

Merrillville DFC Project under Lake County Substance Abuse Council

The Merrillville Drug Free Community (DFC) Project is in its 2nd year of the 5 year grant we received from the Office of National Drug Control Policy. We have had many accomplishments over the past two years, including but not limited to, successful media campaigns, youth-focused events, Town Hall Meetings, increased coalition capacity and staff and member training. During this past year, the Merrillville DFC project graduated from the CADCA's National Coalition Institute, a three week intensive workshop focused on completing 5 deliverables for our coalition. The picture below shows General Arthur T. Dean, Chairman and CEO of CADCA, Amanda Morrison, LCSAC Program Manager, Albert Gay, LCSAC Chair, Fran Harding, Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and Carton Hall, Deputy Director Training & Technical Assistance at CADCA being presented with the plaque at CADCA's Leadership Forum.

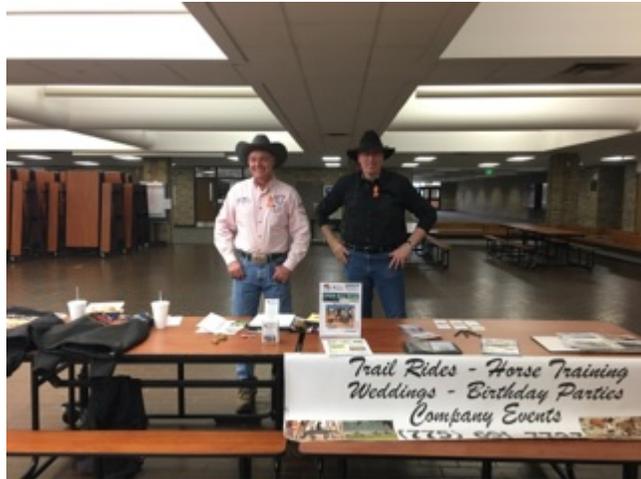


This past year, we also worked closely with the 3 other DFCs in Northwest Indiana, Gary, Porter, and LaPorte, to complete a Marijuana Public Service Announcement, as all 4 DFCs were working towards reducing Marijuana Use Among Youth, but wanted to work together to create a campaign, which message could be saturated in Northwest Indiana. Please click on the link to see the PSA, https://www.dropbox.com/s/mjd6vqy3ovfili1/DFCPSA-Marijuana_Final.mp4?dl=0. This PSA has been running in the Merrillville AMC Movie Theater for three months. A brochure with additional resources related to the PSA is forthcoming.

During Alcohol Awareness Month and Orange Ribbon Week, Jessica Crusor, former DFC Coordinator, was instrumental in partnering with our local Boys and Girls Club, to bring in nationally renowned speakers, Chris Sandy and Jayden Maxwell to speak to over 75 youth, ages 6-18 about the dangers of underage drinking. Chris Sandy is a nationally recognized speaker on alcohol awareness, DUI prevention, and choices and consequences. Jaden Maxwell is a former marine and talented illusionist who has performed for celebrities such as Beyonce', Anthony Hopkins, and The former President "George W. Bush". Jaden also performed on "America's Got Talent". Vendors were also there to discuss positive alternative activities that are available to youth with their parents. Please see the photos below of the event.



Jayden Maxwell with some of the kids performing his illusions.



Vendor – Shilo Ranch



Vendor – A Positive Approach to Teen Health



Information Table at event



Information Table with Obstacle Course

Prizes for the youth that were pro-family including board games to get parents and youth talking



Chris Sandy (Left) and Jayden Maxwell (middle) talking to the youth after the event

During the month of July, Renee Moy, started full-time with the Prevention Services Department at Geminus. She is the Prevention Assistant working with the DFC project, LCSAC, and the Making Student's Successful Initiative. Renee got her feet wet pretty quick in the prevention field by attending CADCA's 16th Annual Training Institute in Atlanta, Georgia. Amanda and her were able to network with some of the best coalition workers in the US and from all over the world. They spent 4 days in intensive trainings. Renee went to introductory workshops, while Amanda went to more intensive workshops regarding policy and law change. Renee said, "My first CADCA training was very overwhelming in a great way. I'm glad I attended and am excited with the wealth of information I gained. I can say for sure, our coalition is "boss" and does it right!" Amanda, with over ten years in the prevention field noted that "it was one of the best conferences she has attended and couldn't be more pleased with what she learned and was able to bring back to her community and work as the manager of the LCSAC." They were also fortunate to be able to a volunteer at the Veteran's Empowerment Organization, a non-profit in the heart of Atlanta, whose mission is to "Enhance The Quality Of Life For All Veterans On Their Road To Self-Sufficiency." It was there that they met and served food to veterans from all over the country, in every stage of life, looking to improve on their current situation. Renee stated that the "the volunteer activity was an awesome experience. To be out there in the heart of Atlanta serving meals, sharing conversations and helping the veterans facing homelessness was just heartwarming. Every county in America should have a Veteran's Empowerment Organization (VEO)." Amanda noted that the "experience was one of a kind, humbling, and made the whole experience of the training institute an instant success." During the experience, Renee and Amanda were fortunate to be seated in front of General Price, Executive Vice President and COO of CADCA, who is a Gary, IN native and Cubs fans (which was a plus in Amanda and Renee's book.) During the experience and bus ride to and from VEO, they were able to get to know General Price, even asking him to come join us at a

coalition meeting in the near future. Renee and Amanda were over the moon thinking about how having General Price at a LCSAC meeting could really impact our community and the work we do as a whole. Below you will find pictures of the event.



Renee and Amanda serving food with fellow coalition workers from Massachusetts and Iowa.

Renee and Amanda are pictured here with General Price, Executive Vice President and COO of CADCA and Tyler Bowser, VEO

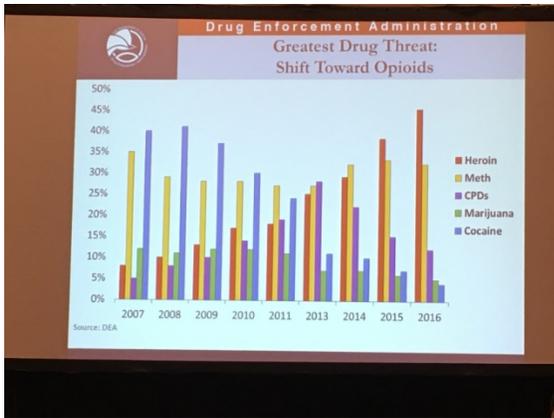


Renee in front of the awesome CADCA backdrop 😊



T-Mobile 8:04 PM 65%
Amanda Marie Morrison
17 mins · 🌐
What a great guy and he's a cubs fan. #CADCA Executive Vice President and COO, General Price. Oh and he's a Gary, IN native!!!





Slide at one of the workshops Renee attended during the training institute about the greatest drug threat and the shift towards opioids.



Last but not least, LCSAC did a lot of community outreach at the Lake County Fair, promoting all the projects and organizations of LCSAC and Geminus Prevention Services.