



Message from our CEO

November is National Gratitude Month. This is a good time for us to show gratitude in more ways than just saying “thank you.” I am grateful for the ACTS team who provides essential treatment services every day to the individuals in our care. I am grateful for the services that ACTS provides in the community and the new programs we will be implementing soon. In October, the Hillsborough County Commission voted to provide start-up funding to the psychosocial Clubhouse we plan to open in 2022. [Check out this story](#) that ran last month for more information. Also, in October Erica Floyd-Thomas, Assistant Secretary of Substance Abuse and Mental Health from DCF visited ACTS to learn more about the services we provide in the Tampa Bay area. I am thankful for the opportunity to provide a full continuum of care of services to our community. The Thanksgiving holiday can be a difficult time for people in recovery – later in this newsletter we share tips for a sober Thanksgiving holiday. I want to take a moment to wish you and your loved ones a wonderful Thanksgiving Day. Please continue to stay safe and well.



Asha Terminello
ACTS CEO

ACTS Celebrates Halloween

Agency-wide, there was a spooky feeling with each location taking part in a Halloween Decorating Contest. ACTS provided each location \$25 to buy supplies and staff were encouraged to work together as a team leading up to Halloween to decorate their site. The winning location – Juvenile Addictions Receiving Facility in Tampa - was chosen by ACTS Senior Leadership and received a pizza party at their location on October 28. “I was so impressed to see all of the hard work that ALL of the locations put into making their lobbies and common areas festive for Halloween,” said Asha Terminello, ACTS CEO. Employees were also encouraged to dress up or wear a Halloween shirt on October 29 or 31, and staff working on Halloween received pizza that evening. To see pictures from Halloween, [click here](#).



The display at the JARF that won the decorating contest

Learn about the COAP Program

ACTS and the Tampa Police Department partner together for the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Program (COAP), where two ACTS staff members work closely with the opioid unit. Taylor Mihocik serves as the therapist, while Tiffany Rhoads is the case manager. Taylor works in the field with plain clothes officers that respond to opioid calls, while Tiffany's role is working closely with the clients after they become part of COAP. Tiffany and Taylor's main goal is to help identify and engage with high utilizers of opiates to ensure that they receive the treatment care that they need. "Our goal is to intervene with a client before they overdose or have law enforcement



Taylor (left) and Tiffany

involvement," said Taylor. Taylor started at ACTS in April 2021, and Tiffany in June 2021, and in that time frame the COAP program has helped 32 clients. "Our goal for the first year of the program was to help 40 people, and we are almost there," said Tiffany. To be part of COAP, clients must be 18 years old and have current or previous involvement with TPD. Once a person starts the COAP program, they receive services for up to 6 months, which include linkage to behavioral health services, housing shelters, medication assisted treatment and healthcare benefits. "One of my favorite parts of the job is getting people into treatment," said Tiffany. "Once they start treatment, I know they are motivated and are starting on the path to recovery." Taylor agrees – "Seeing the changes our clients make while being in the program is remarkable. We had a client who started using drugs and alcohol at 13 and is now 25. They overdosed recently, and luckily had NARCAN at home, which the mother deployed and called EMS immediately after, saving their life. Tiffany completed a Marchman Act on them, and now the client is at Keystone, sober and doing well. They have a second chance at life thanks to the COAP program." To find out more about the COAP program, call 813.879.0494 or [click here](#).

Five Tips for a Sober Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving can be a difficult time for those in recovery, as many holidays can be. Read on for five tips on how to stay sober this Turkey Day.

- 1. Don't show up too early if you can avoid it.** A lot of the drinking tends to happen before the meal during idle time, so if you're an invited guest, bring a dish or dessert you've prepared to the event rather than making it there. Or to stay busy at the host's house, offer to help clean the dishes.
- 2. Bring your favorite non-alcoholic beverage.** Never assume, even if the host knows you're sober, that there will be something other than water for you at the event.
- 3. Have an exit strategy.** If the pressure gets to be too much, be prepared to leave. Also having a sober friend available to call might be helpful too.
- 4. Remember what this day is about.** Make a gratitude list. Ask yourself: What is in your life today that wasn't when you were drinking or using substances? Give thanks for what you have gained in sobriety, give thanks for your own strength.
- 5. Start new traditions.** Visit a pumpkin patch, host a socially distanced Friendsgiving with your sober pals, or eat tacos instead of the traditional Thanksgiving fare. It is never too late to start an entirely new tradition that doesn't revolve around booze or drugs.

For More Information

ACTS, Agency for Community Treatment Services, Inc., is a non-profit serving the Tampa Bay area since 1978. As a comprehensive, community-based behavioral health organization, ACTS mission is to apply the best of contemporary physical and behavioral health interventions and social support services available to assist individuals and families to engage and succeed in recovery. Call us today to find out how we can help you - 813.246.4899 or visit us online at www.actsfl.org.

