



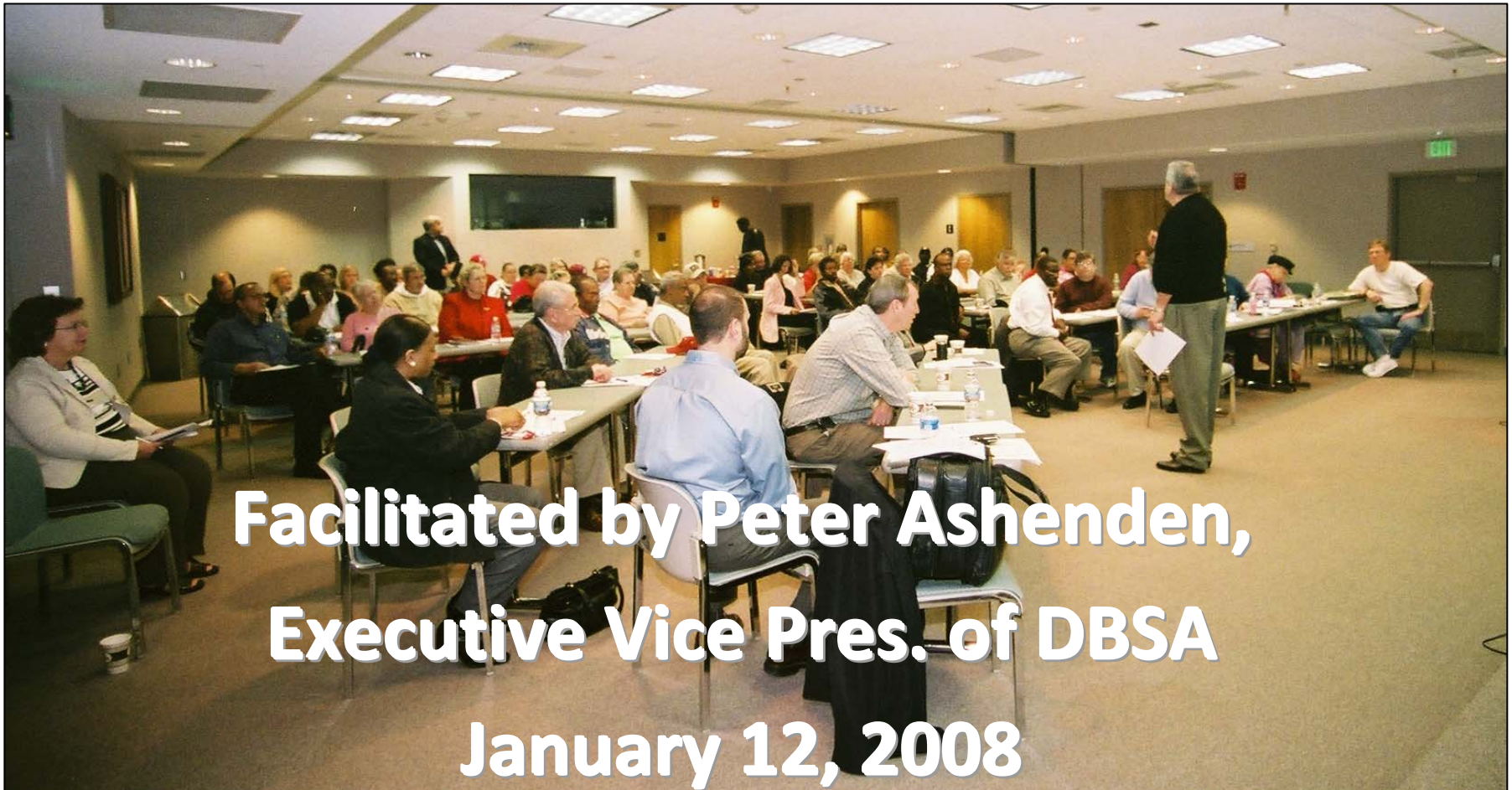
**Alabama's Mental Health Consumer
Organization: Run by Consumers of
Mental Health Services**

Mission Statement :

Contact: Wings Across Alabama is a non-profit organization for consumers of mental health services with a dedication to making positive change in the lives of consumers through education, advocacy, training, services, and technical assistance, as well as through building a strong network of consumers across Alabama with the recognition that inclusion, peer support, true community involvement and participation, self-empowerment, and quality mental health services are **KEY** ingredients to recovery.



