



# Fact Sheet

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Last updated May 23, 2006

## OVERVIEW

- In April 2003, U.S. Congressman Harold “Hal” Rogers (R-Somerset) worked to create Operation UNITE, a regional anti-drug initiative empowering citizen groups and community leaders in the 29 southern and eastern Kentucky counties comprising his Fifth Congressional District.
- UNITE, which stands for Unlawful Narcotics Investigations, Treatment & Education, seeks to fight the drug epidemic by expanding drug awareness and education programs to keep people from using drugs; coordinating drug treatment and outreach programs for those who are already addicted; and operating regional undercover law enforcement task forces for interdiction and prosecution of those dealing drugs.
- Congressman Rogers has directed \$32 million in federal funds to the counter-drug initiative over the past three years.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

- The investigative arm of UNITE is comprised of 40 detectives.
- On July 27, 2005, Operation UNITE became only the second law enforcement drug task force in Kentucky to become accredited by the Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police. Accreditation reflects that an agency has met or exceeded 157 professionally accepted standards of law enforcement.
- Emphasis is on creating quality cases to ensure successful prosecution.

■ Through April 2006 UNITE detectives have:

- ◇ Opened 3,668 criminal cases.
- ◇ Placed 2,547 criminal charges.
- ◇ Arrested 1,372 individuals.
- ◇ Dismantled 37 methamphetamine labs.
- ◇ Had 44 cases adopted for federal prosecution.
- ◇ Removed or seized drugs with a street value of \$5,779,504.32. These include:
  - 40,532 pills.
  - 8,353 grams (18.415 pounds) of cocaine.
  - 5,071 grams (11.179 pounds) of methamphetamine.
  - 39,699 grams (87.520 pounds) of processed marijuana.
  - 3,848 marijuana plants.

■ In November 2005 a new Interlocal Agreement went into effect broadening investigative capabilities of UNITE detectives to all 29 counties. Previously their jurisdiction was limited to one of three multi-county Task Force areas.

■ On April 6, 2004, UNITE began conducting drug roundups with an eight-county (Kentucky River Task Force) sweep targeting 210 individuals – the largest in Kentucky’s history.

◇ Through May 18, 2006, there have been 49 drug roundups.

■ UNITE detectives work in conjunction with city, county and state police agencies. All money seized in undercover investigations goes back to the local departments.

◇ Through April 2006 detectives have seized \$314,760.27 in cash and 6 vehicles with an estimated value of \$95,000.

■ Partnered with HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) to create a Drug Tip Hotline.

◇ Through April 2006 the drug tip line has received 9,385 calls.

■ On June 23, 2005, UNITE partnered with the United States Attorney’s Office to form the Project Cease Fire Task Force in Pulaski, Rockcastle and Laurel counties. This initiative seeks to reduce gun violence by aggressively enforcing existing federal, state and local gun laws.

■ Two Methamphetamine Awareness Training Classes were conducted (August 2, 2005, and September 9, 2005) for law enforcement officers, substance abuse counselors, school liaisons and Drug Court workers throughout the region. More than 100 people attended. UNITE has provided numerous small group meth training and awareness classes to coalitions, civic groups and businesses.

## **TREATMENT**

■ A Treatment Referral Line (1-866-90-UNITE) was established to help individuals/families seeking treatment.

◇ Through April 2006 there have been 936 treatment calls received.

■ In July 2005, UNITE began a \$1.6 million Treatment Voucher Program to help low-income residents of the Fifth Congressional District who suffer from substance abuse issues obtain short-term and long-term residential treatment. (Detoxification treatments are not covered.)

◇ Through April 2006:

- 834 applications for treatment vouchers have been received.
- 147 individuals were currently in a treatment program.
- 103 individuals had completed a treatment program.

■ Since February 2004 UNITE has provided \$5.2 million to fund 17 Drug Court programs serving 20 counties in the Fifth Congressional District in addition to programs operated through the Administrative Office of the Courts. Drug Court handles cases involving drug-addicted, non-violent offenders through an extensive supervision and treatment program. Successful completion results in dismissal of the charges, reduced or set-aside sentences, lesser penalties, or a combination of these. Components include working to obtain a GED or employment, drug treatment, drug testing and monitoring.

◇ Through April 2006:

- 515 individuals have participated in a UNITE Drug Court program.
- 75 individuals have graduated from a UNITE Drug Court program.
- 19 drug-free babies have been born to UNITE Drug Court participants.
- 33 individuals have completed their educational plan.

- \$3 million in federal and state funding was earmarked in 2005 to create two long-term drug treatment centers.

- ◇ WestCare is a long-term residential treatment facility for adult males that opened August 8, 2005, with 42 beds. Plans are to operate a transitional living home and open a Community Involvement Center in the coming months. WestCare is licensed for 72 beds. While a resident at the center, individuals will receive counseling utilizing the 12-step process, relapse prevention education, anger management, parenting and cognitive behavioral therapy classes.

