

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

ELIZABETH KLC, DIRECTOR • (801) 538-1921 • <https://justice.utah.gov/usaav/>

## USA AV+ Council Mission and Duties

The mission of the Utah Substance Use and Mental Health Advisory (USA AV+) Council is to create and coordinate a comprehensive strategy to eliminate substance use and mental health disorders throughout Utah.

The Council's statutory duties (§63M-7-301 through 306) are to:

- Provide leadership and generate unity for Utah's ongoing efforts to reduce and eliminate the impact of substance use and mental health disorders in Utah through a comprehensive and evidence-based prevention, treatment, and justice strategy;
- Recommend and coordinate the creation, dissemination, and implementation of statewide policies to address substance use and mental health disorders;
- Facilitate planning for a balanced continuum of substance use and mental health disorder prevention, treatment, and justice services;
- Promote collaboration and mutually beneficial public and private partnerships;
- Analyze and provide an objective assessment of all proposed legislation concerning substance use, mental health, and related issues;
- Oversee the implementation and evaluation of Utah's Drug-related Offenses Reform Act (DORA);
- Monitor the use of beer tax funds annually distributed to municipalities and counties for purposes of alcohol- and substance abuse-related law enforcement, prevention, treatment, detection, prosecution, and control to ensure compliance with the statute (§32B-2-404 and 405);
- Oversee Utah's Underage Drinking Prevention Media Campaign, ParentsEmpowered.org (§32B-2-306);
- Oversee coordination for the funding, implementation, and evaluation of suicide prevention efforts described in Section 62A-15-1101; and
- Report recommendations annually to the Governor, Legislature, Judicial Council, and Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice.

## USA AV+ Council 2021 Ruminations

I continue my many praises and thanks to each and everyone of our council members as we close out another unprecedented year. With changes to the legislative process to mostly virtual attendance, we adjusted and worked to inform the Governor's Office and the Legislature of policy changes, reviewing over 250 bills, and taking a position on over 150 bills.

We also recognized the exponential need for behavioral health workforce and the public's attention on need for mental health and substance use treatments made available to everyone, focusing on destigmatizing, and increasing resources.

As the USA AV+ Council, we have focused on partnerships with our nonprofit, private industry, and governmental partnerships and look forward to the coming year with the announcement of some monumental recommendations. All of these efforts are thanks to each and every one of our Council Members and your dedication to improving our State and its resources to best serve Utahns.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Klc



## USAAV+ 2021 Legislative Priorities

The 2021 Utah Legislature passed the following USAAV+ priority bills and appropriations during one of the most unprecedented Legislative Sessions in our State's history:

**1<sup>st</sup> Sub H.B. 130 – Mental Health Coverage Amendments** by Rep. Christine Watkins. This bill further ensures behavioral health parity in health benefit plans. Of important note, the bill requires a health insurer that offers a health benefit plan that provides a mental health and substance use disorder benefit to submit a report to the insurance commissioner each year that includes specified information and an analysis indicating the insurer is in compliance with certain state and federal laws governing mental health and substance use disorder benefits and requires the insurance commissioner to enforce certain federal laws governing mental health and substance use disorder benefits and specifies minimum enforcement actions that must be taken by the commissioner.

**3<sup>d</sup> Sub S.B. 155 – 988 Mental Health Crisis Assistance** by Senator Dan Thatcher. This bill creates the Statewide Behavioral Health Crisis Response Account with the membership and duties as defined. This addresses the federal requirement that all states implement a statewide crisis response line with the designation of 988 to address crisis mental health emergencies and designates state funding to establish services and a public campaign to that purpose.

### **Behavioral Health Appropriations**

Because of economic forecast changes, the Legislature held special sessions over the summer address pandemic concerns. USAAV+ Council advocated for the maintenance of critical behavioral health funding. Areas of focus included the underage drinking prevention campaign, continued funding of the behavioral health professional loan repayment program, and expansion of higher education behavioral health professional programs.



## Utah's Underage Drinking Prevention Campaign

Parents Empowered is a statewide media campaign with the goal to have every Utah child reach the age of 21 alcohol-free so they can enjoy the benefits of a healthy brain. As a result of the decreasing rates of underage drinking, since 2009, it is estimated that 32,560 fewer Utah youth have ever tried alcohol, 18,805 fewer youth are regular underage drinkers, and 12,382 fewer Utah youth have experienced binge drinking.

