



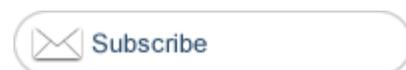
April 10, 2019



Eufaula's New Site Coordinator



Want more?



Contact us

**Katy Wrona,
Conference Director**

[Email Katy](#)

**Courtney Albrecht,
Communications Coordinator**

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We are thrilled to announce that Lasheena Flemming is the new site coordinator

for Eufaula! She is excited to be part of the Communities of Transformation team, and she is eager to help bring transformation to Eufaula. Lasheena finds great joy in giving of herself and her time to help cultivate others. She loves spending time with her family and friends and traveling the world. Lasheena is a woman of faith and believes all things are possible with Christ.

Former site coordinator Beverly Brown has taken on a new role with Communities of Transformation as our VISTA leader. In her new role, Beverly will work to strengthen and build the leadership skills of current VISTAS, develop in-service training, and strengthen the capacity of Communities of Transformation.

Financial Learning in Pine Hill

Our Pine Hill site has been studying the financial dimension with Renee Vines, a County Extension officer. We have talked about tracking spending and easy ways to save change. Renee challenged us to record what we spend each month on non-bill items as a way to look at where we might save for long-term items. She also shared a Money Management Calendar with each of us. We plan to complete the course toward the end of May. Site coordinator Brenda Autry always works to schedule programming that is important to our community.

Fun Night in Montgomery



Montgomery's Community recently took a break from classes and programming and celebrated a Fun Night! Members we haven't seen in a while came back to enjoy the fellowship and fun. We decided to split up for this night--the men went bowling while the ladies enjoyed a spa night. Jessica, a COT member who works at a spa in Montgomery, helped us with facials and manicures and gave us instructions on how to have a spa night at home. It was a treat! Site coordinator

Jennifer Lancaster said, "When you laugh and have fun together, it builds trust. Trust is required when you let someone new into your life. Fun night helps build community, so that when we get back to the work of goals and problem-solving, trust is there."

Phenix City Transformations

We had a special treat in February when one of our members volunteered to share her passion for history with us. *Profiles in Black History* was written, produced, and directed by member Brenda Dixon. She and her cast presented a fantastic program! We learned about Madam C.J. Walker from Brenda; Jane Simmons taught us about Mary Jane McLeod Bethune; Tracy Threatts taught us about Sojourner Truth, and Ruth Ann Powers presented information about Charles Clinton Spaulding. The program was educational and informative, and it presented a great opportunity for community-building as we interacted with each other in new ways. Thanks, Brenda!

We have also enjoyed having Dawn Evans, Special Services Coordinator of Columbus Technical College, share the wonderful programs they have available for people in need of training for a trade or opportunity not requiring a college degree. Programs offered include welding, auto mechanics, electrical, nursing, and construction. Dawn will be with us again in April to conduct mock job interviews as a follow up to a resume writing program we had in March. We are looking forward to brushing up on our skills and getting feedback from an expert!

Learning and Growing Together



Staff members of Communities of Transformation gathered in Montgomery last week for professional development. We enjoyed presentations by colleagues as well as community partners. Montgomery co-trainer Richard Williams shared with us about the significance of connections. Katie Prince from Help Me Grow Alabama offered resources related to child-care issues. Mike Nicholson of Alabama Arise offered insight into how to address systemic issues. We appreciate the time we spend together in fellowship and learning!

Brewton's Wonder Garden

Our Brewton site is excited about the Wonder Garden at Brewton Elementary School! Brewton's Garden Club established the garden, and Communities of Transformation maintains it. Students love the garden! They look forward to meeting their tutors in the garden for a peaceful time of reading and connecting with each other. Volunteers from Communities of Transformation are grateful for our partnerships in the community, and we love helping to provide a beautiful space enjoyed by all.

Special Events

Saturday, April 20 - Santa Rosa Beach 30A 5K Fundraiser

See our [Events page](#) for regular weekly meeting information.

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.



May 14, 2019



Want more?



Conference Leadership Board



Contact us

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Conference Director

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We are so pleased to announce the formation of our new Conference Leadership Board! While each site has its own leadership team, the Conference leadership board will focus on issues that affect Communities of Transformation as a whole. As they discuss the vision and goals for Communities of Transformation in 2019, some specific plans include creating a COT Manual, expansion going into 2020, and the defining the role of the new board. They plan to meet quarterly. Members pictured are: Mary Kate Keel, Laurel Akin, Ora Gillespie, David Willis, Rev. Richard Carter, Katy Wrona, Janet Wooten, Susan Hunt, Eddy Keel, Clara Ester, and Celeste Eubanks.

"Gray" Easter 5K in South Walton



Communities of Transformation in South Walton held their first fundraising event the day before Easter. The Grayt Easter 5K was organized by a member of Good News United Methodist Church, COT's host church in South Walton. The race was limited to 130 runners, and it filled up a week before the race! The weather was beautiful but windy, and kids enjoyed a windy Easter Egg Hunt on the beach when the race was over. Volunteers organized the race, ran the water table, donated to a swag bag, and more. Thanks to their generosity, over \$3000 was raised for COT! Several Communities of Transformation volunteers helped with the race or ran in it, and we are looking forward to doing it again next Easter with even bigger numbers. The race even has its own Facebook page-- follow at [Run Grayt Race Series](#) and join us next year!