- ◇ Chad's Hope, operated by Visions of Eastern Kentucky, Inc., is also a long-term residential treatment facility for adult males. A groundbreaking ceremony for Chad's Hope is scheduled for 10 a.m. Saturday, June 10, with Congressman Hal Rogers. The facility is slated to open in late 2007 with 30 beds, eventually expanding to 75 beds. Chad's Hope will utilize a holistic treatment philosophy that seeks to transform the "whole" person using a strong spiritual component.

- On September 17, 2005, Wayne Supply Company conducted a "Ride Against Drugs" and "CAT Chopper Day" at Perry County Park. The event:

- ◇ Raised \$67,867.26 for the WestCare (Pike County) and Chad's Hope (Clay County) treatment facilities.
- ◇ Involved approximately 350 motorcyclists who rode in to the event from across the region.
- ◇ Attracted more than 2,000 participants.

## **EDUCATION**

- On December 19, 2005, Operation UNITE partnered with the University of Kentucky to create a Drug Endangered Child Training Network in southern and eastern Kentucky through a \$362,128 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission. The grant covers 31 counties considered "distressed" by the ARC, including 23 counties in UNITE's service region. UNITE will provide funding to add its 6 remaining counties. The DEC Network has three goals:

- ◇ Form community-centered planning and intervention teams. In the Fifth Congressional District, DEC team members will become members of the UNITE anti-drug coalitions.
- ◇ Develop a public health surveillance system to track and evaluate implementation of the new National Protocol for Medical Evaluation of Children Found in Drug Labs.

◇ Community education and awareness of the potential damage to children exposed to drug environments.

■ Since February 2005 UNITE has funded 35 Substance Abuse Counselors to work in middle and high schools serving all 29 counties in the Fifth Congressional District. These certified alcohol and drug counselors provide intervention services for students who are beginning to experience substance abuse and/or are already experiencing substance abuse-related problems. They may counsel individuals, families, groups or engage in prevention programs.

◇ Through April 2006 the substance abuse counselors have conducted:

- 18,450 individual counseling sessions.
- 2,336 group counseling sessions.
- 4,424 contacts with parents.

■ UNITE has funded 4 School Liaisons in partnership with educational cooperatives to work in the elementary schools, coordinating drug-education programs and training teachers to use anti-drug curriculum.

■ Starting in July 2005, UNITE Clubs were offered to all schools throughout the district. These clubs aid in developing healthy attitudes and behaviors by helping youth learn and practice life skills, enhance academic performance, and connect peers, adults, communities and learning through service. Through May 18, 2006:

◇ 34 schools have registered a UNITE Club.

◇ 2,012 students have registered as active members of a UNITE Club.

■ Drug testing policies have been adopted by 28 school systems through March 2006.

■ Through a partnership with the U.S. Soccer Foundation, UNITE obtained a \$100,000 grant to implement a pilot community/school soccer program in Breathitt, Lee, Owsley and Wolfe counties for youth ages 6-12.

◇ On November 5, 2005, the inaugural “UNITE North Fork U8 Soccer Tournament” was held with 64 youth participating from three of these counties. Major League Soccer player Stephen Herdsman of the Columbus Crew was the special guest.

■ More than 2,000 people attended the “Go Light Your World” Candlelight Crusades held on October 29, 2005, at Allen Baptist Church (Floyd County) and October 30, 2005, at Renfro Valley’s New Barn (Rockcastle County). Featured speakers were former New York gang leader Nicky Cruz, Congressman Hal Rogers and

recovering addict Melanda Adams from Clay County. These crusades were held (1) to make it clear that no matter how far down someone falls, there's hope, and (2) to remind people they are either part of the problem or part of the solution.

- An “Anti-Meth Rally” was held in Frankfort on February 14, 2005 involving more than 2,000 citizens from all 29 counties to support Senate Bill 63. Group included school children; law enforcement personnel; city, state and local government officials; Fifth District U.S. Congressman Harold “Hal” Rogers; Gov. Ernie Fletcher; Attorney General Greg Stumbo; House and Senate legislative leaders; veteran, civic and community groups; fire, EMS and rescue personnel. This bill was eventually passed unanimously and signed into law March 29, 2005.

- On June 13, 2005, UNITE hosted the debut of a video titled “CHOICES: The Sheriff Sam Catron Story” in conjunction with the Kentucky Medical Association. Copies of the video have been made available to all coalitions, substance abuse counselors, school liaisons, coalition representatives and Court Designated Workers throughout the state.

- UNITE held two The Anchor Holds Faith-based Conferences in 2004, one in Prestonsburg and the other in Corbin, to explain what treatment options were available. The conference drew approximately 700 participants.

