



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

June 21, 2017

Call to Order

The three hundred and nineteenth regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Acting Chairman Neil Van Ess.

Open Public Meetings Act Statement

Mr. Van Ess 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. Chairman Van Ess informed the Council that this meeting would be for informational purposes only due to the lack of a quorum.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Van Ess welcomed everyone to the meeting. He also welcomed Donna Plaza, the new designee from the Administrative Office of the Courts. He thanked the Council members, County Coordinators, Alliance members and GCADA staff for their hard work and dedication to the ongoing improvement process and for being able to approve all 21 County Plans last month.

He informed the Council that he had asked second Vice Chairs, Gregg Benson and Donna DeStefano, along with designees from the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services and Department of Children and Families to sit on a Master Plan Steering Committee for the Master Plan. Acting Executive Director Celina Levy and Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro are working with GCADA staff member, Sean Campbell in preparing the first draft of the Master Plan.

Presentation: "Innovative Approaches to Engage: High Risk YMSM of Color Into Substance Use, Prevention and Care and Treatment Services"

Julio Roman, Manager of LGBTQ Services and Programming and Justin Campbell Health Education Coordinator of the Council on North Jersey Community Research Initiative gave an overview to the Council of their program Project WOW (Web Outreach Works).

Project WOW was established in 2000 in Newark as part of a five year demo grant from the Center for Disease Control. Project Wow uses online engagement and social media to create peer to peer relationships amongst LGBTQ youth (ages 13-24), promote self-empowerment and educate youth of safe sex practices.

The facility consists of 8 office and living rooms and provides a safe place for LBGTO youth residing in Essex and Union counties with a place to socialize and build supportive networks as well as learn new life skills such as obtaining their G.E.D and resume writing. The facility also provides safe sex kits and rapid HIV/STI testing one-on-one counseling and a connection to substance abuse and/or mental health treatment.

Project WOW hold summer and winter retreats as well as LGBTQ skill building weekend getaways. In addition they also hold monthly tri-state community events to promote relationships with key leaders in the community.

Since 2016, Project Wow has served 755 people with a retention and care rate of 98%. Currently, Project WOW has 80 active members.

Acting Executive Director's Report

Acting Executive Director thanked Mr. Roman and Mr. Campbell for their presentation. She also thanked Don Hallcom from the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services for recommending Project WOW.

Ms. Levy shared that she is grateful to the members of the Master Plan steering committee and that there will be continued conversations with Council members and other stakeholders for the development of the plan.

Ms. Levy also informed the Council that the DMHAS Suicide Prevention Workgroup will be planning holding a Suicide Awareness program on September 12th as well as unveiling a website that is devoted to suicide prevention.

Rebecca Alfaro and Sean Campbell held a Mental Health First Aid Training on June 6th for faculty at the College of New Jersey and received excellent feedback.

Ms. Levy informed the Council that the Volunteer of the Year nominee forms have gone out to the counties and it is her hope that all 21 counties will submit a nominee this year.

Other Council Business

Don Bornheimer, former designee from the Administrative Office of the Courts was presented with a plaque in recognition for his service to the Governor's Council. He expressed his gratitude for the award and said he looks forward to connecting with the Council members in a different capacity.

Adjournment

Mr. Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m.