, treatment, and education & prevention initiatives provided to citizens of Kentucky.



Operation UNITE's primary service region covers 32 counties in the current and former 5th Congressional District, but its reach extends across the entire Commonwealth and the nation.

Operation UNITE's primary service region includes 32 current or former 5th Congressional District counties across Southern and Eastern Kentucky, with plans to expand to 33 counties during the 2023-24 Fiscal Year. However, Operation UNITE reaches all citizens of the Commonwealth through the **KY HELP Statewide Call Center** and its many strong partnerships with federal, state, and community organizations. A list of key partners can be found on Page 15.



Jean Vanier

"One of the marvelous things about community is that it enables us to welcome and help people in a way we couldn't as individuals. When we pool our strength and share the work and responsibility, we can welcome many people, even those in deep distress, and perhaps help them find self-confidence and inner healing."

Expanded initiatives place heavy emphasis on youth

Focus must be on prevention

We have not lost hope. In fact, our resolve is stronger than ever!

Operation UNITE's efforts -- slowed by the COVID-19 pandemic and refocused by the emergence of fentanyl -- have rebounded with even greater vigor and purpose. As you will see throughout this report, Operation UNITE continues to address the destructive drug crisis utilizing multiple strategies and partnerships. Over the past 20 years, Operation UNITE initiatives have reached nearly 650,000 youth.

With a full-time Prevention Programs Coordinator now in place, Operation UNITE is positioned to regain the momentum it had achieved in reducing the rate of overdose deaths. UNITE Community Coalitions taking the lead on grassroots level with an emphasis being placed on helping Kentuckians move from life-saving treatment into long-term recovery.

Thanks to a strong investment from the



Nancy Hale
President & CEO

Kentucky Legislature and continued support from its partners, Operation UNITE is poised to launch new and updated youth prevention programs that reinforce the reasons to avoid use of all substances and provide resources to help remove barriers to staying drug-free.

State funding enables Operation UNITE to exist and bring additional resources to the Commonwealth. The UNITE Service Corps (AmeriCorps) program will be expanding to more schools during the 2023-24 academic term. Prevention and education programs are being extended

outside our traditional service region. The KY HELP Statewide Call Center provides treatment resources to citizens in all 120 Kentucky counties.

Prevention is key. And that requires consistent and persistent messaging - from youth through adult. Operation UNITE remains committed to the task.

We are a community full of hope.



"Drug prevention is the best harm reduction."

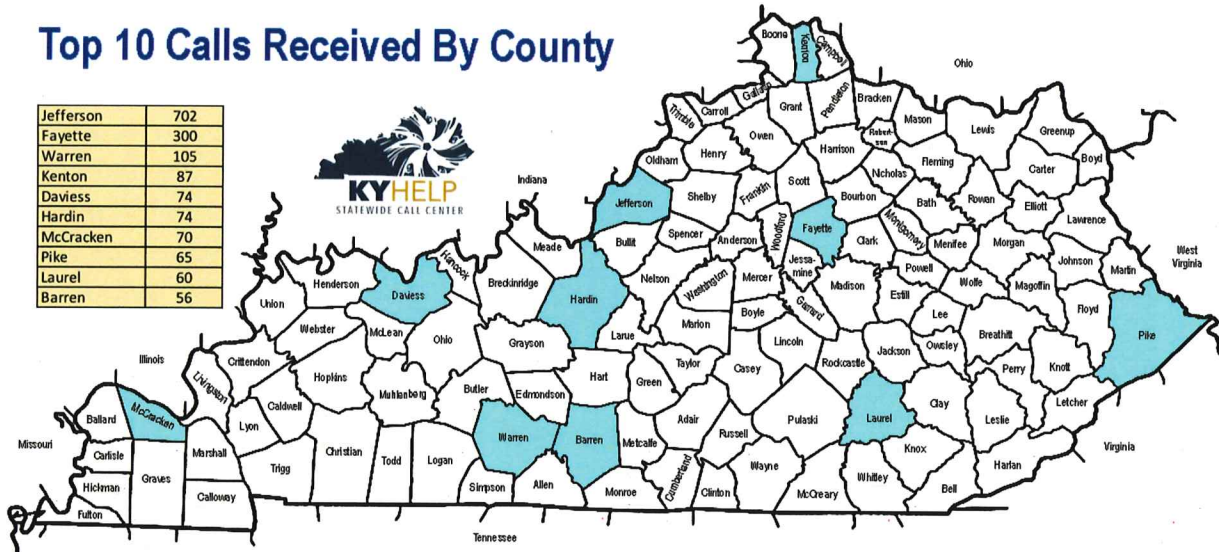
Aubree Adams, Director, Every Brain Matters

