

First Lady Tracey Quillen Carney Announces Statewide Partnership at Trauma Awareness Month Kickoff

First Lady also announces first Compassionate Champion Award winners

DOVER, Del. – At a kickoff event for [Trauma Awareness Month](#) in Delaware, First Lady Tracey Quillen Carney today announced the launch of a new, growing statewide partnership for trauma-informed care to help elevate stories of the work of leaders in trauma-informed practices and approaches across the state called Trauma Informed Delaware. The goal of the statewide public-private-nonprofit coalition is to coordinate a sustainable system that advances resilience through community-based awareness, trauma prevention, and early intervention.

“Trauma-informed care is a pre-requisite to any effective strength-based strategy,” said **First Lady Tracey Quillen Carney**. “Progress starts when a critical mass of people learn and listen, when we recognize – down to our bone marrow – that these are our children, our veterans, our neighbors, and that we are all in this building-the-future business together. Thank you to the all of the people who have been leading trauma-informed work for many years, and to everyone who will be participating in Trauma Awareness Month events.”

“Trauma-informed care is real,” said **Tony Allen, Executive**

Vice President and Provost at Delaware State University, which hosted Wednesday's kickoff event. "When it is present, it goes to the very heart of practitioners knowing both their clients and themselves, and having a clear belief in the power of Ubuntu – I am because WE are. That is not a warm and fuzzy principle or an interesting catch phrase. It is a guiding principle for anyone of us – teachers, social workers, therapists, law enforcement officers, health care professionals – who work with fellow citizens who face unending challenges that place their mental, physical or spiritual health in peril. At Delaware State University, we are committed to building a cadre of healing professionals across any number of disciplines that understand Ubuntu and put it into practice in everything they do for their profession and their community."

"Our educators know first-hand that factors outside of the classroom impact how their students learn inside of the classroom, we have been hearing this for years. The creation of this statewide partnership and Trauma Awareness Month are an important first step towards making Delaware trauma-informed," said **Stephanie Ingram, President of the Delaware State Education Association**. "We are thankful to have the support of Governor Carney and Secretary Bunting in facing these challenges and helping our students find pathways to resilience."

Trauma Informed Delaware at www.traumainformedde.org will support streamlined requests for trainings, host collaborative convening opportunities, promote partners and events from across the state, and offer those supports and other forms of assistance through promotion of and advocacy for:

- Access to quality behavioral and integrated health care.
- Strength-based services for youth and adults.
- Education for providers and the community.

Wednesday's kickoff event was coordinated by Governor Carney's [Family Services Cabinet Council](#), which was charged with promoting Trauma Awareness Month as part of the Governor's [Executive Order 24](#). The Council also created an [online calendar](#) to share information with state employees, community partners, and members of the public on educational and professional development opportunities related to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and building resilience.

"At the Children's Department, we know that many of our clients come to us with a history of trauma," said **Josette Manning, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families**. "We also know that our staff, tasked with helping the most vulnerable children, also suffer trauma. Today, we all came together as a community to learn how we can become more trauma informed to better serve our children and families and how to take care of each other as we do it. We are looking forward to a month of activities focused on building resilience both inside and outside of our Department."

"During the past year, more than 1,000 Department of Health and Social Services employees with the greatest level of direct client contact have been trained in a trauma-informed approach," said **Dr. Kara Odom Walker, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services**, and a board-certified family physician. "We are building a workforce that understands what trauma is, how it affects people across their lifespans, and the most effective ways that we can assess and meet our clients' needs. Having a trauma-informed workforce is a critical step in supporting and promoting recovery for our clients who have experienced trauma so they can build resilience and learn to thrive in their communities."

"Toxic stress in childhood can have a profound and lasting impact on the lifelong health and well-being of a child, well into adulthood. Early intervention is key to reducing this

risk,” said **Lee Pachter, DO, Medical Director, General Pediatrics at Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children.** “Nemours is pleased to be part of a state-wide initiative bringing together experts in the field to help give our kids the resources they need to mitigate the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).”

During the day-long symposium at Delaware State University, the First Lady also announced the [Compassionate Champion Award](#) winners and presented a proclamation from Governor Carney. The honorees are:

- **Stephanie Sklodowski from Christiana Care and Christiana School District’s Newark High School Wellness Center.**
- **Wilmington University College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, Psychology Department.**
- **Renée Beaman, Director of the Division of State Service Centers in the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS).**
- **Division of State Services Centers in DHSS.**
- **Georgetown Police Department.**
- **Shue-Medill Middle School.**
- **Smyrna School District.**
- **Mount Pleasant Elementary School.**
- **Wendy Turner from Brandywine School District.**

Ryan Palmer from Caesar Rodney School District.

- **Collaborative Partnership to promote trauma-informed care approaches, including United Way of Delaware, the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families, the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Education and the Wilmington Community Advisory Council.**

The symposium featured an interactive panel moderated by DHSS Secretary Walker and breakout sessions on the neuroscience of stress, navigating trauma with boys of color, mindfulness and a screening of the film, "Broken Places." Keynote speakers Heather Forbes, LCSW and author of "Help for Billy," talked about understanding challenging and difficult behaviors, and Dr. Abdul-Malik Muhammad, Ed.D, a trauma-informed care leader in Delaware, addressed the collective power to heal.

The event was sponsored by the Delaware State Education Association, made possible through a grant from National Education Association, and co-sponsored by Trauma Matters Delaware, Nemours, Wilmington University and Delaware State University.

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