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Alabama's Observance of 25th Annual National Recovery Month Celebration Marked by Statewide Events and the Celebrate Recovery Challenge

MONTGOMERY - Governor Bentley will soon proclaim September as Recovery Month in Alabama. National Recovery Month seeks to promote the societal benefits of prevention, treatment, and recovery from mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The observance celebrates people in recovery, lauds the contributions of treatment and service providers, and promotes the message that recovery is possible.

The most updated statistics (from 2011) reiterate how important it is to increase awareness and recovery efforts:

- 45.6 million Americans aged 18 or older had mental illnesses in the past year
- Just 31.6 million received mental health treatment
- Approximately 11.5 million adults had serious mental illnesses
- 20.6 million Americans aged 12 or older were classified with substance use disorders in the past year
- Only 2.6 million people actually received treatment for substance use disorders
- 8 million adults reported having co-occurring disorders, meaning they have both a mental illness and substance use disorder

The Division of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services, in partnership with several community providers and advocacy groups, has coordinated rallies, runs, open houses and many other events that will take place throughout the month. For information on these events, regularly visit the department's events calendar at

<http://www.mh.alabama.gov/COPI/EventsCalendar.aspx#Sep14> or call the MHSA Division at 334-242-3961.

This year will also see the return of the 3rd annual highly successful Celebrate Recovery Challenge. The Celebrate Recovery Challenge recognizes the best Recovery Month event in Alabama, as chosen by the public. Last year, Wallace State Community College-Hanceville was crowned the winner. This year's voting will be held October 14-19. More information about the Celebrate Recovery Challenge can be found on the department's website at <http://www.mh.alabama.gov/celebraterecoverychallengeinfo.aspx>, and the most updated information will be shared on the department's Facebook and Twitter pages.

In addition, MHSA has accepted "THE RECOVERY FACT-FIND CHALLENGE." Information related to aspects of recovery are shared with individuals throughout the state to increase

awareness and reduce stigma. Once an individual receives the Fact-Find Challenge, they in turn challenge another individual to do the same. The MHSA Division and Dr. Bell-Shambley, Associate Commissioner, encourage the state of Alabama to accept the challenge and speak up and speak out about recovery with family, friends, colleagues and communities.

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RESOURCES

For more information on National Recovery Month, visit the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Recovery Month website at <http://www.recoverymonth.gov/>.

More info about the Recovery Month and the Celebrate Recovery Challenge will be announced on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ALMentalHealth and Twitter at www.twitter.com/#!/ALMentalHealth.