



Columbia County Connects Newsletter

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Columbia County Connects Honors 40 Community Members

On Thursday, March 25, a group of Columbia County community members were honored for their commitment to positive youth development in their communities at the 9th annual Asset Builders Celebration at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Portage.

The 40 honored Columbia County community members were nominated by past Asset Builder award winners and community members. They join a prestigious list of 225 past recipients. Present at this year’s awards was Representative Keith Ripp. David Douglas, reporter for WISC-TV News 3 in Madison, served as Master of Ceremonies for the event.

All winners were chosen because of their role in providing programs or activities that

relate to the 40 Developmental Assets. Developmental Asset communities and individuals create an environment where youth are valued, can thrive and avoid “at risk” behaviors.

Following the awards presentation, winners and guests were treated to a dessert reception. The recipients are pictured. The following also received awards but were not present at the ceremony: Carson Pawlowsky and Alanna Stapleton of Pardeeville; Scott Bublitz, Laura Simonds and Patrick Strain of Portage; Chris Kilgour of Poynette; Amanda Levzow of Wisconsin Dells; Angela Schmidt of Columbus; Patrick Drury and Terry Haag of Lodi; and Carolyn Dugan and Joan Reiersen of Rio.

40 New Asset Builder recipients join the list of over 225 community members who have been honored



front row: David Douglas-WISC-TV News 3, Calvin Canales -Rio, Gladys Jenkins-Pardeeville, Kendalynn Luetkens-Pardeeville, Andrea Steingraeber-Pardeeville, Karisa Harris-Portage, Gabe Morton-Poynette, Nancy Liverseed-Columbus, Sue Sewell-Columbus, Becky Gutzman-Rio
middle row: Eric Torkelson-Wis. Dells, Delwood Madsen-Columbus, Robbin Kirk-Pardeeville, Samantha Wais-Pardeeville, Taber Hodgson-Pardeeville, Holly Downs-Pardeeville, Sandra Vohs-Portage, Carrie Udell-Poynette, Beth Waldsmith-Lodi, Florence Dalton-Portage
back row: Jeff Becker-Rio, Darrel Ward-Rio, Amy Parish-Rio, Heather Stenberg-Portage, Heather Robbins -Fall River, Grayson Altenberg-Lodi, Mark McGuire-Rio, Karen Laatsch-Poynette, Kris Daugherty-Poynette

“Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don’t be a party to teenage drinking”

More information about **“Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don’t be a party to teenage drinking”** is available at www.DrugFreeActionAlliance.org.



Parents play a major role in their children’s choices about alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. In a recent national survey of parents and teens by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, one-third of teen partygoers have been to parties where teens were drinking alcohol, smoking pot, or using drugs while a parent was present. By age 17, nearly half (46 percent) of teens have been at such parties where parents were present.

Drug-Free Action Alliance has developed the **“Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don’t be a party to teenage drinking”** public awareness campaign to provide parents with accurate information about the health risks of underage drinking and legal consequences of providing alcohol to youth. The campaign encourages parents and the community to send a unified message at prom and graduation time that teen alcohol consumption is not acceptable. It is illegal, unsafe, and unhealthy for anyone under age 21 to drink alcohol.

Here are the facts:

- ◆ Parents who give alcohol to their teen’s friends under any circumstances, even in their own homes, are breaking the law.

- ◆ Parents who knowingly allow a person under 21 to remain in their home or on their property while consuming or possessing alcoholic beverages can be prosecuted and everything associated with such a violation can be confiscated, including personal property.

- ◆ Parents can be sued if they give alcohol to anyone under 21 and they in turn hurt someone, hurt themselves or damage property.

Underage use of alcohol is a serious problem that too often leads to harmful consequences for youth and their families. Parents can protect themselves and their teens by following these guidelines when hosting parties for their children:

- ◆ Host safe, alcohol-free activities and events for youth during prom and graduation season
- ◆ Refuse to supply alcohol to minors or allow drinking in your home or on your property
- ◆ Be at home when your teenager has a party
- ◆ Make sure your teenager’s friends do not bring alcohol into your home
- ◆ Talk to other parents about not providing alcohol at youth events
- ◆ Report underage drinking

Winter Youth Retreat

This past February, county high school groups and middle school groups spent a day writing to the alcohol industry, videotaping reading their letters to the alcohol industry, working on PSAs and video presentations, and then rock climbing at Boulders Gym.

The students learned that the governing bodies of the alcohol industry actually oversee themselves. They discovered that a typical American young person will see 100,000 beer commercials before he or she turns 18 years old. Young people are targets of an alcohol

industry that spends approximately \$2 billion every year on advertising.