Technical Assistance Training in Birmingham, AL



**Facilitated by Peter Ashenden,
Executive Vice Pres. of DBSA**

January 12, 2008

Challenge: Consumers are Geographically Dispersed

- **Total Population of Alabama: ~ 4.6 million***
87.6 Persons per square mile in Alabama.**
- 102.6 Persons per square mile in LA.**
- 133.2 Persons per square mile in SC. **
- 138.0 Persons per square mile in TN.**
- 141.4 Persons per square mile in GA.**
- 296.4 Persons per square mile in FL.**

*2006 data ** 2000 data

U.S. Census Bureau, 2008

Alabama is the southeastern state with the fewest number of persons per square mile that has a Statewide Consumer Organization.

- **51.3 Persons per sq. mile in Arkansas***
- **60.6 Persons per sq. mile in Mississippi***
- **87.6 Persons per sq. mile in Alabama.***

Arkansas and Mississippi have dedicated consumer leaders, but do not have statewide consumer organizations.

*** 2006 Census Data**

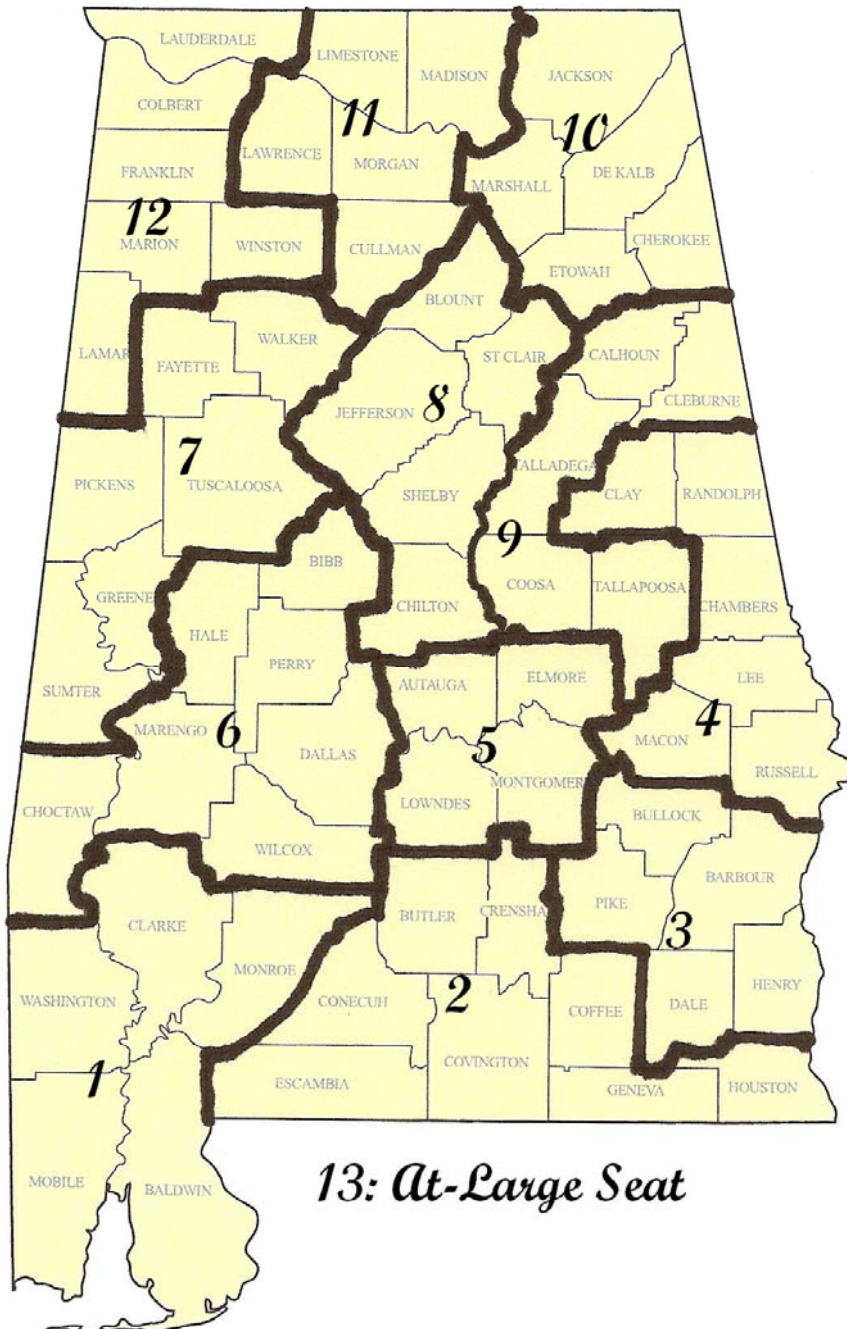
US Census Bureau, 2008

Challenge: Mobilizing our Membership

Much of the budget is spent on transportation.

- Almost 25% of the population lives in the Birmingham metro area.
- 13% percent live in the greater Mobile area.
- 9% live in the greater Huntsville area.
- Only 9% live in Montgomery, the State Capital.

To affect legislative policy, we must get consumers to Montgomery.



Board Members by Area

Area 1: Vacant

Area 2: Adele Morgan

Area 3: Fannie Hicks

Area 4: Sylvia Richey

Area 5: Vacant

Area 6: Donetta Wilson

Area 7: Roy Willingham

Area 8: Vickey Pierson

Area 9: Sara Parfait

Area 10: Ann Jenkins

Area 11: Nancy Jester

Area 12: Vacant

At Large: Steve Puckett

Challenge: Board Education

