



State of New Jersey

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
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MINUTES

Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

April 18, 2016

Call to Order

The three hundred and eighth regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Public Member Donna DeStefano.

Open Public Meetings Act Statement

Ms. DeStefano announced that notice of this meeting was provided in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21).

Roll Call

Katelyn Assenheimer called the roll. Members present and absent were noted for the record. Donna DeStefano informed the Council that this meeting would be for informational purposes only due to the lack of quorum.

Presentation: "New Jersey Youth Challenge Academy"

Ernie Razanno and Cynthia Carlucci of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs gave an overview of the New Jersey Youth Challenge Academy to the Council.

The Academy is a program for at-risk youth that teaches life skills and promotes the development of the self-discipline needed to succeed in life. Ms. Carlucci explained that this was not a boot camp or GED program. Participants in this program must be a resident of New Jersey and be between the ages of 16 and 18 and have officially withdrawn from high school. The program also requires that all cadets be free of any legal obligations as well as be drug and alcohol free.

Males and females are housed in separate facilities; however each cadet goes through the same phases of the program.

During the residential phase, cadets are given uniforms and their day begins at 5:00 am and ends at 9:00 pm. Cadets are taught daily life skills such as cleaning and laundry.

The cadets then enter the post residential phase where they will move off base and are required to obtain a mentor. The mentor must be at least 21 years of age and of the same gender. Cadets have weekly contact with their mentors, which is a critical part of the program.

Ms. Carlucci shared that after completing this program, there has been a 75% success rate of students obtaining their high school diploma. About 34% of students continue on to college, 14% join the military and 47% will complete the course and join the workforce.

The NJ Youth Challenge Program is funded for 200 people per year. The classes start with 150-160 applicants and 100-110 students graduate. Students often come back to the program to become mentors or for other volunteer opportunities.

Acting Executive Director's Report

Acting Executive Director Celina Levy said she was pleased to announce that GCADA was fully staffed and that Sean Campbell had been hired to fill the position of State Alliance Coordinator. She stated that in the next coming months work would begin on the development of the Master Plan. All stakeholders and Council members will be asked for their input and more information will be available before the fall.

Ms. Levy also shared that Deputy Director, Rebecca Alfaro, attended a press conference sponsored by the Partnership for a Drug Free New Jersey regarding their new public service campaign, "Before They Prescribe, You Decide".

The New Jersey Prevention Network Conference will be held on Friday, April 29th at the Atlantic City Convention Center.

Adjournment

Donna DeStefano adjourned the meeting at 10:54 a.m.