Personalized assistance for substance use disorders

Call Center serves entire state

Top 10 Calls Received By County

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| Jefferson | 702 |
| Fayette | 300 |
| Warren | 105 |
| Kenton | 87 |
| Daviess | 74 |
| Hardin | 74 |
| McCracken | 70 |
| Pike | 65 |
| Laurel | 60 |
| Barren | 56 |



Screening and Referral Specialists at the KY HELP Statewide Call Center are able to respond quickly to Kentuckians confronted with a loved one’s addiction.

The Call Center offers support, comfort, and guidance for substance use issues from **8:30 am to 10 pm (EDT) Monday-Friday, and 8:30 am to 5:30 pm (EDT) on Saturdays and Sundays.**

Specialists help callers navigate through treatment options - from medication-assisted treatment to faith-based care - insurance, recovery resources, and other barriers that may occur.

They are trained to manage crisis situations, help family members understand the procedure for utilizing Casey’s Law, and provide outreach services for up to a year to ensure that a client’s needs are being met.

The Call Center is marketed as part of WLEX-TV’s “You Are Not Alone” campaign.

4,294
calls received seeking assistance from **118** Kentucky counties

927
individuals referred to a treatment program

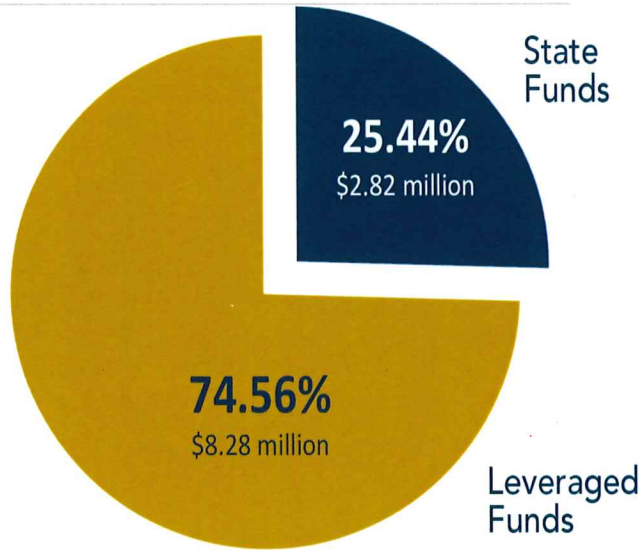
14,360
follow-up calls made in response to caller needs

