



Operation UNITE (Unlawful Narcotics Investigations, Treatment & Education) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation created in 2003 by U.S. Congressman Harold “Hal” Rogers (KY-5th) to provide a regional, community-based, anti-drug response to the prescription drug epidemic sweeping across southern and eastern Kentucky.

- More than **296,000 youth** have participated in UNITE-sponsored youth prevention/education activities since April 2003. This does not include participants in UNITE Coalition-sponsored youth programs.
- **UNITE Clubs** – School-based anti-drug education/prevention clubs featuring peer mentoring and community service components for students in grades 4-12. Since 2005, there have been clubs at 356 different schools in 39 counties with 107,608 student members through May 31, 2020.
- **“On The Move!” Prevention Program** – A one-of-a-kind initiative targeting students in 7th and 10th grades. This mobile prevention unit utilizes 5 interactive components related to distracted or impaired driving and provides real-time data collection that meets standards of the Kentucky Core Curriculum areas of Practical Living and Health. Launched in the fall of 2013, there have been 43,989 students from schools in 43 counties in 4 states (KY, TN, VA & WV) complete the program through May 31, 2020.
- **UNITE Service Corps** – A nationally-recognized AmeriCorps initiative with 54 full-time members providing math tutoring and drug prevention education at 54 schools in 19 districts (17 counties) for the 2019-20 school year. As evaluated by the University of Kentucky, during the 2018-19 school year, test scores increased 30.0% for the 2,526 students receiving math tutoring. In addition, drug education and healthy decision-making knowledge increased 36.81% among the 1,572 students receiving wellness curricula. In addition, members mentored 2,308 students. (2019-20 data not yet available.)
- **Camp UNITE** – A free, week-long leadership/adventure program targeting youth who are at high risk of drug use, whose immediate family has been directly impacted because of substance abuse, or who are financially unable to afford a summer camp experience. Since 2007, there have been 2,579 middle school-aged youth participants. In addition, approximately 180 youth and adult volunteers work in conjunction with UNITE staff to present the program each summer.
- **“I Am UNITE” Scholarship Program** – Using privately-raised funds, the “I Am UNITE” scholarships provide \$1,500 for post-secondary education expenses to youth who have been actively involved in their school’s UNITE Club, been a participant or volunteer youth leader at Camp UNITE, or who have been impacted (directly or through their family) by substance abuse. UNITE has awarded 177 scholarships since the spring of 2013.
- **“Give Me A Reason” Prevention Initiative** – Parents/caregivers can obtain free saliva-based drug testing kits. This voluntary program is designed to help youth make positive life choices by giving them a reason to resist peer pressure to use drugs. Kits are currently available in 25 Kentucky counties plus counties in Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.
- **Shoot Hoops Not Drugs** – A summer drug prevention initiative utilizing basketball skills instruction under the direction of Jarrod Polson, a four-time All-SEC Academic Team member from the University of Kentucky. Since 2006, there have been 85 camps attended by 11,399 youth from 63 Kentucky counties and 20 other states. In addition, more than 2,528 parents/caregivers have attended drug awareness education programs during camp. There were no camps in the summer of 2020.
- **National Archery in the Schools® Program** – With UNITE’s assistance, 199 schools or programs in 33 counties have received funding to start or continue NASP in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources.
- **Hooked On Fishing-Not On Drugs®** – More than 9,000 youth have participated in this year-round mentoring program of the Future Fisherman Foundation since 2005 in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources.
- **“Life With A Record” Prevention Program** – This school prevention program, targeted to 7th grade and above, examines the criminal justice system and how the seemingly harmless acts– many of which are actually crimes – engaged in by youth can impact their futures. This initiative, that includes pre- and post-program surveys, has been presented 80 times to 11,955 students at 46 schools in 21 counties through May 2020.
- **“WISE” (Why Internet Safety is Essential) Prevention Program** – A classroom presentation program designed for students in grades 4-6, this program examines potential threats and influences from on-line and social media activities and includes pre- and post-program surveys. This program has been presented 80 times to 5,072 students at 54 schools in 20 counties through May 2020.



