



Highlands Community Services

Marcus Alert/Co-Response Implementation in a Rural Area

May 2024

Marcus Alert/Co-Response Implementation in a Rural Area

Leadership

Kandace Miller

- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)
- HCS Crisis Services Department Director
- Over two decades of experience in behavioral health services

D. Byron Ashbrook

- HCS Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Coordinator
- Over seventeen years in law enforcement (former Chief Deputy)
- FBI National Academy Graduate, session 248

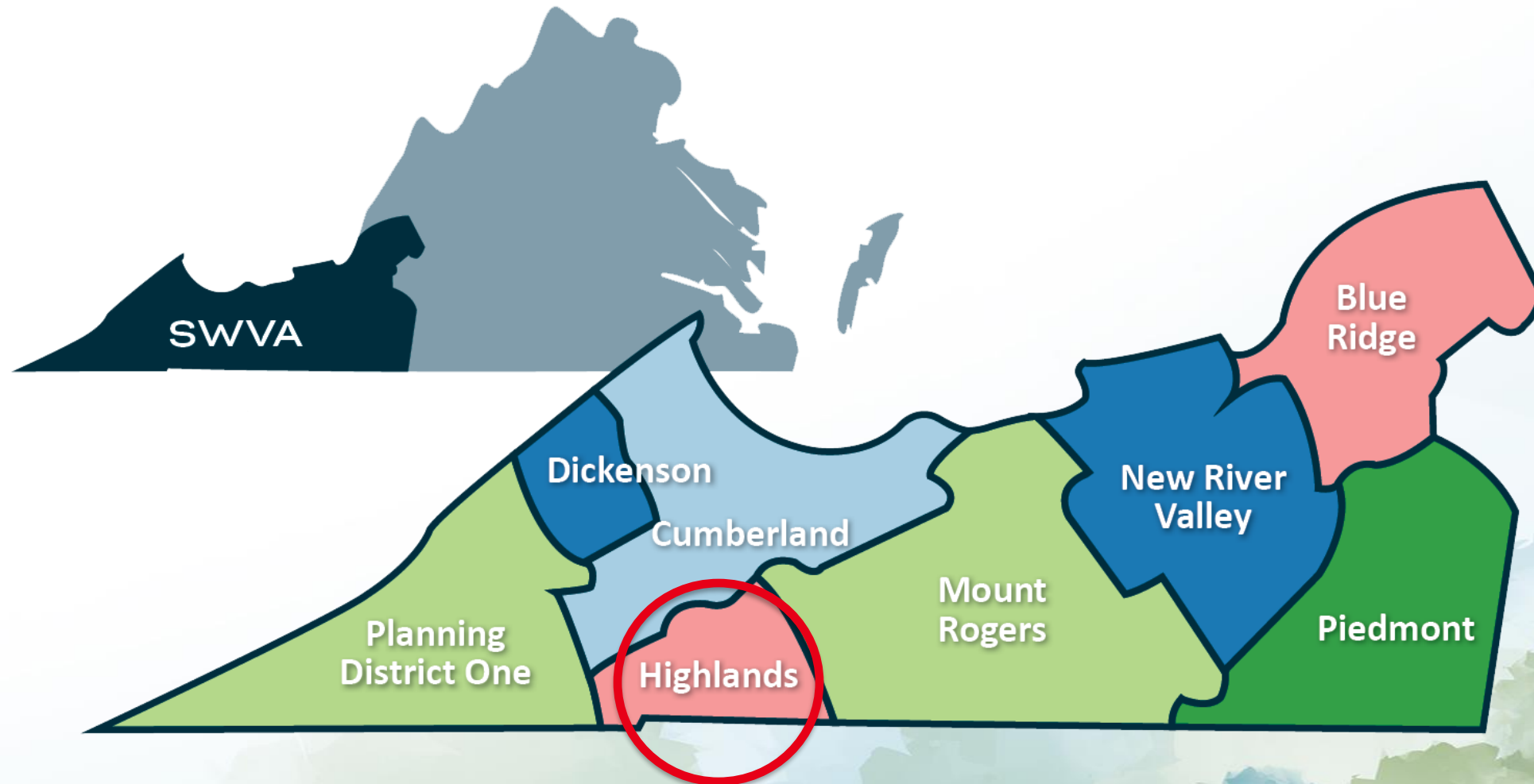
Chris Parks

- Regional Marcus Alert Coordinator, DBHDS Region 3
- Over twenty-four years of law enforcement experience
- Experienced in working with multiple agencies and bringing groups together