801
outreach calls to clients who have entered treatment

Focus on education, prevention & treatment initiatives

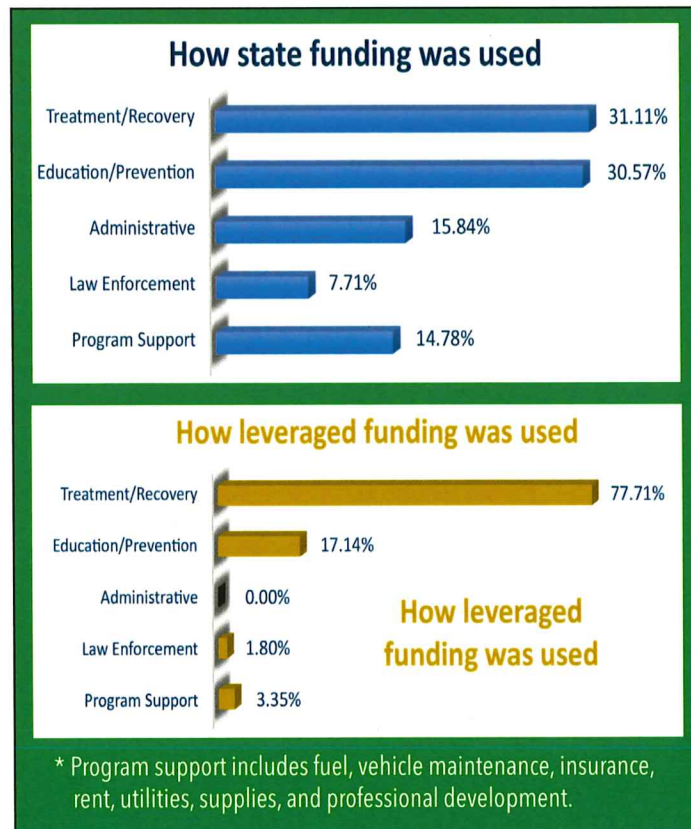
State funding impact

FY 2022-23 Expenditures



\$8.64 of every \$10 spent was used for treatment and education/prevention initiatives!

Because of the Kentucky General Assembly's \$2.8 million investment in Operation UNITE during Fiscal Year 2022-23, staff secured an additional \$8.28 million from grants and contributions to: 1) educate youth and community members about substance use and misuse; 2) provide access to long-term treatment for a substance use disorder; 3) provide support for those in recovery; 4) provide assistance to families impacted by a substance use disorder; and 5) provide anti-drug youth programs.



Without funding from the Kentucky General Assembly, Operation UNITE would not be able to provide comprehensive substance use and prevention services.

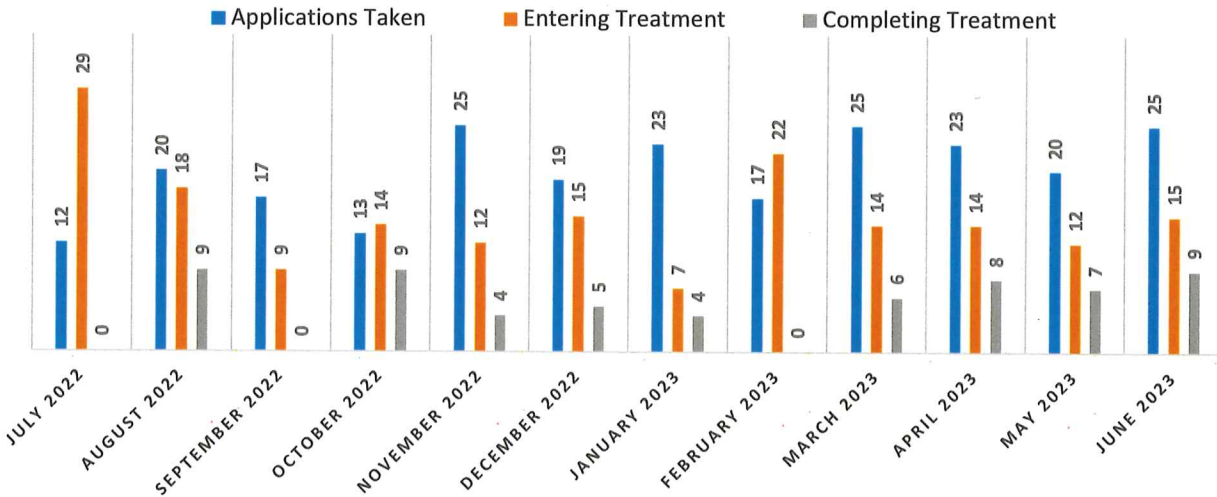
Citizens in all 120 counties benefit from law enforcement collaborations, have access to treatment and recovery services, and access to education/prevention resources and support.

