

TURNING THE TIDE

VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM

2022 FALL NEWSLETTER



Changing What's Possible

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS

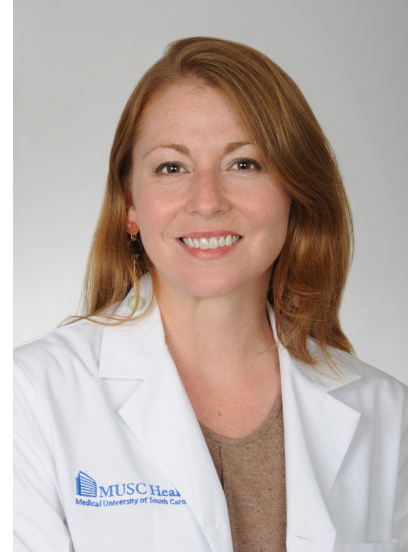
The MUSC Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program (TTVIP) has served patients, families, the community, and MUSC Health system care team members and trainees since July 2021. As the first and only hospital violence intervention program in South Carolina delivering this evidence-based violence intervention service, we have seen remarkable impact and change.

The TTVIP team, notably our violence intervention client advocates Keith Smalls and Donnie Singleton and new client advocate, Cat Yetman, have gone above and beyond to provide support and comprehensive wraparound services to patients experiencing violence, high-risk youth, and families served by MUSC. They are there at the hospital bedside after injury and up to months after the injury for enrolled patients in the program. They aid their clients' recovery and help them meet basic needs, achieve goals, and reduce risks of a repeat injury. The team also helps support and mobilize other stakeholders in the Charleston and North Charleston communities to invest in violence prevention and intervention efforts. Additionally, they educate MUSC healthcare providers and student learners in an effort to promote understanding of the underlying causes of violence, best practices to support patients and families, and public health efforts to promote violence and firearm injury prevention.

We have also welcomed two new members to the TTVIP team to support this impactful work. Christa Green, MPH, joins us as the Program Director of TTVIP. She previously helped support the TTVIP through her role as the pediatric injury prevention coordinator for MUSC Children's Health. She has been a vital member of the team in integrating the TTVIP in MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital and developed key implementation and evaluation strategies for the program. Cat Yetman, BS joins the TTVIP team as a violence intervention client advocate and research specialist. She has many years of experience working with high-risk youth in the SC Department of Corrections in a youth offender re-entry program. Ms. Yetman also spent many years as a volunteer victim advocate with Tri-County S.P.E.A.K.S. and worked with unhoused community members at the City of Charleston's Hope Center.

In peace and service,

Ashley Hink, M.D., MPH
Christa Green, MPH



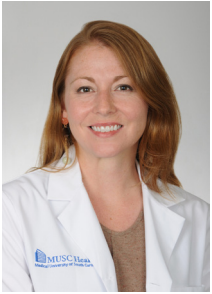
Ashley Hink, M.D. MPH
Medical Director
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Department of Surgery
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Christa Green, MPH
Program Director
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MEET THE TEAM

PROGRAM DIRECTORS



Ashley Hink, M.D. MPH is a general, trauma and acute care surgeon and medical director of the Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program. She is a nationally known researcher on injury and violence prevention, and recovery after trauma. She serves on the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma Injury Prevention, working on research and advocacy efforts that aim to reduce violent injuries and suicides. Her work has been published in scientific journals, and she has won awards for her leadership in surgery and humanism in medicine.

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Christa Green, MPH is the program director of the Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program. She oversees the day-to-day operations of the program and leads a team of violence intervention advocates. Prior to joining the MUSC TTVIP Program, Christa served as the Pediatric Trauma Injury Prevention Coordinator for MUSC Children's Health. She is a published researcher, advocate and organizer for community violence and firearm injury prevention.

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CLIENT ADVOCATES



Keith Smalls works with victims of gun violence from the time they enter the MUSC Health emergency department through the course of their recovery and beyond. A native of North Charleston, Mr. Smalls is the founder and executive director of My Community's Keeper Mentor Group, whose mission is to improve and enhance the quality of life from one community to another through mentorship, life skills training and revitalization projects.

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Donnie Singleton works with victims of gun violence, with a special focus on high-risk youth, providing comprehensive wraparound services to address risk factors for violence and promote recovery. Mr. Singleton started the nonprofit organization North Charleston SC Youth Resistance, Inc. The mission of the organization is to build strong individuals, helping them become aware of their true identity and breaking beyond stereotypes.

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Cat Yetman, BS is a violence intervention client advocate and research specialist. She has many years of experience working with high-risk youth in the SC Department of Corrections in a youth offender re-entry program. Ms. Yetman also spent many years as a volunteer victim advocate with Tri-County S.P.E.A.K.S. and worked with unhoused community members at the City of Charleston's Hope Center.