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Highlands Community Services – Catchment Area



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Highlands Community Services – Catchment Area

- Located in Southwest Virginia on the Tennessee border
- Comprised of Washington County and the City of Bristol, Virginia
- Approximately 579 square miles geographical size
- Combined population of 71,154 not counting the transient population (2020 Census)



cite: www.visitabingdonva.com



cite: <https://digitaledition.chicagotribune.com>



cite: www.timesnews.net

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HCS Crisis Intervention Team Program (Training)

- Started in 2019 as a joint Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training Program and Crisis Intervention Team Assessment Center (CITAC).
- CIT Training Program partners with the local law enforcement academy to provide 40 Hour Core and Train the Trainer classes.
- Challenges/Accomplishments
- To date we have trained 287 law enforcement officers, corrections officers, clinicians, and hospital security.
- In our catchment area approximately 25% percent of all officers/clinicians are CIT Trained.



HCS Crisis Intervention Team Program (CITAC)

STAKEHOLDERS

Law Enforcement

- Washington County Sheriff's Office
- City of Bristol Sheriff's Office
- City of Bristol Police Department
- Abingdon Police Department
- Damascus Police Department
- Glade Spring Police Department
- Virginia Highlands Community College
Police Department
- Emory & Henry College Police
Department
- Virginia State Police

Community

- Virginia District 17 Probation and
Parole
- Southwest Virginia Regional Jail
Authority
- Southwest Virginia Criminal Justice
Training Academy
- Ballad Health
- Washington County Virginia
- City of Bristol Virginia
- Town of Abingdon



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HCS Crisis Intervention Team Program (Current Status)

- 24-hour coverage – 12-hour shifts
- Staffed with Four (4) Deputies, One (1) Sergeant, Four (4) Clinicians
- CITAC Sergeant also oversees CRU Deputies
- Sergeant provides supplemental coverage to CITAC as well as assistance to the 23 Hour Center when needed
- Multi-jurisdictional – WCSO / BVSO
- Statistics – June 2019 – February 2024
- 1,561 Accepted Referrals (996 ECO – 565 Voluntary)
- Over 4,600 hours saved to local law enforcement
- CITAC Officers have conducted over 450 Local TDO and Courtesy Transports

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Highlands Community Services Crisis Center



**414 Ivy Street
Abingdon, VA 24210**

- Emergency Services
- 24 Hour CITAC
- 23 Hour Observation (The Anchor)
- CSU (Highlands Harbor)
- Co-Response (Marcus Alert)
- Mobile Crisis

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Highlands Community Services Crisis Center



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Highlands Community Services Crisis Center