* Program support includes fuel, vehicle maintenance, insurance, rent, utilities, supplies, and professional development.

Providing help for SUDs more urgent now than ever

Treatment & Recovery

UNITE TREATMENT VOUCHERS



159

Individuals entered treatment using a **UNITE Voucher**

108

Voucher clients completed their treatment program

1,481

treatment-related inquiries handled by staff each month

94

Applications approved for **Recovery Residence** assistance

“Policymakers must recognize the profound benefits of pursuing proactive public policies that help more Kentuckians overcome Substance Use Disorders and live successful lives in recovery.”

Kentucky Chamber Foundation

School and community programs

Education & Prevention

53,830 youth & 10,211 adults were engaged through UNITE Coalition youth programs

All youth programs are infused with drug education and prevention messages.

Coalition Activities Conducted
3,274

National Archery in the Schools
13,229
youth



The First Tee Golf Program
797
youth

Intramural Sports
3,853
youth

Special Programs
15,121
youth

Summer Activity Programs
1,852
youth

Backpack Program
947
youth
average served/month

Red Ribbon Week
6,396
youth

Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs
539
youth

Project Prom
680
youth

UNITE initiatives

Medication Drop Boxes



5,735 lbs
(2.86 tons)

of unused, expired or unwanted medications collected by UNITE as part of National DEA Take-Back Days. This represents

27.73%

of all medications collected in the Commonwealth.

48

Drop Box locations.

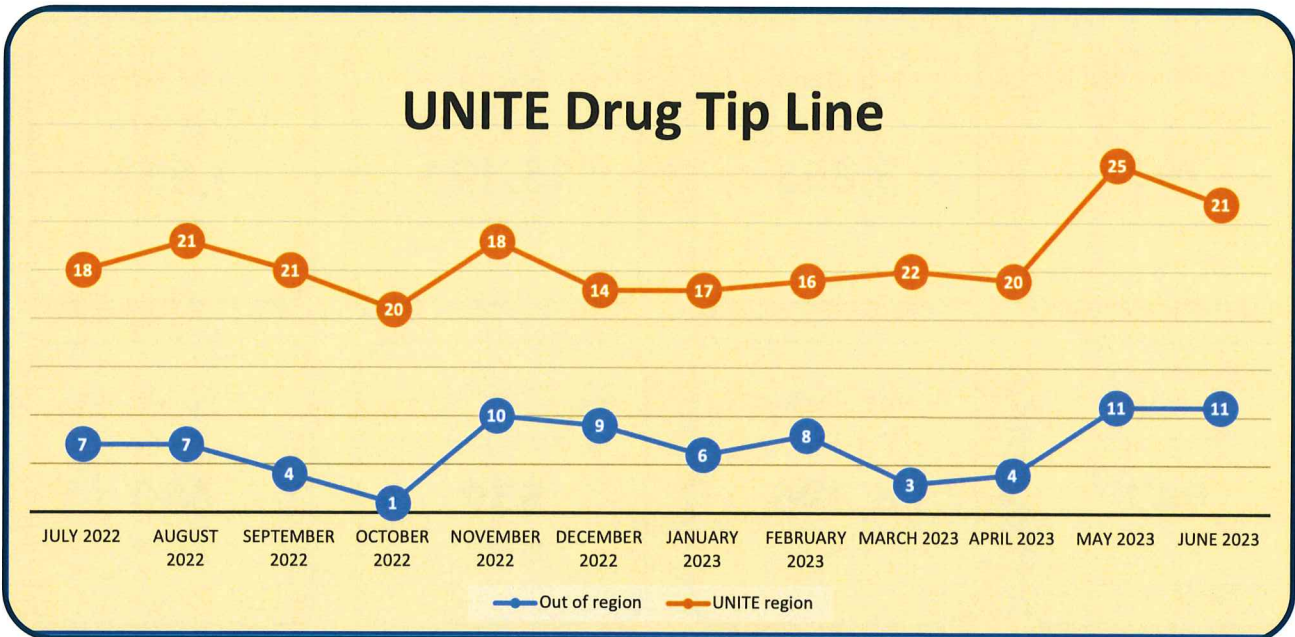
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UNITE detectives are engaged with youth prevention initiatives, community education programs, and support treatment and recovery initiatives in addition to drug investigations



