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The Greater New Paltz Community Partnership (GNPCP) has entered our final quarter of its Drug-Free Communities grant funding; the project period coming to a close on September 30th 2016. The coalition, along with local leaders from town and county government are exploring possible funding sources that could be used for the creation of a town-funded staff position (community outreach coordinator) to support and sustain the work that has been done, as well as the infrastructure that has been built throughout the course of the project.

GNPCP is seeking and collecting letters of support from community members in the greater New Paltz community. We are reaching out to parents, youth coalition members, key stakeholders from across different community sectors who:

- Share our concern for the issues youth and families are facing, within the areas of substance abuse, anxiety, depression, suicide, stress, bullying/cyber bullying, etc.
- Have participated in our workshops, trainings, and/or forums and
- Have witnessed the benefits received (share a personal example/story)

A tremendous amount of work has been done. Here is a list of some of the work completed by GNPCP and Project Director Phoenix Kawamoto:

- “Be in the know” Parent Education events
- Community Conversations programming on Channel 23 and GNPCP’s You Tube Channel
- Community Dialogue/Forums
- Community Grief Forums
- Discounted Medical Lock Boxes
- Med Return Units in 3 local locations
- Mental Health First Aid Trainings for Adolescents
- Mindfulness Meditation classes for adults and youth
- New Paltz Eve – Substance free celebration for youth and families (free activities, community dinner, bonfire on New Year’s Eve.
- Numerous student-led projects for distracted and drugged driving at New Paltz High School
- Safe TALK Suicide Prevention Training
- Staff Development Training
- Step-Up Bystander Intervention Training (Youth, Parents and Community Members)
- Stress Busters programming at New Paltz High School
- UC Community forum on the Opiate and Heroin Crisis

We are beginning to see the benefits from these initiatives. We cannot stop now!

There is much more to be done. As previously mentioned, local leaders like supervisor Neil Bettez and County Executive Mike Hein have recognized the need and are exploring possible ways to sustain the work. Letters of support are vital to this type of effort, and time is of the essence. Don’t forget to thank them for that while encouraging them to find a solution.

Will you write a letter of support addressed to Supervisor Neil Bettez? Your letter of support can be sent by email (supervisor@townofnewpaltz.org) or by U.S.mail (attn.:Neil Bettez, Town Supervisor, Town of New Paltz, P.O. Box 550, New Paltz, NY 12561).

We have created a template that you can use as a guide, or simply copy, paste, and add content to personalize. It is included on the next page. If you are a resident and tax payer within the Town of New Paltz, please be sure to include that within the opening paragraph.

Thank you very much for your time, attention and support!

Sincerely,

Jim Tinger, LMSW
Youth Director
Town of New Paltz