- Following the faith-based conferences UNITE conducted at least 10 “Living Free” Workshops in conjunction with Turning Point ministries designed to help church leaders mobilize individuals to help others with life controlling problems within their congregation and community. More than 320 people have attended these trainings.

- A total of 353 professionals attended two Health Care Workshops (March 10-11, 2005, in Prestonsburg and London) on identification, screening, intervention and referral for prescription, over-the-counter and other drug abuse.

- In conjunction with the University of Kentucky, UNITE conducted “Hot Drugs In Kentucky” workshops for the public and community coalitions in London and Prestonsburg on August 23-24, 2004). More than 300 people attended.

- A Tri-County Buddy Bass Fishing Tournament was held October 15, 2005, on Laurel River Lake to benefit the Knox, Laurel and Whitley County Coalitions. Kick-off celebration drew about 200 people and there were 61 boats (122 people) in the tournament. The event raised \$10,213.35.

- The Knox County UNITE Coalition conducted a spring Buddy Bass Tournament on April 22, 2006, that drew 112 boats (224 people) and raised approximately \$18,000 in support of the Hooked On Fishing-Not On Drugs program.
  
- UNITE partnered with the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources in April 2005 to offer the national Hooked On Fishing-Not On Drugs program from the Future Fisherman Foundation.
  - ◇ Training programs for volunteers have been conducted for nearly 250 people.
  - ◇ More than 1,000 youth benefited from programs offered by local coalitions in 2005. At least 14 counties have planned events in 2006.
  
- To educate neighbors on what they can do to join together in order to become a safer community, UNITE has provided training sessions on a program called Neighbors UNITED. Based on the Neighborhood Watch program, Neighbors UNITED takes the concept a step further by returning to the days of neighbors helping neighbors, helping residents feel more secure.
  
- UNITE partnered with the Christian Appalachian Project to provide 1,250 drug-testing kits.
  
- UNITE provides continuing education and training opportunities to explain the dangers of drugs and how each person can participate in fighting drugs in their communities.

## **COMMUNITY COALITIONS**

- Community coalitions are central to implementing UNITE initiatives. They mobilize individuals within each community and give them ownership in finding solutions to their specific needs.
  
- As of April 2006 there are 39 community coalitions:
  - ◇ There is a coalition for each of the 29 counties in the Fifth Congressional District.
  - ◇ There are coalitions on 9 college campuses:
    - Morehead State University.
    - Hazard Community and Technical College's Hazard and Lees College locations.
    - Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College's Cumberland, Middlesboro, Harlan, Pineville and Whitesburg locations.

- Pikeville College

- ◇ A special coalition called UNITE Bikers Against Drugs (UBAD) Motorcycle Association is a faith-based organization of motorcycle enthusiasts to raise awareness and support for anti-drug efforts throughout the region.

- Coalition Roundtables were conducted at 6 locations throughout the region between August 9 and September 29, 2005 to inform coalition members about the programs offered by Operation UNITE. A handbook describing the operation was given to each of the 230 people who attended.

- Approximately 200 people attended a series of coalition video-conference training sessions provided by the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) during 2005. UNITE was a national model for this training.

- Community coalitions have conducted 25 March and Rally events through March 1, 2006, to promote the anti-drug efforts in their communities. These events were attended by an estimated 31,055 people.

- Each community coalition has eight primary committees:

- ◇ Court Watch/Judicial Review – In a peaceable and non-threatening manner this committee monitors, tracks, records and reports, without bias, all aspects of local drug and drug-related cases from arrest through sentencing or dismissal.

- ◇ Education – Committee members work to build strong relationships between schools and the community in order to enhance drug awareness education and to provide drug-free activities for students.

- ◇ Faith-Based – The cornerstone of each coalition, this committee provides prevention, intervention, treatment, family support, after-care and mentoring for drug abusers and their families by replacing faith and serenity in those lost due to addiction.

- ◇ Family Support – This committee's primary purpose is to reach out to families affected by substance abuse by providing support, referrals and direction for assistance.

- ◇ Grant Writing/Fundraising – This committee is responsible for researching and applying for funding sources to enhance coalition efforts. Members can also host fund-raising events that support coalition endeavors.

◇ Medical Advisory – Committee members work to provide accurate and current information on the drugs of abuse within the local community, address concerns of health care providers, and encourage the utilization of the Kentucky All-Schedule Prescription Electronic Reporting (KASPER) system.

◇ Neighbors UNITED – To educate neighborhoods on what they can do to join together in order to become a safer community. The program has proven effective in getting rid of drug dealers while bringing together individuals and families.

◇ Youth Activities – Members will provide positive, sustained relationships with children by offering them healthy and fun alternatives to using drugs. This committee will review the availability of activities for youth within the community, seek ways to expand existing programs, and help sponsor additional drug-free events.

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**Drug Tip Hotline – 1-866-424-4382**

**Treatment Referral Hotline – 1-866-90-UNITE (1-866-908-6483)**