300+

locations where parents can obtain a free **"Give Me A Reason"** saliva-based drug testing kit



UNITE initiatives



AmeriCorps

UNITE Service Corps (USC)



6,985

students **Mentored** by USC members in addition to math and "Too Good for Drugs" components

162

Volunteers recruited to help within member schools

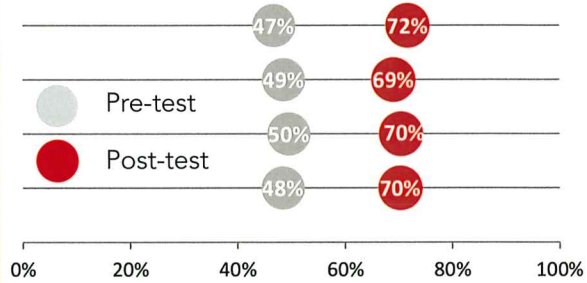
324

service hours provided by volunteers

58

USC members are state certified in FEMA disaster and emergency response by the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management

Math Component



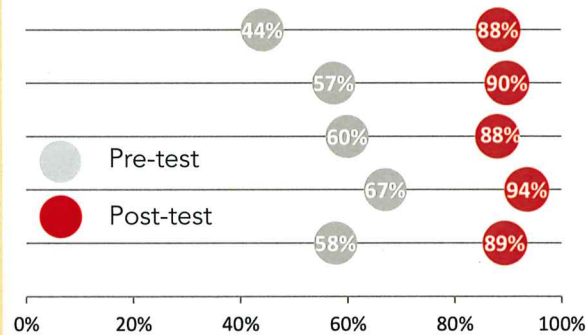
3,557

students receiving **Math Tutoring** by USC members

45.8%

average growth in math knowledge among students tutored

Drug Prevention Component



2,252

students taught **"Too Good For Drugs"** curricula by USC members

53.4%

average growth in drug education knowledge among students

UNITE initiatives



Camp UNITE is comprised of many fun, action-packed activities designed to develop leadership and communication skills, promote teamwork and problem solving, instill confidence and trust, and – perhaps most important – let youth know they do not have to face difficult situations alone.



85 middle school-aged youth attended the 16th annual **Camp UNITE**, held July 19-22, 2022, at Morehead State University



117 Team Mentors and Volunteers assisted UNITE staff to provide activities



“The first summer at Camp UNITE I learned so much about what UNITE stands for, and even so much more about myself. At just 12 years old, I chose to remove myself from a house full of drugs and live with my grandparents. I thought I was the only kid going through these problems. But, Camp UNITE made me realize these problems were everywhere, and we young people need to be advocates against drug abuse. I am now a Registered Nurse in an ER. I truly believe if I hadn’t participated in Camp UNITE - as both a camper and Team Mentor - and gained the strength and courage to take a better life for myself, I would not be where I am today.”

