

## Maine Youth Group Receives Grant

Pioneer Press (Des Plaines Times) 12/9/04

Des Plaines Healthy Community Partnership Foundation has announced a \$93,000 Drug-Free Communities matching grant was earned to support the work of the Maine Community Youth Assistance Foundation (MCYAF) of Maine Township.

The grant was one of 226 new grants totaling \$21.9 million awarded today to community anti-drug coalitions across the country. These coalitions are comprised of a diverse cross-section of parents, youth, teachers, religious and fraternal organizations, health care and business professionals, law enforcement, the media, and community leaders. They work to prevent and reduce drug, alcohol, and tobacco use among youth. ONDCP administers the community anti-drug program in conjunction with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The Drug-Free Communities Program provides grants of up to \$100,000 to community organizations that serve as catalysts for citizen participation in local drug prevention efforts. A competitive peer review process selected this year's awardees from 512 applicants. To qualify for matching grants, all awardees must have at least a six-month history of working together as a coalition on substance abuse reduction initiatives, develop a long-term plan to reduce substance abuse, and participate in a national evaluation of the Drug-Free Communities Program. The Des Plaines Healthy Community Partnership Foundation is the fiscal agent for the Maine Community Youth Assistance Foundation (MCYAF). The \$93,000 award will assist MCYAF to achieve its two goals strengthening coalition effectiveness and reducing substance abuse among youth by implementing the following strategies: 1. Develop a multi-year risk prevention community action plan; 2. Develop effective community responses to youth alcohol, tobacco and drug use; and 3. Strengthening coalition effectiveness by increasing the number of community sectors represented on the coalition and supporting existing partner staff to institute and or continue prevention/intervention programming. MCYAF partnered with other community organizations whose focus is on healthy, safe and drug-free youth.

Grant dollars will support East Maine School District 63's TLC after-school program and Maine Township High School District 207's alternatives to suspension program.

U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky took an active role in supporting the MCYAF's grant application to bring these resources to Maine Township.

"Drug prevention works. The Drug-Free Communities Program and other drug prevention efforts are the most cost-effective approach to the drug problem, sparing society the future costs that treatment, rehabilitation, lost productivity, and other social problems related to drugs incur. The Maine Community Youth Assistance Foundation is doing crucial drug prevention work in our community and this additional infusion of federal money will help them expand their efforts and reach more of Maine Township's children."