

From the community Grant Helps to Promote Wellness of Wolcott Youth



Wolcott CASA receives a grant from Main Street Community Foundation. (Posted by Main Street Community Foundati, Community Contributor)

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Wolcott Citizens Against Substance Abuse (CASA) received a \$2,000 grant from the Bristol Savings Bank Fund at Main Street Community Foundation to implement a social marketing campaign on the dangers of underage drinking.

"Prevention efforts have positive effects not only on individuals but on the community as a whole," stated Katie Ciarlo, President of CASA. "We strive to maintain public awareness of the truth and dangers of substance abuse."

Targeting youth ages 12-17, Wolcott CASA aims to reduce substance abuse and promote wellness in the community through collaboration, education, awareness and community action.

The social marketing campaign will use informational handouts and posters; a television public service announcement (PSA); community and school presentations; an Asset Mascot, which will be an eagle, to display

positive messages and interact with youth; as well as other techniques to spread the dangers of underage drinking. A community-wide forum is also being planned.

"All members of CASA will be involved in the campaign, especially the youth members. They will help design the materials to ensure that their peers will find them informational and interesting," said Katie Ciarlo. "In fact, we are partnering with 12 sectors of the community, including schools, law enforcement, businesses, churches, media, parents and youth. This is a true community-wide effort to improve youth wellness."

The campaign will also target the parents and guardians of students in middle and high school. Information regarding Connecticut's Social Hosting Law will be disseminated as well as other information on the legal issues surrounding serving alcohol to minors. In addition, CASA aims to remind parents that their children often emulate their behavior and that is one way to reduce underage drinking among Wolcott youth.

"At the end of the day, we hope to increase awareness and knowledge of the dangers of alcohol, increase participation in CASA and increase in the number of people who do not use alcohol," stated Katie Ciarlo.

The grant was awarded during a small ceremony at the CASA office at Wolcott High School.

The Main Street Community Foundation is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for both present and future generations in the communities served by encouraging and promoting gift planning, prudent stewardship of assets, effective grantmaking and community leadership. A nonprofit public charity, created by private citizens, the foundation works with donors in Bristol, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington and Wolcott who wish to build permanent charitable endowments to support their communities. Since its founding in 1995, the foundation has provided nearly \$14 million in grants and scholarships.

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