Emily Wood, RN (2019 “I Am UNITE” Scholar)

UNITE initiatives



795

youth participated in a **Shoot Hoops Not Drugs** basketball camp

239

parents or guardians attended an educational program on the emerging threat of **fentanyl** during these camps



1,466

students attended a **"Truth About Vaping"** presentation



7,317

students were members of 126 **UNITE Clubs** at schools in 26 counties



5,087

middle and high school youth participated in an **"On The Move!"** drug prevention education program at 59 schools in 20 counties

36%

average increase in student knowledge about vaping, alcohol, marijuana, meth, tobacco, fentanyl, and synthetic drugs as a result of these programs

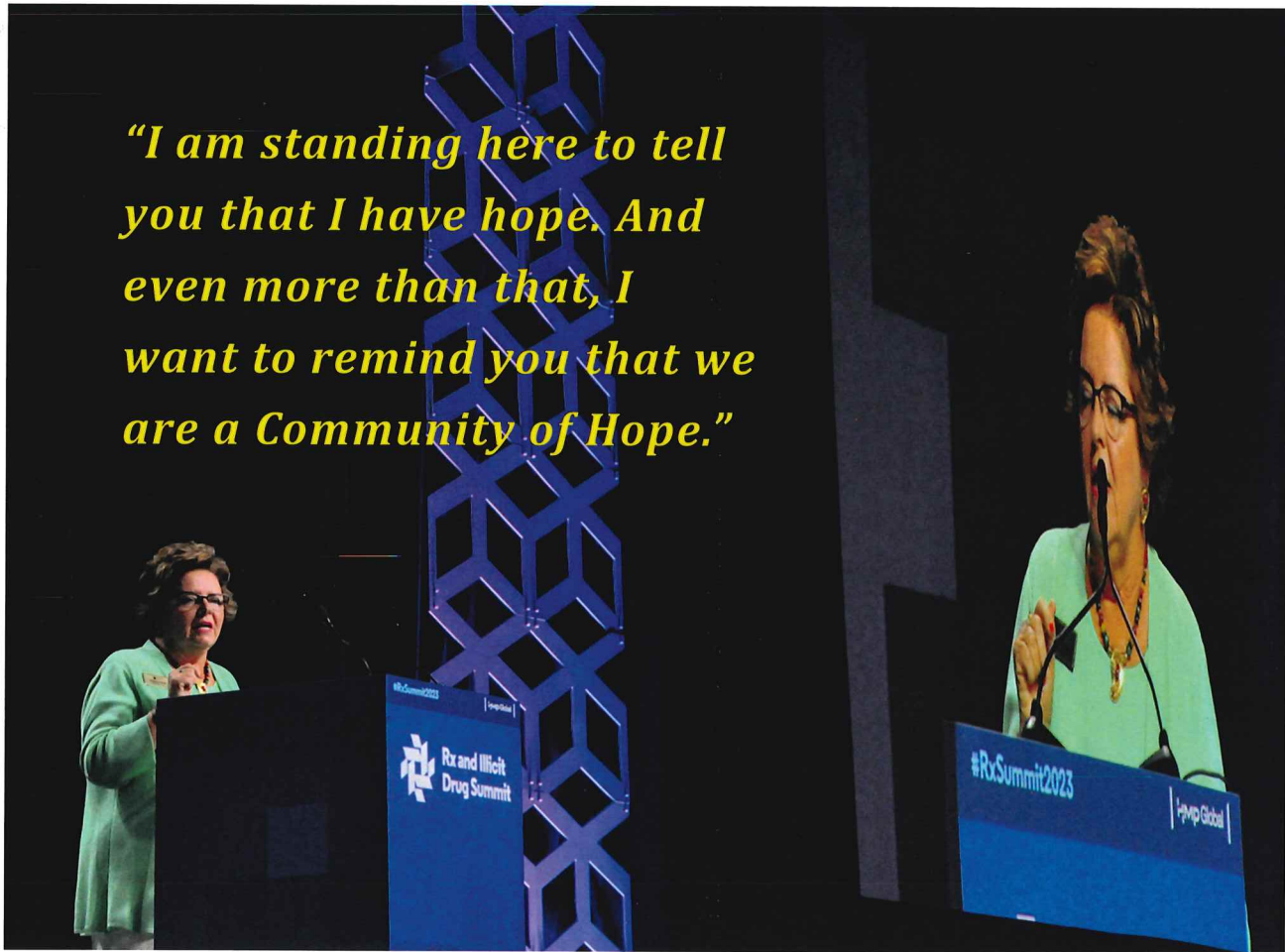


24

high school seniors awarded privately-funded \$1,500 **"I Am UNITE" Scholarships** for post-secondary education

92 & 79

students taught **"Too Good For Drugs"** curricula and received math tutoring, respectively, at 3 schools through the **Perry Promise Neighborhood** program



KY Opioid Abatement Commission grant

Educate. Empower. Prevent.

