



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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**White House Drug Policy Office Awards up to \$125,000 per year for five years to
Local Coalition to Prevent Youth Substance Use in East Palo Alto, California**

***Grants Support Administration Efforts to Emphasize Public Health Approaches
to Drug Policy, Reduce Demand for Drugs through Education***

(Washington D.C.) – Michael Botticelli, Acting Director of the Office National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), announced 680 Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program grants, totaling \$84 million, to communities across the country. The grants will provide local communities funding to prevent youth substance use and support the Administration’s National Drug Control Strategy, which treats our Nation’s drug problem through a balanced public health and safety approach. The **One East Palo Alto Community Based Partnership for the Prevention of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (also known as the East Palo Alto Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition [EPASAPC])** from East Palo Alto (EPA), CA was selected as one of the grant recipients and will receive up to \$125,000 in DFC grant funds per year for up to five years to involve and engage the EPA community in comprehensive efforts to prevent substance use among youth.

“Last week, President Obama designated October as National Substance Abuse Prevention Month because we know the best way to reduce youth drug use is to stop it from ever beginning,” said Acting Director Botticelli. “Today, I congratulate prevention advocates for their continuing hard work and dedication to young people many of whom are struggling with peer pressure and other challenges in today’s society.”

“Drug-free coalitions across the nation are mobilizing to mount effective, coordinated prevention programs against substance use, especially among youth,” said Pamela S. Hyde, Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). “SAMHSA is honored to partner with the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) in building these critically important community coalitions.”

This DFC award marks a historic second round of funding and 6th year of a multi-year commitment from the federal government in support of EPASAPC’s youth substance use prevention efforts in EPA, a powerful, multi-sector coalition convened by One East Palo Alto (OEPA). Like EPASAPC’s first successful bid for funding, which covered costs of work conducted from September 2009 through September 2014, the second five-year DFC award offers an annual assurance of up to \$125,000 from September 2014 through September 2019 providing annual compliance requirements are met. What’s more, the funding will bring federal support of the OEPA-led EPASAPC prevention work to a total of \$1.25 million by 2019.

“We are thrilled to have been selected again to participate in the national movement to reduce youth access to and use of substances, especially alcohol and marijuana,” said Dr. Faye McNair-Knox, Executive Director of OEPA. “Achievement of this major milestone not only affirms that the quality of EPASAPC’s work is nationally competitive but shows that we are not powerless against the challenge of substance use among young people here in EPA. Research shows that prevention is the most effective tool we have to reduce the terrible consequences associated with drug use, especially when an environmental prevention framework is used.” Khabral Muhammad, OEPA’s Community Organizer and Program Coordinator for EPASAPC, further asserts that “renewed DFC funding once again adds a third essential component to a powerful partnership through which this important work in EPA has evolved – that between OEPA/EPASAPC and San Mateo County Health System’s Behavioral Health and Recovery Services/Alcohol and Other Drugs Services. Such a partnership has worked diligently to achieve a level of collective impact that will yield results which help place more young people on the path toward success and enable them to live healthier and safer lives.”

EPASAPC delivers its primary work through a youth-focused prevention initiative called YouthEastPaloAlto (YouthEPA), established in 2009. It oversees and operates in partnership with YouthEPA specifically to achieve two primary DFC goals: 1) reduce substance use and abuse and the impact of substance use by addressing community conditions and root causes of substance abuse and 2) strengthen collaboration across key sectors while deepening connections with youth and community. In order to accomplish these goals EPASAPC will continue to employ Seven Strategies for Community Level Change from an environmental prevention framework, which include the following: conducting educational presentations and workshops; improving systems to decrease the ease, ability, and opportunity for youth to access substances, and providing support to people to participate in activities that reduce risk or enhance protection (e.g., alternative activities, mentoring and youth clubs). Selected examples of EPASAPC’s accomplishments to date are provided in the accompanying “About YouthEPA” document.

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The Drug-Free Communities Support Program is directed by ONDCP in partnership with HHS's SAMHSA division. The DFC Program provides grants of up to \$625,000 over five years to community coalitions that facilitate youth and adult participation at the community level in local youth drug use prevention efforts. Coalitions are comprised of community leaders, parents, youth, teachers, religious and fraternal organizations, health care and business professionals, law enforcement, and media.

The DFC Program was created by the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997 and reauthorized by Congress in 2001 and 2006. Since 1998, ONDCP has awarded over 2,000 DFC grants to local communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Palau, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

The rate of overall drug use in the United States has declined by roughly 30 percent since 1979. More recently, the number of current cocaine users has declined by more than a third (36%) from 2006 to 2013, and the number of current meth users has fallen by 19 percent over the same period. To build on this progress and support a balance of public health and safety approaches to drug control outlined in the Strategy, in FY 2015 the Obama Administration has requested nearly \$10.9 billion for drug education programs and support for expanding access to drug treatment for people suffering from substance use disorders.

For more information about EPASAPC, please contact One East Palo Alto staff at 650-261-2265

For more information about the Administration efforts to reduce drug use and its consequences, or to learn more about the Drug-Free Communities Support Program, visit: www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp

The Office of National Drug Control Policy seeks to foster healthy individuals and safe communities by effectively leading the Nation's effort to reduce drug use and its consequences.

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