As schools and workplaces closed, many parents and children socially distanced together at home. Sales of alcohol spiked to record highs both in Utah and nationwide, and people's media habits changed, with screen time increasing 50%, from 4.59 hours to 6.79 hours daily—much of it spent on social media and streaming services, such as Disney+. Like many programs and organizations, Parents Empowered reacted quickly to the “new normal,” and the campaign's changes and adaptations worked.

To help achieve these reductions in underage drinking, significant changes were made to the Parents Empowered campaign due to COVID-19. As campaign budgets were reduced and almost a quarter of a million dollars (\$236,523)



returned to the State's general fund, Parents Empowered cut the length of its TV and video advertising by half—from 30-second to 15-second ads—to save on production and media costs. With half the ad time to educate and motivate parents about underage drinking prevention, messaging was simplified and focused on the basics: **That parental disapproval is the #1 reason kids choose not to drink, and that parents need to set clear rules and expectations about not drinking underage.**

According to the most recent June 2021 survey of Utah parents, conducted by Cicero, the simplified messaging worked, with 68% percent of Utah parents rating themselves as the greatest influence in their children's decision to drink or not, representing a 19% increase from the previous survey and a record high.

Parents Empowered has become the most creatively awarded ad campaign in the state. During the recent 2020-21 Utah American Advertising Awards, the campaign won more total awards than any other advertiser in Utah, plus the coveted "Best of Show."

Parents Empowered also leads in its community partnership opportunities. Because Utah ranks seventh in the nation for residents who identify as a gender or sexual minority, the 2019 SHARP Survey opted—for the first time—to include questions regarding sexual identity. The student-reported data showed that one tenth of Utah County students identified as LGBTQ+. Yet when a local prevention

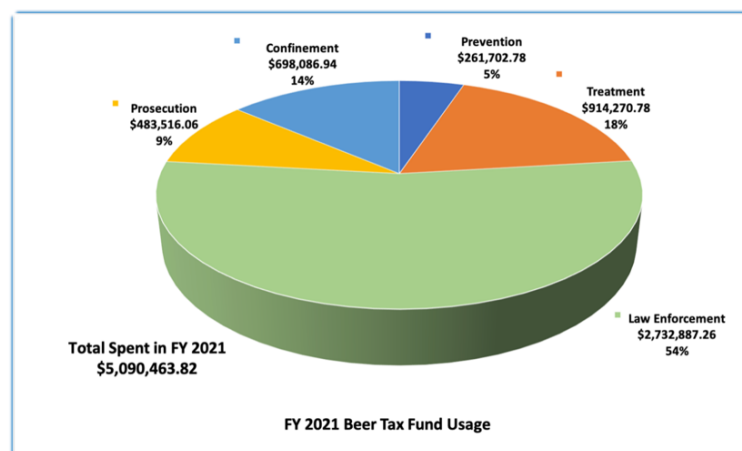
coordinator assessed current resources to help address problem behaviors associated with LGBTQ+ youth, the critical gaps in prevention services became apparent. For example, of all 12th grade students surveyed in Utah County who also identified as straight, six percent reported consuming alcohol in the last 30 days. Yet, with the same scenario for those identifying as LGBTQ+, the rate was 13 percent. Further, binge drinking rates among LGBTQ+ twelfth graders almost triples that of their hetero classmates, from 4% for straight peers to 11.4% for LGBTQ+ youth.



## FY 2021 Beer Tax Funds

The USAAV+ Council monitors the use of beer tax monies distributed annually by the Utah State Tax Commission to Utah's municipalities and counties from the *Alcoholic Beverage and Substance Abuse Enforcement and Treatment Restricted Account* for alcohol- and drug-related activities (§32B-4-4, 1Utah Code).

The Legislature appropriated \$5,651,400.00 for the fiscal year 2021. The total amount of funding expended may be less than the amount distributed because some municipalities and counties did not utilize all their funding during the fiscal year, in which case they may carry it over into the new fiscal year. The figure to the above shows how beer tax funds



were utilized during FY 2021. The figure to the left was presented to the USAAV+ Council on total net distribution, dollars spent, and carryover dollars. The

USAAV+ Council has committed to continuing conversations about best uses of Beer Tax Funds and how to work with all the parties to increase the usefulness to address alcohol and substance use issues in municipalities and counties.

