



Opioid
Response
Network

ISAC
Iowa State Association of Counties

Opioid Settlement Funds Strategic Planning Summit

Meet the Speakers



Christina Boyd, LSCSW, LCAC, is currently an Associate Professor of Practice for the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare. She is a master trainer for the ATTC network and serves as a content expert on prevention with the Opioid Response Network State Targeted Response. Christina has worked in several behavioral health settings in rural areas of the country over the last 26 years. She resides in western Kansas and is passionate about the equity of health resources in rural areas.



Catie Holmes, LMSW, is a Senior Project Coordinator for the Opioid Response Network serving states of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska by supporting the facilitation of providing technical assistance related to evidence-based approaches to preventing, treating and recovering from opioid and stimulant misuse. Catie is an experienced program coordinator skilled in mental health counseling, program development, crafting curriculum and educational and training experiences.



Samantha Karon is a Senior Program Manager at the National Association of Counties (NACo) where she leads the Opioid Solutions Center, an initiative to help counties maximize the impact of opioid settlement funds.

Samantha comes to NACo from the North Carolina Division of Public Health where she helped build the state's capacity to provide technical assistance to county jails. She earned her BA at Emory University and her MPH from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



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Deena M. Murphy, Ph.D., is the Founder of Deem Research, Inc. and directs, manages, and facilitates leadership training, diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, research, evaluation, and other types of capacity-building support to national and local academic, healthcare, community, and organizational change. As a community psychologist, Deena has collaborated on community and organizational capacity building related to equity, leadership and workforce development, substance use prevention, treatment and recovery, the HIV care continuum, team dynamics, strategic planning, and conducted numerous community and organizational assessments and trainings. Deena works with a variety of community-based, healthcare, and academic organizations to transform research into practical knowledge to inform their systems change and capacity-building strategies. Deena was the first in her family to go to university and she received her Ph.D. from North Carolina State University, where she specialized in Community Psychology and implementation science with a focus on nonprofits and organizational change and learning.



Greg Pliler, MPS, is the Director of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Region 7 (IA, KS, MO, NE) Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center. Greg spent the past 20 years working in the field of substance misuse prevention in a variety of roles including evidence-based program implementation, coalition-building, policy development, strategic planning, and evaluation. His work has provided him with a unique perspective and experience with collaborative community efforts and barriers to effective and sustainable program implementation.



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Steven Samra, MPA, is a Senior Associate at C4 Innovations and has expertise in recovery, MAT/MOUD, harm reduction, anti-stigma approaches, and promotion of lived experience as critical experiential knowledge. He serves in leadership capacities for a variety of recovery, substance use, mental health, peer involved, and homelessness focused federal, state, and local initiatives around the country. Mr. Samra is in long-term recovery from a co-occurring opioid use disorder and mental health challenges arising because of trauma, poverty and incarceration.



Sherrie Watkins, LMSW, is the Regional Coordinator for the Opioid Response Network serving the states of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska by providing technical assistance related to evidence-based approaches to preventing, treating and recovering from opioid and stimulant misuse. She earned her MSW from the University of Kansas and brings over 25 years of experience in community behavioral health to the work of implementing and sustaining evidence-based practices.



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Dr. Andrea Weber, MD, MME is an Internal Medicine Specialist and Psychiatrist in Iowa City, IA and has over 6 years of experience in the field of addiction medicine. She is a Clinical Associate Professor of Internal Medicine and Psychiatry at the University of Iowa and services as the Assistant Director of the UI Addiction and Recovery Collaborative. In addition to her academic duties, Dr.

Weber serves as the Board Chair of the Iowa Harm Reduction Coalition, a non-profit organization dedicated to health equity for people who use drugs. Dr. Weber is an award-winning clinical educator, receiving the American College of Physicians (ACP) Laureate Award in 2021 for demonstrating a commitment to excellence in medical care, education, and research in service to community, as well as the Excellence in Clinical Coaching award from the University of Iowa Graduate Medical Education office. She is a native Iowan and care deeply in providing evidence-based, low barrier, and compassionate care to our communities.



Sara Whaley, MSW, MPH, MA, is faculty at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and is the manager of the JHU arm of the Bloomberg Overdose Prevention Initiative. Sara is a co-author of the Principles for The Use of Funds From The Opioid Litigation and is working to support state and local governments in the effective use of opioid litigation dollars.



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Monica Wilke-Brown, LMSW, is the Project Director for the State Opioid Response grant at the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services. She has experience with leading several opioid grants as well as County Substance Abuse Prevention grants, the Iowa's Child Protection Centers' grants, and the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) grant, which integrated substance use screenings into primary care, other medical services, and the National Guard. Monica's prior experiences include HIV Prevention work as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ecuador, substance use and violence prevention services in central Iowa, and work with international students and immigrant groups in St. Louis.

Monica spent ten years managing community-based programs at a Central-Iowa non-profit prior to joining the Department. Monica received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa and her Masters of Social Work degree from the Brown School, at Washington University in St. Louis.



Bill Pearson is Assistant Attorney General in the Consumer Protection Division of the Iowa Department of Justice. Bill investigates and prosecutes data breach, privacy, and technology platform cases, as well as other consumer frauds. Prior to working in the Consumer Protection Division, Bill represented the State of Iowa in employment and tort cases in the Special Litigation Division. Prior to joining the AG's Office, Bill worked at law firms in San Francisco and New York. Bill lives in Des Moines with his wife, two boys, and a dog. He is looking forward to RAGBRAI this summer.