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KENTON COUNTY ALLIANCE ATTENDED CADCA'S NATIONAL LEADERSHIP FORUM TO LEARN NEW SKILLS TO INCREASE SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION EFFORTS

Erlanger, Kentucky – Representatives from Kenton County Alliance to Prevention Substance joined approximately 3,000 substance abuse prevention specialists and advocates from throughout the country for Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America's (CADCA's) 28th Annual National Leadership Forum. CADCA's National Leadership Forum, the nation's largest training event for community prevention leaders, treatment professionals and researchers, took place at the Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center Feb. 5-8 in the Washington D.C., area.



Kenton County Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse is a substance abuse prevention coalition working to support drug-free lifestyles among our youth. The alliance is comprised of community volunteers who are committed to reducing alcohol, tobacco and other drug use among youth. They work for a health community through collaboration and policy change.

“We were excited to be able to spend several days with other similar organizations from across the country, learning and honing our prevention skills so our community can be a better place, one that doesn't suffer from the harms of drug and alcohol abuse,” said Diana O'Toole, KCA Coordinator. “We came back reenergized with new strategies under our belt to tackle drug use in Kenton County.”

CADCA's Forum covered a wide range of topics – everything from how to prevent prescription drug abuse and the abuse of synthetic drugs and marijuana to how to create tobacco-free environments and develop policies to reduce underage drinking.

The coalition representatives, which included Diana O'Toole, Sgt. Todd Rice, Erlanger Police Department and Michelle Marrs, Aetna heard from several leaders including Acting Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Richard Baum and Dr. Bertha Madras, Harvard Medical School, who brought their expertise and insights to share.

Capitol Hill Day began with a roundtable discussion among members of Congress during the Capitol Hill Day plenary session. Members of Congress discussed legislative issues, opportunities and priorities related to community based substance abuse prevention, treatment and recovery. Kentucky was well represented with coalition members from Boone, Kenton, Grant, Pendleton, Owen, Carter, Knox, Oldham, and Shelby Counties. This was followed by a Congressional Rally led by The Honorable Hal Rogers, Serving Kentucky's 5th Congressional District at the Senate Park in Washington D.C.

Diana O'Toole, Kenton County Alliance Coordinator along with Sgt. Todd Rice of the Erlanger Police Department met with U.S. Representative Thomas Massey, and Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell, along with Senator Rand Paul's Congressional Aide, Seana Cranston at the Forum's Capitol Hill Day event on Wednesday, Feb. 7. This allowed the members to present information to our legislators about the effectiveness of substance abuse prevention. Senator McConnell was

very pleased to announce to our group that “The bipartisan budget agreement will fund new grants, prevention programs, and law enforcement efforts in vulnerable communities across the county struggling against the Opioid Crisis and substance abuse.” All of the representatives and senators were very open to the discussions, and have verbally committed to working with prevention partners in communities.

For more information regarding Kenton County Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse, please contact Diana O’Toole at diana.otoole@erlangerkyschools.us