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INJURY PREVENTION COORDINATOR



Adrianna Bellamy, BSPH is the MUSC Health injury prevention coordinator for adult trauma patients and the Trauma Survivors Network (TSN) Coordinator for MUSC. She works closely with the TTVIP team supporting case management, evaluation, and community outreach activities.

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WHO WE ARE

The MUSC Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program is a multi-disciplinary program that supports youth and young adults that are at risk of or experience violent injury with the aims of reducing risk factors for violence, preventing injury and re-injury, and improving patient-centered outcomes.

Core principles to this model include:

- A public health approach to address the social determinants of health and root causes of violence;
- Culturally competent, trauma-informed services to improve trust and communication;
- Community partnerships with community-based organizations and agencies that provide services to comprehensively support patients' needs.

Who do we serve?

MUSC's Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program aims to improve the care and recovery of violently injured patients to prevent future violence and improve quality of life. We currently serve patients 12-30 years old that suffer gunshot injuries

from community-based violence, and are treated at MUSC Health Charleston's Adult and Pediatric Trauma Centers.

Full wraparound services are offered to enrolled patients and families. Homicide survivor support services are also available to families and friends that experience the loss of a loved one at MUSC. A key component of this program is the long-term intensive follow-up provided up to a year post-injury.

What are Wraparound Services?

Wraparound services are inclusive of whatever the patient and family need to address unmet needs and risk factors for violent injury, and will promote recovery, reduce repeat violence, and improve their health, social, and economic outcomes.

Services may include mentorship and encouragement, conflict mediation, and connecting patients to social services such as food, housing, education, employment, transportation, healthcare, mental health, substance abuse counseling, victims services, and community support.

PRESENTATIONS AND EDUCATION

Members of the MUSC TTVIP have presented at a number of local, regional and national conferences and forums during the past year. Some highlights include:

- South Carolina Pediatric Trauma Symposium, February 2022
- National Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine workshop on healthcare approaches to violence prevention and intervention, March 2022
- MUSC Thomas A. Pitts Memorial Lectureship in Medical Ethics "Gun Violence as a Public Health Problem," April 2022
- The National Conference on Health Disparities, September 2022
- Medical Summit on Firearm Injury Prevention, September 2022
- 23rd Annual Southeastern Trauma Symposium, October 2022
- Numerous presentations to MUSC medical students, public health students, residents and staff



PROGRESS REPORT

■ The TTVIP has provided support services to over 200 patients treated for violent injuries in our trauma centers and hundreds of their family members and nearly 60 patients have enrolled for long-term wraparound services.

■ To date, none of our enrolled patients have had any violent re-injuries. In addition to increased service connections, we have a cohort of patients enrolling to earn their GED, and others obtaining gainful employment such as one patient becoming a merchant marine! We've also seen increases in follow-up care at our trauma clinic and fewer emergency department visits after injury.

■ In June, we recognized National Gun Violence Awareness Day, or Wear Orange Day, by hosting an event in the greenway that brought together patients and families, care team members and

hospital leadership, community partners and local elected officials. While honoring those we've lost to gun violence, we also shared a message of hope that in working together, as a community, as partners, we can prevent gun violence and make our communities safer.

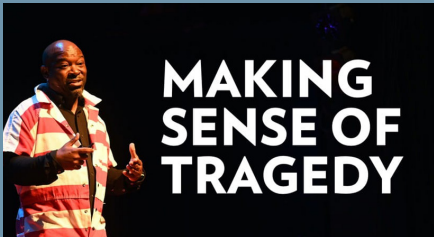
■ The team has gained additional grant support to sustain the programmatic efforts of TTVIP, in addition to developing a community-based violence intervention and interruption program with Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. (YAP). Through a 3-year grant funded by the Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention Program, we aim to establish support for at-risk youth and families, and reduce violence in neighborhoods disproportionately experienced in our communities.



IN THE NEWS

■ *The Post and Courier Cover Story: [In gunfire's destructive wake, SC hospital helps victims pick up the pieces](#)*

The front page article described how the team provides immediate, in-hospital support and long-term assistance to promote recovery, address needs and help individuals thrive after injury.



■ *TEDxCharleston: [Making Sense of Tragedy](#)*

Keith Smalls was a speaker at TedX Charleston this spring sharing his life experiences and the need for restorative criminal justice reform. He left the audience in tears and on their feet for a standing ovation.



MUSC Turning the Tide Client Advocates Donnie Singleton and Keith Smalls were recognized for their significant contributions to improving the lives of patients who have survived gun violence during the Value in Action Awards Ceremony, where they were both honored in the Respect Category. Both men were recognized for their tireless work to improve the lives of young men and women survivors of gun violence - both within the hospital setting and the community.

“Donnie Singleton exemplifies what it means to show respect to our patients, colleagues, and community members,” said Ashley Hink, M.D. MPH, medical director. “He was the first member of this new program and has taken the opportunity and challenge with incredible dedication.”