A \$1 million Kentucky Opioid Abatement Commission grant awarded in April will be used to expand and develop new youth and adult prevention initiatives during Fiscal Year 2023-24.

Through school-based programs and adult trainings, the "Educate. Empower. Prevent." initiative will provide accurate information about substances, increase knowledge regarding substance use and misuse, reduce stigma associated with Opioid Use Disorder, and increase knowledge about

FY 2022-23

treatment resources -- all with the ultimate goal of reducing the overdose death rate.

In addition, Operation UNITE will provide ONEbox emergency opioid overdose reversal kits to school systems in its service region and provide training to staff.

Operation UNITE has a Prevention Programs Coordinator who will facilitate staff training on new or updated kindergarten-to-adult prevention programs, and make scheduling presentations easier.

UNITE Partners

Serving UNITE's Service Region:

- ▶ 32 UNITE Community Coalitions
- ▶ 43 city police departments
- ▶ 32 county sheriff offices
- ▶ 7 Kentucky State Police Posts
- ▶ 350 public and private K-12 schools
- ▶ 11 public and private colleges and universities

Key Partners:

- ▶ ACT Now-Martin County
- ▶ Addiction Recovery Care
- ▶ Appalachian Challenge Academy
- ▶ Appalachia HIDTA (High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area)
- ▶ Appalachian Regional Commission
- ▶ Berea College Partners for Education
- ▶ Boys and Girls Clubs of America
- ▶ Citizens Attacking Addiction Coalition (Jefferson County)
- ▶ Healthcare Made Practical (HMP)
- ▶ Institute for Behavior and Health
- ▶ Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts
- ▶ Kentucky Area Development Districts (6 serve UNITE counties)
- ▶ Kentucky Army National Guard
- ▶ Kentucky Cabinet for Health & Family Services
- ▶ Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Kentucky Department of Education
- ▶ Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources
- ▶ Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Development and Intellectual Disabilities
- ▶ Kentucky Department for Public Health (local health departments)
- ▶ Kentucky Division of Emergency Management
- ▶ Kentucky Employers' Mutual Insurance (KEMI)
- ▶ Kentucky General Assembly
- ▶ Kentucky Judicial Commission on Mental Health
- ▶ Kentucky Legislative Research Commission
- ▶ Kentucky Nonprofit Network
- ▶ Kentucky Office of Attorney General
- ▶ Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy
- ▶ Kentucky Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission
- ▶ Kentucky Opioid Response Effort (KORE) Treatment Access Program
- ▶ Kentucky Specialty Courts
- ▶ Kentucky State Police
- ▶ KYnect Resources
- ▶ Leadership Kentucky
- ▶ National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP)
- ▶ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
- ▶ National Council for Mental Wellbeing
- ▶ Operation Parent
- ▶ Partnership to End Addiction
- ▶ RECON Kentucky
- ▶ Recovery Kentucky Centers
- ▶ Serve Kentucky (AmeriCorps)
- ▶ SOAR (Shaping our Appalachian Region)
- ▶ Stand in the Gap Coalition
- ▶ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- ▶ University of Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center
- ▶ U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
- ▶ U.S. Department of Agriculture
- ▶ U.S. Department of Education
- ▶ U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
- ▶ U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation
- ▶ Volunteers of America Mid-States
- ▶ White House Office of National Drug Control Policy
- ▶ Numerous additional individual businesses, civic groups, and community organizations



For additional information contact

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