The students were divided into groups. One group wrote letters to the alcohol industry and then were videotaped reading what they wrote. These will be used in local promotions. A second group worked on a 20-30 second public service announcement and the last group worked on their 5-10 minute video for the film festival. After several hours, the students had an opportunity to challenge themselves by climbing at Boulders Gym in Madison.

Medical Marijuana, Part Two

In the last newsletter we talked about how the hot topic of medical marijuana is affecting our kids. In part two we are looking at some of the misconceptions about medical marijuana. The following article was taken from the Office of National Drug Control Policy's Medical Marijuana Fact Sheet which was published in November 2009. A copy of this fact sheet can be found at: www.WhiteHouseDrugPolicy.gov.

"We created Prop. 215 so that patients would not have to deal with black market profiteers. But today it is all about the money. Most of the dispensaries operating in California are little more than dope dealers with store fronts." – Rev. Scott Imler Co-Founder of Prop. 215, California's Medical Marijuana Law.

What's Wrong with Permitting the Use of Smoked Marijuana?

Simply put, the smoked form of marijuana is not considered modern medicine. On April 20th, 2006, the FDA issued an advisory concluding that no sound scientific studies have supported medical use of smoked marijuana for treatment in the United States, and no animal or human data support the safety or efficacy of smoked marijuana for general medical use.

A number of states have passed voter referenda or legislative actions making smoked marijuana available for a variety of medical conditions upon a doctor's recommendation. According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), these measures are inconsistent with efforts to ensure medications undergo the rigorous scientific scrutiny of the FDA approval process and are proven safe and effective under the standards of the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

While smoking marijuana may allow patients to temporarily feel better, the medical community makes an important distinction between inebriation and the controlled delivery of pure pharmaceutical medication. Raw (leaf) form of marijuana contains a complex mixture of compounds in uncertain concentrations, the majority of which

have unknown pharmacological effects.

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has concluded that smoking marijuana is not recommended for any long-term medical use, and a subsequent IOM report declared that, "marijuana is not modern medicine." Additionally, the American Medical Association, the National Cancer Institute, the American Cancer Society, and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society do not believe that the scientific evidence on the therapeutic use of the drug meets the current standard of prescribed medicine.

Smoking Marijuana May Unintentionally Cause Serious Harm to Patients

The delicate immune systems of seriously ill patients may become compromised by the smoking of marijuana. Additionally, the daily use of marijuana compromises lung function and increases the risk for respiratory diseases, similar to those associated with nicotine cigarettes.

Marijuana has a high potential for abuse and can incur addiction. Frequent use of marijuana leads to tolerance to the psychoactive effects and smokers compensate by smoking more often or seeking higher potency marijuana.

In people with psychotic or other problems, the use of marijuana can precipitate severe emotional disorders. Chronic use of marijuana may increase the risk of psychotic symptoms in people with a past history of schizophrenia. Marijuana smoking by young people may lead to severe impairment of higher brain function.

And neuropsychiatric disorders, as well as a higher risk for addiction and polydrug abuse problems.

Existing Legal Drugs Provide Superior Treatment for Serious Medical Conditions

The FDA has approved safe and effective medication for the treatment of glaucoma, nausea, wasting syndrome, cancer, and multiple sclerosis.

Marinol, the synthetic form of THC (the psychoactive ingredient contained in marijuana), is already legally available for prescription by physicians whose patients suffer from pain and chronic illness.

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Columbia County Connects

The Columbia County Connects Coalition is made up of members that represent school districts and communities throughout the county. This coalition was established through the Columbia County Juvenile Justice Committee.

Funding is provided by Columbia County Health and Human Services, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), a Federal Drug-Free Communities Support grant, Wisconsin Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future and the STOP grant.

The two main programs are Youth Connects (teen leadership) and Community Connects (community education). The 40 Developmental Assets play a major role in our programming. The following are the top 4 assets we are currently addressing:

- **Caring School Climate** - School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
- **Safety**-Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood.

- **Restraint**-Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
- **Youth as Resources**-Young people are given useful roles in the community.

Community Advocacy

The Community Advocacy Department works with the Community Liaisons to provide community education on prevention, hold responsible beverage server classes for community groups, alcohol compliance checks, coordinate Community Action Teams, work with Project Northland teachers on 6th grade Poster Fairs coordinate Project Northland 7th grade Amazing Alternative activities and media advocacy campaigns.

Youth Connects

The Youth Connects Coordinator works with the Youth Liaisons in the individual schools in creating service programs and leadership opportunities with students. An adult from each school district supports the local youth efforts.

Please feel free to post this newsletter or share it with a friend!