



NEWSLETTER

WINTER EDITION 2017



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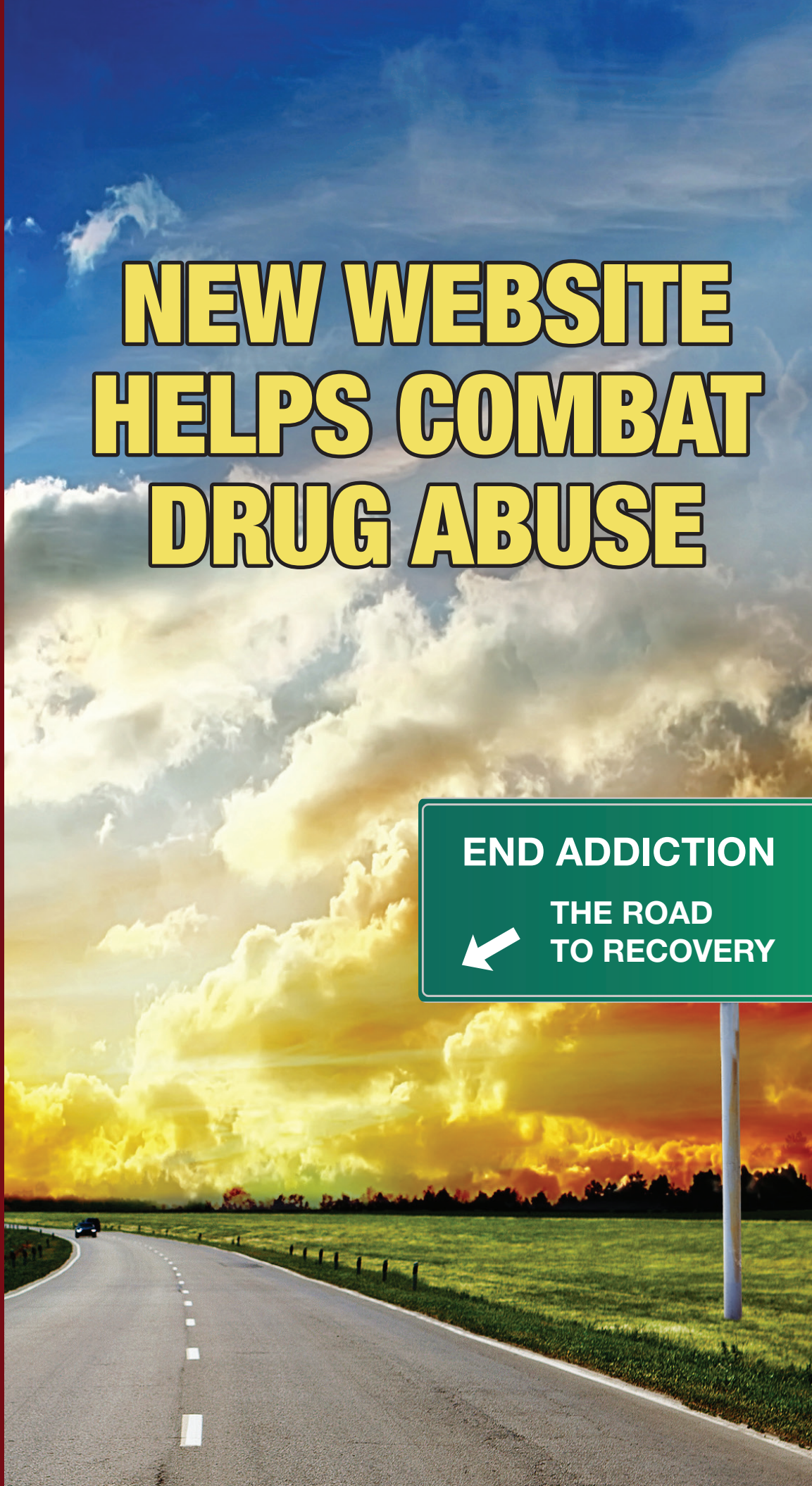
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END ADDICTION



