



July 2, 2019



Annual Conference and COT



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On June 2, 2019, the Alabama-West Florida Conference convened for Annual Conference as they do each year in June. Clergy, lay delegates, choirs, and interested members gathered for worship and to conduct the business of the conference. Communities of Transformation values our relationship with

the AWFUMC and is grateful for the opportunity to attend Annual Conference. Thanks to all of you who stopped by our table! We loved visiting with you and hearing about the transformation happening in your community. It is a privilege to share this ministry with so many dedicated clergy and lay leaders, and we look forward to continuing to create sustainable change across our conference.

Meet Montgomery's New Site Coordinator!



Our Montgomery site welcomes new coordinator Amy Armistead! Amy is passionate about equipping and empowering folks in her community to break down barriers and cultivate meaningful relationships. Amy is also a United Methodist pastor, which has fueled her love of community building. She is very recently married to a UMC deacon, and they enjoy spending time with their dog Nora, cooking, and traveling. Amy is from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, but is excited

to call Montgomery her new home.

Celebrations Around the Conference

Mobile



Communities of Transformation Mobile celebrated their seventh Awaken Class on May 30, 2019. Two determined women, Jennifer and Bobbi, finished the leadership class despite the April storms. This class formed a tight bond and learned to lean on each other as they went deeper into holistic leadership curriculum. The site participant trainer, Amy, speaks of the bravery shown in the class as everyone in the small group learned how to be more vulnerable and trust a new community. This class is excited to begin the next step as they begin writing their new future story as they walk with the COT community as they work on their goals.

Rev. John Russell was the guest speaker for the celebration event. Rev. Russell was part of the original planning team that launched Communities of Transformation in Mobile. He shared a message centered around the book of Nehemiah and God's plan for his life. We were reminded that with God and our community, we are able to change our lives and bring forth a brighter tomorrow for those around us.

This community is excited to continue to bring change to their lives and begin walking towards their brighter tomorrow. COT Mobile will be starting their next leadership class this fall! Please contact katywrona.cot@gmail.com to learn more.

Evergreen



Our Evergreen site held their celebration in May, and what a celebration it was! We celebrated with the diversity that makes up our site: children in the bow tie club, interpretive dance, singing from members of matched groups, delicious food, and fellowship with people expressing interest in the next Awaken Class.

One of the Awaken Class Celebrants said, "I have made mistakes, even served time in prison but my life is making a transformation through this program. I am giving my life to the Lord, learning to repair my credit, and working toward home ownership ...and I have a job I love!"

The celebration clearly demonstrated our mission of building relationships! The entire night was joyous with an attitude that only comes from a loving, thankful, celebrating community.

It was a wonderful night planned by everyone involved in our site and greatly supported by the community with over 80 in attendance! As a pastor in attendance said, "It was an amazing night of celebration and love."

South Walton



Our site's first Celebration of Awaken graduates, volunteers, and partners for Caring and Sharing's Communities of Transformation program on June 25 was so amazing! The food, trivia and decorations were awesome-- we had a luau theme and a photo booth provided by a participant! But the best part, of course, was the people and the stories shared--the hearts and courage and the vulnerability. Three of the six Awaken graduates gave their testimonies, and there were many tears. About sixty people were in attendance, all of whom were graduates, volunteers, family members, donors or partners in some way. We so appreciated Director Katy Wrona and Rosaland Harrison coming to show their support and celebrate with us.

Update on our Selma Site

After being on hiatus for the past few months, our Selma site is ready to move forward! We are recruiting now to begin community development work before we relaunch the site later this year. We are also hiring a VISTA to be our new site coordinator. You can see the job posting here: <https://www.communitiestransformation.org/job-opportunities>. Contact Katy at katywrona.cot@gmail.com for more information.

Events

Reminder: no July meetings in Eufaula, Montgomery, and Phenix City

July 23- Taste and See in Dothan

August 12- Meetings resume in Eufaula

August 13- Meetings resume in Phenix City

August 27- Taste and See in South Walton

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.



August 6, 2019

The History of Communities of Transformation

Did you know that Communities of Transformation was started nearly ten years ago? We believe that celebrating our history will teach us about our past and help us discern our future as we move forward. On August 15 our History tab will be updated on our website to include a comprehensive history of our program. [Click here to access it](#), or you can find it under the "About" section in the left-hand column. You can learn about the original vision for Communities of Transformation and how we have grown through the years. Many of you were instrumental in starting COT, and we are so grateful for your support. You are invited to email your COT memories to Courtney at courtney.cot.comm@gmail.com. Happy reading!

Brewton



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We are so proud of what our participants are accomplishing! Patricia has completed her bachelor in early childhood.



Taylor has completed our Awaken curriculum and is moving in August.

Communities of Transformation is truly making a difference in Brewton, and we could not do what we do without your support. If you are interested in partnering with COT in Brewton, contact Shae at shae.cot.brewton@gmail.com. We are looking forward to our next Celebration on August 20, 2019.

Dothan



Communities of Transformation in Dothan celebrated Christmas in July! Fifth Tuesdays are Fun Nights in Dothan, and in July we had a test run for the holidays. We divided into teams with each team focusing on one of the dimensions studied in Communities of Transformation as it relates to the holidays. We enjoyed Christmas foods, talked about healthy eating during the holidays, how to manage stress related to finances and relationships, and the meaning of Christmas. And no Christmas celebration in complete without photos! Planning ahead can provide us a chance to set goals related to the holidays so we can celebrate without the stress!