TOTAL NET DISTRIBUTION						
FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY21 CHANGE FROM FY20
\$5,390,261.85	\$5,404,755.95	\$5,597,400.00	\$5,854,419.95	\$5,575,608.00	\$5,649,708.00	- \$74,100.00

TOTAL DOLLARS SPENT						
FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY21 CHANGE FROM FY20
\$4,940,803.83	\$5,686,870.81	\$5,181,434.13	\$5,665,733.11	\$5,538,584.75	\$5,090,463.82	- \$448,120.93

TOTAL CARRYOVER DOLLARS						
FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY21 CHANGE FROM FY20
\$1,409,262.16	\$1,479,899.08	\$1,674,991.72	\$1,853,980.92	\$1,857,526.42	\$2,408,742.67	+ \$551,216.25

## 2021 Utah Substance Use and Mental Health Advisory (USAAV+) Council Members

### **Commissioner Jess Anderson**

*Commissioner of Public Safety*

### **Judge James Blanch**

*District Court Drug Court Judge*

### **Janae Duncan**

*Executive Director of the Department of Health's Designee*

### **Dr. Karen Buchi**

*Chair, Drug Endangered Children Committee*

### **Daniel Burton**

*Attorney General's Designee*

### **Dennis Cecchini – VICE-CHAIR**

*Resident Who Has Been Personally Affected by a Substance Use or Mental Health Disorder*

### **Santiago Cortez**

*Chair, Treatment Committee & Behavioral Health Workforce Workgroup*

### **Commissioner Bill Cox**

*Elected County Official*

### **Dr. Michael Crookston**

*Representative of Treatment Professionals*

### **Tom Ross**

*Executive Director, Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice*

### **Ron Gordon**

*State Court Administrator's Designee*

### **Patrick Fleming, CHAIR**

*Citizen Representative*

### **Mark Foote, M.D.**

*Representative of the Physical Health Care Field*

### **Brent Kelsey**

*Chair, Recovery Residences Committee*

### **Clarissa Stebbing**

*State Superintendent of Public Instruction's Designee*

### **Mayor Howard Madsen**

*Representative of Utah League of Cities and Towns*

### **Judge Mary Manley**

*Juvenile Court Drug Court Judge*

### **Mary Jo McMillen**

*Representative of a Statewide Advocacy Organization for Recovery from Substance Use Disorders*

### **Deborah Kreeck Mendez**

*Criminal Defense Attorney*

### **Diane Moore**

*Director, Utah Division of Child and Family Services*

### **Kimberly Myers**

*Chair, Statewide Suicide Prevention Coalition*

### **Sigrid Nolte**

*Co-Chair, Utah Behavioral Health Planning and Advisory Committee*

### **Chief Ken Wallentine**

*President, Utah Chiefs of Police Association*

### **Eric Clarke**

*Prosecutor*

### **Nubia Peña**

*Director, Division of Multicultural Affairs*

### **Brett Peterson**

*Director, Division of Juvenile Justice Services*

### **Carrie Cochran**

### **Mike Haddon**

*Chair of Board of Pardons and Parole's Designee*

### **Brian Nielson**

*Executive Director, Utah Department of Corrections*

### **Doug Thomas**

*Director, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health*

### **Rob Timmerman**

*Chair, UPAC/Prevention Committee*

### **Judge Vernice Trease**

*District Court Mental Health Court Judge*

### **Carlene Walker**

*Chair, DUI Committee*

### **Rob Wesemann**

*Representative of a Statewide Advocacy Organization for Recovery from Mental Illness*

### **Christina Zidow**

*Representative of Youth Services Providers*

### **Sherri Wittwer**

*Representative of a Statewide Advocacy Organization for Protection of Rights of Individuals with a Disability*

### **Colonel Gary Harter**

*Military Service Member/Veteran*

### **Staff:**

**Elizabeth Klc, USAAV+ Council Director**

### **Morgan Williams**

*USAAV+ Beer Tax Funds Program Manager*

### **Livi Folk, Administrative Assistant**

### **Pending**

*Director, Division of Indian Affairs or Designee*

*Representative of Prevention Professionals*

*Certified Peer Support Specialist*