THE ROAD TO RECOVERY





2016-2017

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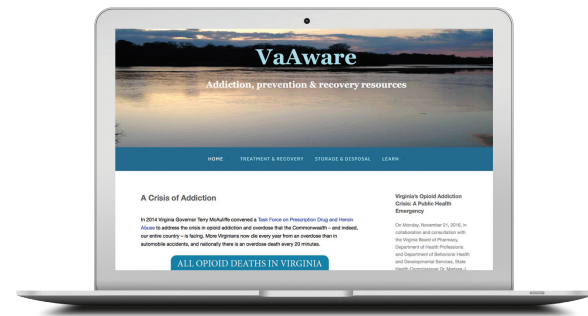
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NEW WEBSITE PROVIDES IMPORTANT TOOL AGAINST DRUG ABUSE

A new website, www.VaAware.com, has just launched to help combat prescription drug and heroin abuse in Virginia. The website is one of the many recommendations put forth by the Governor's Task Force on Prescription Drug and Heroin Abuse.

VaAware.com offers resources and the latest information for parents, healthcare providers, law enforcement members, and those seeking help with addiction. According to Governor McAuliffe, "deaths from prescription drug overdoses doubled in Virginia over the past 15 years, while heroin-related deaths tripled from 2011 to 2015."

The goal of this online initiative, which is a collaboration among four Virginia agencies,



Department of Health, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Department of Criminal Justice Services and Department of Health Professions, is to make it easier for people to take that first step to find help. Law enforcement officers throughout our state are using this website and every tool at our disposal to fight the epidemic of heroin and prescription drug addiction.



STAFF COMPENSATION TOP PRIORITY OF VIRGINIA SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

The Virginia Sheriffs' Association is requesting the General Assembly and governor to address the salary disparity that exists in sheriffs' offices across the Commonwealth. In localities that do not supplement local sheriff's office salaries, a starting deputy sheriff with a family of four and two children may qualify for food stamps.

This has evolved because the General Assembly approved a budget with pay raises that were eliminated by a revenue trigger. The prior year, all other state funded law enforcement offices received a 3% across the board raise, compression raises and special raises, depending on what state law enforcement agency was involved.

This low salary has resulted in high turnover — 18.4% — for all localities (including the localities that supplement), according to the Virginia Compensation Board.

Sheriffs' offices are the primary law enforcement office in 86 counties in Virginia, making over 63,000 part A and part B arrests annually and answering nearly 2 million calls for service. Sheriffs are absorbing additional responsibilities each year, including the overwhelming responsibility of mental health transports and addressing the mental health crisis in local jails.

In addition, sheriffs serve more than 3 million civil process papers to keep the court system moving and provide security to keep Virginia's courts, judges and users of the judicial system safe. Sheriffs also serve as the keepers of all local jails and many serve as policy makers on regional jail boards and authorities.

Given these enormous and growing responsibilities, VSA is urging elected officials, both state and local, to adequately compensate deputy sheriffs in our state.



LIKE THE VIRGINIA SHERIFFS' INSTITUTE ON FACEBOOK!

The Virginia Sheriffs' Institute would really appreciate your "electronic approval"! Please visit our Facebook page today and like us at [www.facebook.com/vasheriffsinstitute!](http://www.facebook.com/vasheriffsinstitute)

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: EMERGING PUBLIC SAFETY THREAT



Human trafficking is a form of modern day slavery. According to Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring, “human trafficking is an emerging public safety threat across our nation, including here in Virginia. Trafficked victims don’t come from any one place. They come from large cities, small towns, different socioeconomic situations, and diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds.”

Virginia ranks 13th in the country for the number of human trafficking reports. The majority of the cases reported in 2016 involved women forced into sex work against their will. A new partnership between the Department of Homeland Security and Virginia is providing more resources for law enforcement agencies to identify victims and combat this growing crime.

Human trafficking is a lucrative and growing business. In fact, it is the second-largest criminal activity in the world. It generates a reported \$9.5 billion annually and approximately 300,000 children are at risk of being prostituted in the U.S.

If you have any information about a case of human trafficking, you are urged to contact your local Sheriff’s Office or call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888, which serves victims and survivors of human trafficking and the anti-trafficking community in the U.S.



LOOK OUT FOR SLOW-MOVING EQUIPMENT ON VA ROADS THIS WINTER

Slow moving equipment, which operates at 25 mph or less, can leave highway workers vulnerable. Sometimes signs are not out to indicate slow moving equipment ahead because a work zone is either setting up or shutting down.

