



**A Collective Impact Initiative of Envision 2020 & SummaSource at Auburn Montgomery**



**October 18, 2016**

**PRESS CONFERENCE:**

**October 26, 2016**

**1:00 p.m.**

**AUM Center for Lifelong Learning, on TechnaCenter Drive**

***Team Tapped and Funded for Crisis Intervention Training***

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MONTGOMERY, AL – Four Montgomery citizens have been tapped to be certified as instructors in **Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)**. Generous financial support is being provided by Baptist Health, Barrie Harmon III, Goodwyn Mills & Cawood, River Bank & Trust, Montgomery Police Department and Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office that will enable two Baptist Health employees, an officer from the Montgomery Police Department, and an officer from Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office to spend a week in Minneapolis at CIT International where they will gain certification as CIT instructors. Once certified as CIT instructors, the four candidates will train Montgomery and the River Region’s law enforcement officers, and other related personnel, in Crisis Intervention.

First developed in Memphis, Tennessee, CIT arms law enforcement officers with the information tools they need to do their jobs safely and effectively when they encounter citizens displaying potential signs of mental illness. CIT-trained law enforcement organizations make their communities safer by equipping officers with the knowledge of how to recognize signs of mental illness and providing them techniques to de-escalate potentially dangerous situations. CIT-trained officers are more likely to move mental health consumers into treatment instead of jail, thus getting them on the road to recovery and reducing the chances they will be arrested in the future. These outcomes from CIT are realistic for the River Region based on what other communities have experienced after their law enforcement officers have received CIT training. Some examples:

- After the introduction of CIT in Memphis, officer injuries sustained during responses to “mental disturbance” calls dropped by 80%.<sup>i</sup>
- A number of studies have found that CIT training has improved officers’ attitudes and knowledge about mental illness, increased their confidence in identifying and responding to persons with mental illness, and increased their overall confidence in their departments’ response to mental health related calls.<sup>ii</sup>
- Detroit’s, CIT-trained police force reduced the number of re-arrests of people with mental illness by a staggering 58%.<sup>iii</sup>
- Louisville’s CIT program generates more than \$1 million a year in cost savings.<sup>iv</sup>

In 2013 Envision 2020 began to proactively begin addressing challenges to mental healthcare access. Dr. David Satcher, former U.S. Surgeon General, was the keynote speaker for a “kickoff” conference that resulted in creation of the Healthy Minds Network (HMN), a *Collective Impact* initiative spearheaded by Envision 2020 and Summa Source at Auburn Montgomery. Since then the 33-member HMN Leadership Council has established the Post-incarceration Case Management Program that is under the auspices of the Montgomery Area Mental Health Authority, sponsored a second Mental Health Conference in March of this year with former Congressman Patrick Kennedy as the keynote speaker, launched training on October 17 for thirty lay persons to become certified instructors in Mental Health First Aid, secured signed resolutions from four River Region county commissions to support *Stepping Up*, which is a national initiative to reduce the number of mentally ill people in jails, and conducted a Sequential Intercept Mapping workshop with a nationally competitive grant they won.

Reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in the River Region’s jails is not just a public safety issue. It is also a taxpayer issue because it will move taxpayer dollars where they will have the greatest impact. Data indicate that 15% of inmates in Montgomery’s city and county jails have a serious mental illness--nearly 90 inmates per day. Moreover, the literature indicates that,

after their release from the jail, more than half of them (56%) will be re-incarcerated. Preventing mental health consumers from going to jail and keeping them from returning will save taxpayer dollars and reduce crime at the same time.

Equally important is the human toll of incarcerating people living with mental illness. Mental illness is the only illness treated as though it were a crime. Communities throughout the country are finding that people who receive the treatment and supports they need can and do obey the law, and become productive citizens. Law enforcement and jail personnel at all levels are essential players in this initiative. It is community safekeeping in action for all citizens.

Crisis Intervention Training is one very important step in improving the River Region's mental health system. When combined with other initiatives that the HMN is working on with the Region's hospitals, the Montgomery Area Mental Health Authority, the courts, and various nonprofit organizations, the River Region will reap the benefits that other CIT-trained communities around the country have achieved.

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<sup>i</sup> Dupont, R., Cochran, S., & Bush, A. (1999) "Reducing criminalization among individuals with mental illness." Presented at the US Department of Justice and Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Conference on Forensics and Mental Illness, Washington, DC, July 1999.

<sup>ii</sup> Borum, R., Deane, M.D., Steadman, H., & Morrissey, J. (1998). "Police perspectives on responding to mentally ill people in crisis: perceptions of program effectiveness." *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 16, 393-405.

<sup>iii</sup> TAPA Center for Jail Diversion. (2004). "What can we say about the effectiveness of jail diversion programs for persons with cooccurring disorders?" The National GAINS Center. Accessed December 19, 2007 at: [http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/pdfs/jail\\_diversion/WhatCanWeSay.pdf](http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/pdfs/jail_diversion/WhatCanWeSay.pdf). - See more at: <http://www.nami.org/Law-Enforcement-and-Mental-Health/What-Is-CIT#sthash.3DmwdCVC.dpuf>

<sup>iv</sup> J Ky Med Assoc. 2008 Sep;106(9):435-7.