



Henderson County Opioid Leadership Forum Speaker Biographies

Steve Wyatt—Steve Wyatt has been the Henderson County Manager for 12 years. He is a 35 year veteran of local government serving as both a city and county manager. He is a native of western North Carolina.

Dr. Craig Martin—Dr. Martin has served as the Chief Medical Officer at Vaya Health since 2011 and is certified in Addiction Medicine as well as adult and child psychiatry. Prior to his current role, he was the Chief Psychiatrist for a 7 state military regional Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder program in New England. He is a recovery ally and supports evolving best practices in the treatment of substance use disorders.

Sheriff Charlie McDonald—Sheriff McDonald has served as Sheriff of Henderson County for six years with a total of 31 years of wide ranging law enforcement experience. Before taking office as Sheriff, he served the citizens of Henderson County as a patrol deputy, SWAT member, drug agent, Chief of Investigations, Detention Captain and as a tactical command instructor overseas.

Jimmy Brissie—Jimmy Brissie is the Director for Henderson County Emergency Management. Born and raised in Henderson County he has been active in Emergency Services since 1990 when he joined the Rescue Squad, where he served as Chief for 17 years. He served for 18 years with a local police department prior to coming to work with Henderson County Emergency Management in 2016.

Mike Barnett—Mike Barnett is the Emergency Medical Services Manager for Henderson County, he has been a resident of Henderson County for the past 36 years. His EMS career started with Henderson County EMS in 1986, he has worked as a flight paramedic, Emergency Room RN and served 25 years as a volunteer fireman with Mills River Fire & Rescue. He returned to Henderson County as EMS Manager in 2011.

Dr. Keith Maxwell—Dr. Maxwell was born and raised in Henderson County and is in his 30th year of medical practice. He is the founder and President of Southeastern Sports Medicine and board member of First Contact Addiction Ministries. He is the parent of a son in recovery.

Kevin Marino—Kevin is the Social Work Program Administrator for Henderson County Department of Social Services. He grew up in Rutherford County, moving to Henderson County at age 21. Kevin has worked with families, children, and adults struggling with mental health and substance misuse/abuse for 20 years. He left the clinical workforce about 10 years ago to continue to work with the most challenging social problems, which are found in Social Services Protective Services. His passions are to equip social work staff to engage adults and families with dignity and respect and to achieve positive outcomes for families, children, and adults in the community.

Steve Smith—Steve Smith has served as the Henderson County Health Director since 2014. He has 25 years of public health experience and is currently the President Elect for the NC Association of Local Health Directors. He has been directly involved with mental health reform and substance use issues in the community and region since 2004 through various roles with the Henderson County Partnership for Health, WNC Health Network and Vaya Health.

Jessi C.—Jessi C. has been a resident of Henderson County since childhood and attended North Henderson High School. After losing her brother (also a North graduate) to an overdose death a few years ago, she began work with HopeRx, sharing her story in area schools.

Judy Long—Rev. Judith Long serves as the Executive Director of The Free Clinics for almost 13 years. In that capacity, she is a member of Partnership for Health and the fiscal agent for HopeRX. A native of the north Georgia mountains, she's made WNC her home since 2005. Like many of you, she's walked with family members struggling with addiction and the painful toll it takes.

Julie Huneycutt—Julie is the director of HopeRx. In 2010, she and her husband founded Anna's Hope after losing their 20 year-old daughter to an opiate overdose. She works tirelessly in the community to raise awareness about substance abuse and currently serves on a Senate Task Force for Opioid sentencing reforms.

Patrice Roesler—Patrice is the manager of Elected Official Programing at the UNC School of Government. She previously worked for the NC County Commissioners Association for over 42 years, serving counties across the state of North Carolina. During that time she assisted the UNC School of Government to create the training academy for elected officials that she now manages.