Eufaula

We are proud to partner with the Eufaula Housing Authority's YouthBuild program. YouthBuild provides opportunities for young people who are not in school to build skills that help them enter the workforce. Our participant Paquallia just received a "Ready to Work" award. She is a faithful and motivated member of Communities of Transformation. Congratulations, Paquallia!

Can you believe we are recruiting for our tenth class?!? Please keep our site in your prayers as



we move forward and begin a new Awaken class soon. If you are interested in getting involved at our Eufaula site, contact Lasheena Fleming at lasheenaflemming.cot@gmail.com

Phenix City

With the help of her small circle of support member Roger, Kristi has made great progress toward reaching her goals of a better life for herself and her children. She is currently without transportation, so Roger has been taking her to CDL training every weekday for a few weeks. Kristi is learning to drive a big rig 18-wheel truck! Once she finishes the training course and passes the licensing test and is hired, she will be even closer to securing reliable transportation for herself and her family. In addition to going to school every day, she has a weekend job at Waffle House to help pay the bills and put food on the table. Two of her sons graduated from high school in May, and both have also found jobs for the summer to help with the bills before either going to school or in the military. Two other children are a bit younger and will soon be able to contribute as their siblings are doing now, and their mother is setting a wonderful example for them to follow. Kudos to Kristi and Roger for their relationship and doing the hard work of achieving goals!



Pine Hill



The Town of Pine Hill celebrated the Fourth of July with its annual parade. Pine Hill Mayor Dusty McDanal said a few words to open the parade. The parade had about twenty entrants, including four-wheelers, ATV's, and a COT truck! We carried American flags down Church Street as we celebrated the holiday. We are so thankful for our community!

Events

Friday, August 2 First Friday with Chamber of Commerce in Eufaula

Tuesday, August 6 Meetings resume after summer break in Montgomery

Monday, August 12 Open House in Eufaula

Tuesday, August 13 Meetings resume after summer break in Phenix City

Tuesday, August 13 Taste and See in Montgomery

Tuesday, August 20 Awaken classes begin in Montgomery

Tuesday, August 27 Taste and See in South Walton

Thursday, August 29 Taste and See in Evergreen

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September 9, 2019



Communities of Transformation in Chicago!

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Site coordinators Lasheena Flemming and Emily Proctor traveled to Chicago for Americorps VISTA In-Service Training in August. They enjoyed learning more about the unique role of an Americorps VISTA member in doing capacity-building work as opposed to direct service. They also gained valuable tools and resources for volunteer recruitment and training, resource development, partnership development, and planning and leading effective meetings. Emily shared that her site has drafted an "Ideal Matched Volunteer Description" and a Fundraising Strategy for review by the programming and leadership team. Lasheena gained knowledge on how to better lead meetings. She learned that you have to adapt but not compromise. We are thankful for their willingness to learn and to share with our staff!

Evergreen



As the summer gardening season winds down in Evergreen, members are thankful for their harvest and preparing for a fall garden. Earlier this summer Communities of Transformation joined with DHR and other local agencies to

host a picnic in the garden for foster children and their families. Even though it rained, spirits were high as everyone enjoyed time in the garden! We are thankful for all the opportunities our garden has given us and our community.

New Site Coordinators in Mobile and Selma

Our Mobile and Selma sites are excited to welcome new site coordinators this month! Cliff Daugette is serving in Mobile. He has planned community events like Coffee with Cliff to establish relationships and strengthen partnerships in Mobile. They have a Taste and See planned for this month. Our new Selma site coordinator is Liz Brown. She is looking forward to developing relationships and networks in Selma. Her goals include strengthening the site and its people and encouraging opportunities for change. Look for more information soon on all of our new staff members!

South Walton



Our South Walton site celebrated their first graduates in June, and they are excited for "Phase 2" of meetings. After completing Awaken or Engage, members form matched groups for ongoing support. They have had game time, created vision boards, and learned about family systems to get to know each other better and learn to how to support each other better. This month they will begin their second class of Awaken and Engage!

ABCs of COT

Volunteer Marsha Clayton read her creative description of COT at a recent Montgomery Celebration. We are thankful for her willingness to share and her faithful service!

Communities of Transformation means.....

Active, Affirming, and Accepting
Building Better Behavior
Considerate, Confidential Community and Creative Connections
Definite, Diverse and Dynamic differences
Empowering and Encouraging Environment
Fun-Filled, Forgiving, Faith-based family
Great group to grow goals
Homey, healthy, and helpful
Interesting Interactions and Ideas, Informative and Inspiring
Joyful and Jubilant
Lots of Love and Laughs
Many Moments for Meaningful Ministry
Non-judgmental, Nice, and Neighborly
Open and Outreaching Opportunities
Patient and Prayerful Place
Qualifying and Quintessential
Respectful, Responsible Relationship-Building
Safe, Stable, Strengthening
Time for Tenderness, Thriving, and Transformative
Understanding, Useful, and Uplifting
Valuing Various Viewpoints
Welcoming Wellness and Worth
X-tra ordinary you and X-tra ordinary me
Yearning for
Zest and Zeal

September Events

Monday, September 2- Labor Day; No meetings
Tuesday, September 3- No meeting in South Walton
Thursday, September 5- Coffee with Cliff in Mobile
Thursday, September 5- Taco night in Evergreen; Awaken class meets
Monday, September 9- New classes begin in Eufaula
Tuesday, September 10- New classes begin in South Walton
Tuesday, September 10- Taste and See in Phenix City
Wednesday, September 11- Remembrance Day
Thursday, September 12- Taste and See in Mobile
Tuesday, September 17- New classes begin in Brewton
Tuesday, September 17- Taste and See in Phenix City
Tuesday, September 24- New classes begin in Phenix City

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