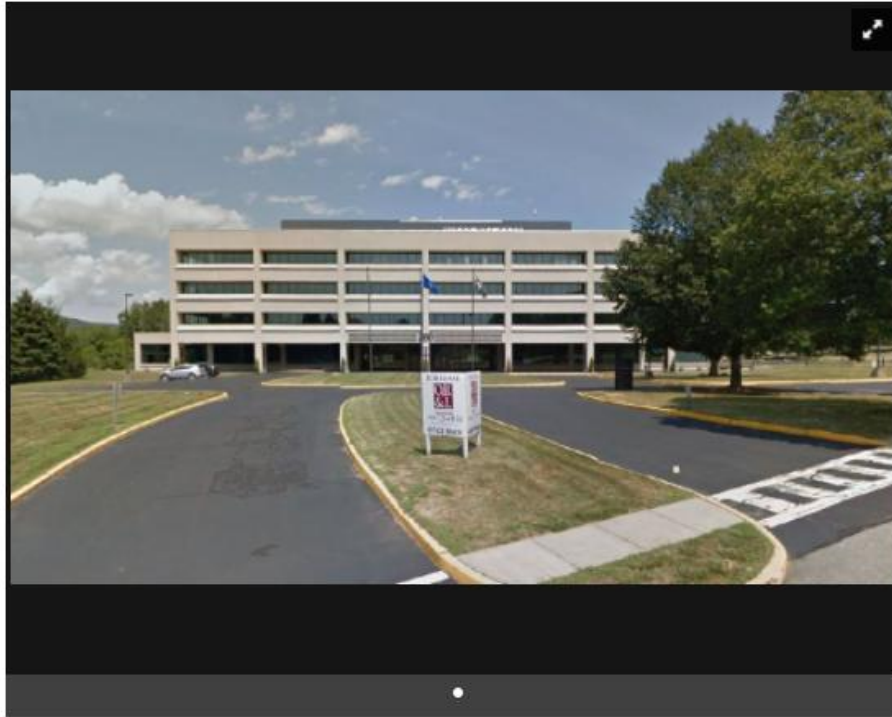


Barnes grant to fund Southington drug addiction and prevention efforts



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By Jesse Buchanan, Record-Journal staff



SOUTHINGTON — A wellness grant from the Bradley Barnes trust is helping local groups educate teachers on drug trends, fund treatment for addicted youth and provide more counseling services to families of the addicted.



Main Street Community Foundation, which oversees the Bradley Barnes and Leila Upson Barnes Memorial Trust, gave \$25,600 to LISA Inc., a local non-profit which is partnering with the Southington Town-Wide Effort to Promote Success and the town's Youth Services to provide addiction prevention and treatment.

On Election Day, teachers received education on drug trends and the paraphernalia that accompanies different drugs as part of the grant. Youth Services employees have also been trained on drug intervention according to Kelly Leppard, youth prevention specialist.

Only non-profit organizations are eligible for Barnes trust grants according to Susan Sadecki, Main Street Community Foundation president and CEO. LISA Inc. That organization provided clinical expertise in addiction treatment, Sadecki said. She was also pleased that the grant was fostering collaboration and prompting groups to pool resources and skills.

"I think what was really important about this grant was the collaboration between three different organizations," she said.

Part of the grant is funding for identifying youth who are addicted and provided treatment. Sadecki said STEPS's federal grant is limited to prevention and that this expands intervention efforts on behalf of those already involved with drugs.

It'll also fund a second night of family counseling a month through Youth Services. Families of those struggling with addiction meet with a licensed counselor once a month at the Southington Hope and Support and with the grant that'll be available twice a month.

"This is everything. This is prevention, intervention, this is the support families need," Sadecki said.

LISA Inc. has offices on Executive Boulevard in Southington. A criteria of the Barnes grant was that the recipient organization have an address in Southington.

The group serves children who have been removed by the state from homes and provides leadership and life skills training. Addiction prevention is part of LISA Inc's curriculum according to executive director Kim Selvaggi.

After moving administrative offices to Southington two years ago, the group wanted to provide needed services in town.

"This collaboration (with STEPS and Youth Services) seemed like the perfect opportunity," Selvaggi said.

Leppard said her group is also glad to be working with LISA Inc.

"They are such a well-known, such a well-respected organization," she said.

Selvaggi is hoping that this grant will show results and could lead to continued funding for prevention and intervention efforts.

"We hope we can demonstrate some really good outcomes," she said.

jbuchanan@record-journal.com

203-317-2230

Twitter: @JBuchananRJ