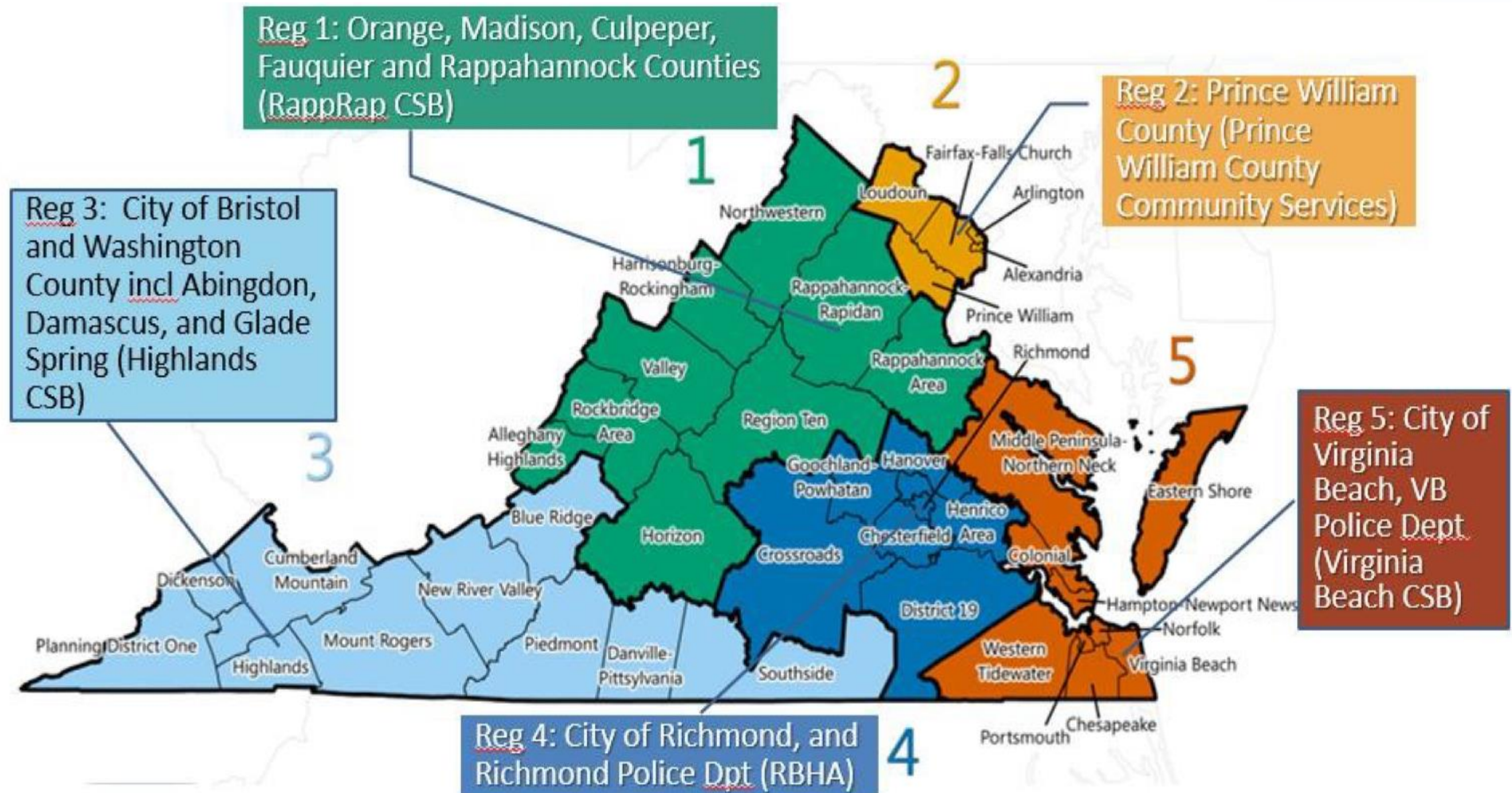
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Highlands Community Services Crisis Center



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Highlands Community Services was selected to be 1 of 5 pilot programs to implement Marcus Alert



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Funding – Staff

- Deputies (2) – HCS received special permission from DBHDS to utilize funding for LEOs on the team
- Clinicians (2)
- Registered Peer Support Specialist
- Local Marcus Alert Coordinator (partial)
- Regional Marcus Alert Coordinator (partial)

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Funding – Equipment

- Ballistic vests for clinical staff responding with LE
- iPad(s) -including cellular service for clinical staff to use in the field and Telehealth purposes.
- Footwear for clinical staff
- Overtime for fill-in staff
- General office equipment and space

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Stakeholder Group – Community Buy-In

Obtaining community participation was paramount to the successful launch of the HCS Marcus Alert program. The diverse stakeholder group included but not limited to:

- Crisis Workers
- LBGQTQ Members
- Municipal Leaders
- US Marshals Service
- Clergy Members
- Black Community Leaders
- Law Enforcement
- Correctional Officers
- Persons with Lived Experience
- Military Veterans

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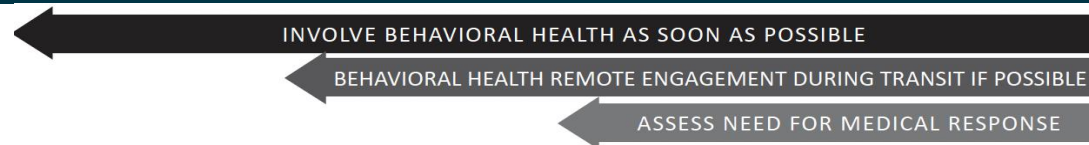
Stakeholder Group – Community Participation

Chaired by Kyle Sensabaugh – Well respected leader in the black community of Washington County and surrounding area. Assistant Athletic Director at Emory and Henry College.