[Lunch with Bishop David Graves in Evergreen](#)



Communities of Transformation in Evergreen welcomed Bishop David Graves for a fundraiser luncheon on May 1. The luncheon was held at Evergreen FUMC, our site's host church. Volunteers from Communities of Transformation planned, cooked, served, and decorated for the event. We were pleased to welcome longtime COT advocate Dan Morris along with other pastors in the area. We are thankful for the ways that our community and our conference are connected!

Healthy Living in Mobile



Communities of Transformation in Mobile has been focused on healthy living as part of the physical dimension. Presentations from a dietitian and a registered nurse from Victory Health Partners taught us more about the topics of Healthy Eating on a Budget and Nutrition. We are committed to staying on track! Thanks

to Mobile Communities of Transformation for providing all of us a pedometer to help keep track of our steps.

Special Events

- Thursday, June 6- Relationship building day in Mobile
- Monday, June 10- Celebration in Eufaula
- Thursday, June 13 - Matched Groups start in Mobile

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June 4, 2019



Planting Seeds in Phenix City



Site Coordinator Joan Gatewood lead Communities of Transformation in Phenix City in a seed-planting activity. As members planted seeds, Joan related it to goal setting and planning: working the plan, tending to it, and nurturing it to make it bear fruit.

Here is what Joan had to say:

At our May 13th meeting, the Phenix City site family planted zinnia, marigold, sweet banana pepper, basil, and forget-me-not seeds in empty egg cartons, misted them with water, and gingerly carried them to our homes to be put in sunny windows to wait for the seeds to sprout. Some in the group had never planted anything before that night and were very excited about the experience, while others who had planted seeds in the past were helpful to those who were novices, giving advice about how and how much of whatever was needed. It was a great time of sharing and caring and getting our hands messy. The project was related to the making of goals, in that a plan is made which has to be carried out to be successful. Goals constantly require tending or they will wither into nothingness like untended seeds. Obstacles may come with a plant just as with a goal-- there may be a setback requiring time to heal and regroup before moving

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forward again. When the day finally comes when you can pick a bouquet of flowers or eat a banana pepper on a sandwich or add basil to the dish you are preparing, just as with a goal that has been achieved, all the work and problems fall away, and the rewards are sweet. Many of us have shared that our planted seeds have sprouted continuing our excitement, which is a big part of the fun of growing something and much like a goal being achieved.

Pine Hill Area Agencies Gather for Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



On Wednesday, May 29, 2019. United Way of Southwest Alabama's Clarke County Outreach Center opened its doors at 118 Clark St. in Grove Hill. Members of Communities of Transformation in Pine Hill were on hand to show their support and share more about what COT is doing in the area. The purpose of the Outreach Center is to offer a variety of services under one roof. We look forward to working with Trista Walker, coordinator of the Outreach Center, to serve residents of Clarke county. The center will be open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays with services offered from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. COT-Pine Hill Outreach Day is scheduled for the second Wednesday of the

month from 10 a.m. until noon. We are excited for this community partnership!

Moving Forward in Eufaula



Communities of Transformation in Eufaula continues to move forward under the leadership of site coordinator Lasheena Flemming. VISTA leader Beverly Brown has helped ensure a smooth transition. Members in Eufaula have had fun at Game Night, and they have worked to meet goals.



Recently Earlona Walker went through a 12-week training at the Alabama Corrections Academy, graduating in April. Stephanie March has completed all of her general Studies at Wallace Community College and received her degree. We are so proud of your hard work!

Montgomery's Celebration



State Representative Kirk Hatcher was our guest speaker for the celebration of our fifth class. Rep. Hatcher encouraged us to continue in our support of one another. He spoke about the importance of being part of a supportive community, referencing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision of a "Beloved Community" where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to succeed. Rep.

Hatcher encouraged members of Communities of Transformation to continue to strive for this vision; to share in each other's successes and to carry each other's burdens. We appreciate Rep. Hatcher's willingness to visit COT on a long, busy day of legislative session

Dothan Volunteer Spotlight: Les Pinckard



Dothan volunteer Les Pinckard has been involved in Communities of Transformation since its early days. Les is a faithful volunteer who can be counted on for just about anything. He finds creative ways to serve! He has hosted a graduation party for one of our members, taken the kids to Water World, and manned the grill at cookouts. He and his wife Caroline are advocates for COT all around town. Les is a member of First United Methodist Church in Dothan, and he volunteers with Rotary, The Harbor Homeless Ministry, but his heart is with COT. Les is an excellent communicator who is willing to share his experiences with others to help them succeed. Les has a servant's heart and inspires others to serve as he does. Thanks, Les!

Volunteering in Brewton



Communities of Transformation in Brewton appreciates our volunteers! Some of our favorite ways to help include reading to students and tutoring at Brewton Elementary School. They also love volunteering at the Wonder Garden at the school. We also enjoy visiting the nursing home in Brewton.

Outside the school, volunteers help at Communities of Transformation by preparing meals, recruiting, leading book studies, and helping with our programs. Mostly, our volunteers enjoy motivating and walking along side our participants as we grow and learn together.

Events

Tuesday, June 25, July 2, and July 9- no meeting in Dothan

No meetings in July in Eufaula, Montgomery, and Phenix City

Tuesday July 2, 2019- no meeting in South Walton

Thursday, July 4 and July 18- no meeting in Evergreen

Tuesday, July 16- no meeting in Brewton

Tuesday, July 16- Taste and See in Dothan

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