



**News from the Shelby County Mayor's Office**  
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### **Shelby County Leaders Asked to Share Ideas at National Summit Local Initiatives to Be Highlighted To Reduce the Number of Mentally Ill Jail Inmates**

A local team of Shelby County Government leaders and mental health professionals has been asked to attend an invitation only conference in Washington, DC, April 17-19. It will focus on best practices to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails. Shelby will be the only county in the state to attend.

**"We are pleased to be one of the 50 teams chosen to participate in the summit to share ideas about our efforts to reduce the mentally ill population in jail here in Shelby County,"** said Shelby County Mayor Mark H. Luttrell, Jr., who has served on state and federal alternative sentencing task forces.

Shelby County's team was chosen to attend the summit, in part, by the success of the newly created Shelby County Mental Health Court.

**"This specialized court opened this past February and has been an effective and innovative asset to our criminal justice system by providing an alternative to incarceration,"** said Kim Daugherty, LMSW, Coordinator of the Shelby County Mental Health Court.

The summit will be sponsored by the *Stepping Up Initiative*, a national program that includes 240 counties-both urban and rural-across 41 states, all of which have passed resolutions which call for mentally ill people who commit crimes be provided mental health services as an alternative to jail.

Shelby County's team includes: Shelby County Mayor Mark H. Luttrell, Jr., General Sessions Division Nine Judge Gerald Skahan, Dr. Althea Stewart with the University of Tennessee, William Gupton, Director of the Shelby County Division of Corrections and Kim Daugherty, LMSW, Coordinator of the Shelby County Mental Health Court.

The average daily census at the Shelby County Jail is about 2,400 inmates. Of those, an estimated 500 inmates have a mental health diagnosis and have been arrested many times: 21 percent had three (3) bookings, 18 percent had five (5) or more bookings and 12 percent had ten (10) or more.

The Council of State Governments Justice Center, the National Association of Counties and the American Psychiatric Association Foundation are hosting the *National Stepping Up Summit*.

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