Vision Statement:

“A culturally competent, person centered and trauma-informed approach to community crisis care”

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LEVEL 1 RESPONSE	LEVEL 2 RESPONSE	LEVEL 3 RESPONSE	LEVEL 4 RESPONSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 911 PSAPs triage and refer to 988 regional crisis call centers for calls that can be managed by phone or triaged for possible mobile crisis dispatch. Outreach received via text or TDY must be processed by the entity receiving (either PSAP or call center), as these are unable to be transferred between entities. 988 regional crisis call centers provide phone triage and possibly transfer to CSB for additional services on the crisis continuum if mobile crisis is not an option, for routine scheduling for Same Day Access, or transfer/transfer back to appropriate 911 should law enforcement and/or EMS response be required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 911 PSAP refer to 988 regional crisis call centers for triage or call is received directly by crisis call center and triaged for phone or mobile crisis dispatch. Outreach received via text or TDY must be processed by the entity receiving (either PSAP or call center), as these are unable to be transferred between entities. First available mobile crisis team is dispatched per regional/local CSB MOA arrangements. Calls originating through 911 flags information on transferred calls so that information gathered initially is provided to any calls for back-up law enforcement involvement that may escalate or occur later in the situation. Response locations that may present safety concerns should be elevated to level 3 and transferred to 911 for co-response dispatch. Crisis call center may route some calls to CSB for additional processing if mobile crisis is not an option and if co-response is not indicated. 911 will share any known hazards for identified addresses indicated for mobile crisis dispatch. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 911 PSAPs handle all calls at this level via direct answer or immediate transfer from crisis call center, with call center consult to identify if co-response unit dispatch is appropriate. Co-response team is dispatched for situations with potential safety concerns in prohibiting dispatch of mobile crisis teams only. Law enforcement secures scene before co-response unit engages or before handed off to mobile crisis if deemed appropriate. Specialized mobile crisis responses including REACH for individuals with ID/DD are utilized as appropriate and prioritized due to co-response nature. Upon request by on-scene law enforcement, EMS will respond to medically evaluate someone in a mental health crisis (Phased Implementation) If co-response team is not available for response, at minimum, a trained clinician via in person or teleservice could still assist in engaging consumer to comply with officers on scene to reduce use of force risk and assist in deescalation. Welfare checks may be appropriate for co-response dispatch. Primary LEA also dispatched and responsible for execution of ECO, if warranted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 911 PSAPs dispatch law enforcement, EMS and/or fire without delay. Law enforcement or EMS approaches the scene to assess and secure. 911 dispatches co-responder team ONLY at the request of an incident commander or officer on scene for supports/intervention once the scene is secure and deemed safe.

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Marcus Alert – MOU

A multi-jurisdictional MOU was developed by HCS and the Washington County Sheriff's Office.

Participating localities are:

- Highlands Community Services
- Planning District One
- New River Valley Community Services
- Frontier Health
- County of Washington and Washington County Sheriff's Office
- City of Bristol, Police and Sheriff
- Abingdon Police Department
- Damascus Police Department
- Glade Spring Police Department
- Emory and Henry Police Department
- Virginia Highlands Community College Police Department

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Marcus Alert – Hiring Process

- Hiring the best clinicians and officers was/is paramount to the success of the program.
- HCS Department Director and staff conducted an extensive search for the right clinicians to be part of the program.
- WCSO administration vetted several applicants and from this pool allowed HCS staff to participate in the interview process for the MA Deputies.

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The HCS & Washington County Sheriff's Office Teams



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Marcus Alert – Clinician Training

- Drug Identification and Hazard Awareness
- Patrol Vehicle and Equipment/Location
- Officer Gear/Location/Use
- Officer and Clinician Safety/De-escalation, Situational Awareness, Pre-attack Indicators
- TCCC (Tactical Combat Casualty Care) and First Aid
- U.S. Constitution
- Firearms Familiarization – Pistol/Shotgun/Patrol Rifle
- Police Radio and PSAP Observation
- Pre-Admission Screening Training

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Marcus Alert – Deputy Training

- CITAC basic (40) hour course.
- CITAC observation and familiarization.
- Mental health pre-screening and observation.
- Advanced Marcus Alert Training (once developed by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services).

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Deputy and Clinician Training



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Marcus Alert – Does the Plan Work?

- Since November 2022, 964 mental health related calls for service have been answered by team members.
- Additionally, 442 of these calls were triaged a Marcus Alert level.
- Overall team members have answered or assisted with 1184 calls.
- In fiscal year 2024 (July '23 to present) team members have spent over 500 hours on MH related calls.
- NO use of force incidents.

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Community Outreach

Damascus Trail Days, Wash Co. Fair, VHCC Food Drive, Homeless Backpacks





Highlands Community Services

HighlandsCSB.org