Initiatives, continued



- **“Vaping Awareness” Program** – This school- and community-based prevention program, initiated in June 2019, examines the facts surrounding vaping, e-cigarettes and JUULs. This program has been presented 14 times to 3,168 students at 13 schools in 10 counties through May 2020.
- **“The First Tee”** – This youth development program builds character, instills life-enhancing values, and promotes healthy choices through the game of golf. A Bell County UNITE Coalition member developed the drug prevention component - The Science of Addiction - that is now being used internationally.
- **Community Coalitions** – Volunteer community-based anti-drug coalitions work to implement drug prevention, education and recovery initiatives within their individual counties. More than \$5.9 million in funding has been provided through an “Action Plan” application process requiring approval of the UNITE Board of Directors through January 2020. These projects are implemented by hundreds of community volunteers throughout the region.
- **Treatment Vouchers** – One-time financial assistance provided to individuals in our service region for residential substance treatment of a substance use disorder. Since 2005, UNITE has provided \$18.2 million in vouchers to enable more than 4,700 individuals to enter a treatment program through December 2019.
- **Treatment Help Line** – UNITE operates a toll-free Treatment Referral Help Line (**1-866-908-6483**) connecting those with a substance use disorder and their families to treatment and support options. Staff handles more than 1,000 inquiries per month.
- **KY HELP Call Center** – In December 2017, UNITE began offering a statewide KY HELP Call Center (**1-833-859-4357**) in conjunction with the Kentucky Justice and Public Safety Cabinet to connect individuals to resources for substance use disorders. That line has received more than 9,200 inquiries through May 2020.
- **Medication Drop Boxes** – There are 48 locations throughout UNITE’s service region for citizens to properly dispose of unwanted or unused prescription and over-the-counter medications. Through May 2020, more than 34,500 pounds (17.2 tons) of drugs have been collected since the take-back program began in October 2012, keeping these medications from being diverted or abused.
- **Hope Wall** – This 20-foot serpentine wall features approximately 200 photos with information on individuals who are in long-term recovery and living sober lives. The wall is set up in courthouses, judicial centers and large events to raise awareness about recovery.
- **Drug Court Program** – Before UNITE was launched in April 2003, there were only five Drug Court programs serving 10 counties in the Fifth Congressional District. Drug Courts now cover all counties within our region. UNITE and its coalitions support the Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts by providing vouchers for treatment, assisting families, and reaching out to participants’ children through UNITE’s youth prevention and education initiatives.
- **Community Education Kits** – UNITE created two self-contained educational kits for use by trained community coalitions to educate youth and adults about drugs:
 - **Addicted: A Dose of Reality** – Educates parents, caregivers and teachers about current drugs of abuse and drug trends.
 - **Accidental Dealer** – Discusses the importance of properly storing prescription and over-the-counter medications to prevent diversion or theft.
- **Drug-Free Workplace Training** – UNITE provides free drug-free workplace trainings for employees and staff on substance use disorders, signs & symptoms of drug use, and workplace effects. The training has been given at two dozen different companies.
- **UNITE Law Enforcement** – UNITE employs a Law Enforcement Manager to work with prevention/education projects and two detectives assigned to the DEA as Special Agents. These detectives have been involved in some of the largest state and federal cases involving pill-mill operators and drug trafficking organizations. From 2004 through 2015, UNITE’s Drug Task Force detectives: removed nearly \$12.6 million worth of drugs from the street and arrested nearly 4,500 individuals, with a conviction rate of 97.2 percent.
- **Drug Tip Line** – Toll-free line to report suspected drug activity. More than 23,500 calls have been received since January 2004.

National Impact

- In 2012, UNITE created the **Rx Drug Abuse & Heroin Summit**. Now in its 10th year, the Summit is the largest national collaboration of professionals from local, state and federal agencies; businesses; academia; clinicians; treatment providers; counselors; educators; state and national leaders; and advocates addressing the opioid drug crisis.