- Because consumers are spread across the state, Board recruitment & education is important.
- Potential Board members are needed to replace 4 founding Board members that are serving their last term allowed by the by-Laws.
- On 1/12/08, Peter Ashenden provided a training on the roles and responsibilities of Board membership.

Our Board of Directors with Peter Ashenden & OTA Project Coordinator Tim Tunner



Technical Assistance: Suggestions & Solutions

- Work from committees to reduce the frequency and length of Board meetings.
- Utilize conference calls to replace travel to a central meeting location.
- Develop an Advisory Group to focus attention on our mission and develop an action plan.
- Develop skills in Advisory Group members to promote future Board membership.

Implementation

- We have implemented an Advisory Group that we call a Mentoring Board.
- We distributed Board Packets to the Mentoring Board and other interested parties at the 16th Annual Alabama Recovery Conference.
- We distributed a survey asking Conference participants to rank responses to the question “What would you like WINGS to accomplish in five years?” Peter Ashenden facilitated this discussion in January.
- We now have several committees that work by conference call.

Ronald Hunt,
Executive Director

CONTACT: WINGS ACROSS ALABAMA

400 Eastern Blvd. Suite 201

Montgomery, AL 36117

1-888-946-4725 (1-888-WINGSAL)

Fax: 334-395-7618

rghwings@bellsouth.net

REFERENCES

- Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University (2008). *Metropolitan Area Statistical Population*. Accessed on 4/28/08 at: <http://recenter.tamu.edu/data/popm00/>
- U.S. Census Bureau (2008). *State and County Quick Facts*. Accessed 4/28/08 at: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>