Dr. Hink provided the following, “Perhaps the most meaningful compliment that encapsulates Donnie’s demonstration of respect in action, a recent patient said, ‘he made me feel like a human being.’” In addition to the successes of his patients’ support and recovery, and helping them achieve their goals, his work has also made incredible impressions on our staff, residents and medical students on the importance of providing trauma-informed supportive services for victims of violence.

“Being 15 years old and homeless, I would never have thought I’d be right here right now receiving an award for helping the community of young people that are going through the same thing I’ve been through,” said Donnie. “I’m honored and blessed to be a part of this group. Thank you, Dr. Hink, Dr. Talley, and Dr. Baliga. We appreciate your leadership and support.”

Keith Small’s passion and commitment to the work of violence intervention and prevention are equally impressive. “He also goes above and beyond for our patients that come into our trauma center, showing them compassion, respect, and dedication from the moment they arrive and beyond discharge,” said Dr. Hink. “When a patient suffered a traumatic brain injury from gun violence, Keith kept this young man focused on his goals, and he was paramount in ensuring this devastating injury didn’t define the rest of his life. While this is just one of the many success stories, it reflects his underlying commitment and dedication to victims of violence and their families; showing respect and compassion is at the heart of what he does.”

“This award is for everybody who supports this program,” said Keith. “I thank you all so much and I look forward to what we’re going to continue to do for these families and our community.”





A CHANGE OF LIFE, PURPOSE AND GOALS AFTER SURVIVING AN ACT OF VIOLENCE

This time last year Jacqui* woke up in MUSC's intensive care unit with a breathing tube down her throat and metal rods holding her knee together. Later that day, Donnie Singleton arrived at her bedside. Donnie, one of Turning the Tide's Client Advocates, has been there for Jacqui ever since.

Jacqui was just 22 years old when she was injured while leaving a party, sustaining a gunshot wound that shattered her knee. Having just moved back to the area, this was the last thing she expected to happen.

Jacqui was hospitalized for a month. Unfortunately, her leg needed to be amputated above the knee. Donnie visited daily, providing positive support and encouragement, dissuading thoughts of retaliation, and focusing on recovery. In Jacqui's words, "We need more people like Donnie at the hospital, especially for our black youth." Donnie's presence was calming and reassuring during a time of uncertainty and pain.

After returning home, Donnie worked diligently to connect Jacqui to resources that would support long-term recovery, including applying for disability and victims of crime compensation, in addition to coordinating rehabilitation and medical appointments. Frequent calls and texts helped Jacqui stay focused on recovery, but unbeknownst to Donnie, Jacqui started carrying a firearm for protection. Tragically, not six months after her injury and despite precautions, Jacqui's young son found her firearm and unintentionally shot

himself. Again, Donnie responded to the hospital daily, supporting Jacqui and her family as her son recovered. He also provided gun locks and counseled the family on the risks associated with having a firearm in the home.

Over time Donnie has connected Jacqui to several resources, including a study guide to pursue a CDL license, resources for legal advice related to her assault, and others for starting a non-profit organization. Although Jacqui has a close, supportive family, Donnie was "an extra helping hand, a person to talk to that can relate to the things I'm going through." Feeling seen and understood in this unique way was a critical part of the support Donnie offered, so much so that Jacqui and her mom are hoping to work in schools as youth advocates too. "There's not a lot of people out there like Donnie and I'm proud I get to connect with him. Everybody needs an advocate, everybody needs someone that will listen to them."

The demand of providing lifesaving care to thousands of patients annually leaves clinical providers little time to provide this level of support for violently injured patients. Turning the Tide's Client Advocates fill this gap in our clinical teams at MUSC. Even beyond the hospital walls, this type of lifesaving work continues into the communities and homes of the patients we serve. In Jacqui's words, "At the end of the day, it's the little things that count and Donnie does all those little things and so much more."

*Patient's name changed to protect her identity.

Gratitude

Your generous support is changing what's possible.

We'd like to give recognition and thanks to recent contributors to the MUSC TTVIP. Their support will help ongoing efforts for violence intervention and victim support in 2023 and beyond:

- Department of Justice Comprehensive Youth Violence Prevention and Reduction Program Grant. This is a 3-year grant that supports a community partnership with Youth Advocate Programs, Inc to initiate violence intervention and interruption services in the community.
- Everytown For Gun Safety Grant – This is a 2-year grant to support the TTVIP
- Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation
- City of North Charleston Community Assistance Grant
- And, to all of our individual donors for their support which allows TTVIP to care for our patients and families!

*Thank you
Because of you, the tides are turning!*

If you'd like to join our efforts and support the TTVIP program that is creating positive change in our community, please visit connect2.musc.edu/surgery and select "MUSCViolence Prevention Program."

Learn more about how you can support the Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program by contacting Vera Ford, MUSC Development Director in the Department of Surgery at 843-792-1840 or fordva@musc.edu.

Learn more at Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program
muschealth.org/TTVIP

[Join Us! Support the MUSC Health TTVIP Program!](#)