That’s why we’re urging all motorists to heed the advice of the Virginia Department of Transportation to slow down, pay attention, and pass only when it is safe and legal.

DON'T BECOME A VICTIM OF SCAMS

The Better Business Bureau has been providing consumers in Virginia and communities all across the country with Scam Alerts for more than five years. The BBB recently shared their top five tips for spotting a scam, including:

- **Always be wary of “too good to be true.”** If a deal is significantly better, a price lower, or an offer greater than you can find elsewhere, be cautious. Keep in mind that businesses need to turn a profit. If a company’s offer is so amazing that it’s not sustainable, it could be a ploy.
- **Don’t underestimate the power of a quick online search.** An online search can go a long way in uncovering a con. Chances are that the scam has already fooled other people, and they have posted about it online. Be sure to check out BBB Scam Tracker for the latest (bbb.org/scamtracker).
- **Pay with a credit card and refuse unusual forms of payment.** Protect yourself by paying with a credit card, which gives you additional protections such as the opportunity to dispute charges if the business doesn’t come through. Be wary of anyone who requests alternative forms of payment, such as wire transfers, pre-paid debit cards, or gift cards.
- **Watch out for a change in routine.** If an organization normally reaches you one way, be suspicious if you suddenly start receiving a different type of communication. For example, government agencies generally communicate through mail, but scammers impersonating them often call or send email.
- **Don’t believe what you see.** Con artists can spoof phone numbers, email templates, websites, letterhead, and social media accounts. Just because something looks real, doesn’t mean it is. Instead of relying on your eyes, look for other warning signs.

PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM VSI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JOHN W. JONES



On behalf of all of us at the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, I hope you and your family had a happy and safe holiday season, and that you are eager to usher in a new year in the Commonwealth.

With the prospect of continued wintry conditions, I urge you

to take extra care and caution when traveling on Virginia's roadways. I've included some tips on how to respond to slow moving equipment to ensure the safety of highway workers and other motorists.

As I mentioned in this newsletter, Virginia public safety officers are aggressively pursuing every tool at our disposal to tackle the growing epidemic of heroin abuse and overdoses in our state. We believe the launch of VaAware.com will provide residents in our communities with vital resources to easily access help for friends or loved ones who may have a drug problem.

As always, it is my privilege to serve as Executive Director of VSI and we greatly appreciate the partnership of citizens like you in making sure our Commonwealth is a great place to live, work, and learn.

Thank you again for all you do to support the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute!

Sincerely,

John W. Jones, Executive Director
Virginia Sheriffs' Institute
951 East Byrd Street, Suite 905
Richmond, Virginia 23219

TRAINING PROMOTING SAFE, FAIR, 21ST CENTURY POLICING

One hundred and twenty-seven Virginia law enforcement officers recently concluded a series of regional trainings on implicit bias. The sessions were part of Attorney General Mark Herring's initiative to promote safe, fair, 21st century policing, and to help build trust and lines of communication between law enforcement and the communities we serve.

The officers who took part in the training will serve as trainers in their own agencies to help raise awareness about implicit bias and help make communities across the Commonwealth safer. According to Attorney General Herring, "this training is quickly becoming part of the new standard in 21st century policing."


During the series, 51 Virginia law enforcement agencies sent at least one officer for train-the-trainer instruction.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

One of the many benefits the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute offers is our scholarship program. This award — which is funded by generous VSI supporters like you — is granted to full-time or part-time students majoring in criminal justice and attending a Virginia state college or university. In fact, with the help of loyal members like you, we awarded 87 scholarships for the 2016-2017 academic year to Virginia's youth.

Scholarship applications are available to be downloaded from our website or they may be picked up in your local sheriff's office after January 31, 2017. In addition to the application, students must submit SAT/ACT scores, transcripts, a copy of the student's voter registration card if the student is 18 and an essay. A full list of application materials can be found at <https://vasheriffsinstitute.org/scholarship/>. Applications are due May 1, 2017.

We Want to Hear from You ...

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The VSI solicits articles and comments from associate members of the Virginia Sheriffs' Institute for inclusion in this newsletter. Articles and comments should be directed to: John W. Jones, Executive Director, Virginia Sheriffs' Institute, 951 East Byrd Street, Suite 905, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or phone (804) 225-7152.