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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Contact: ONDCP Public Affairs

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 **Office of National Drug Control Policy Awards** $[AMOUNT] **to Local Coalition** **to Prevent Youth Substance Use in [City/Community Name]**

(Washington, D.C.) – Gil Kerlikowske, Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), announced $7.9 million in new Drug-Free Communities Support Program (DFC) grants to 60 communities and 6 new DFC Mentoring grants across the country. The awards announced today are in addition to the nearly $76.7 million in Continuation grants simultaneously released to 608 currently funded DFC coalitions and 18 DFC Mentoring Continuation coalitions. [COALITION NAME] from [CITY/STATE] was one of the grant recipients, and will receive $[AMOUNT] in DFC grant funds to involve and engage their local community to prevent substance use among youth.

The DFC Program provides grants of up to $625,000 over 5 years to community coalitions that facilitate citizen participation in local drug prevention efforts. Coalitions are composed of community leaders, parents, youth, teachers, religious and fraternal organizations, health care and business professionals, law enforcement, the media, and others working together at the local level.

“America’s success in the 21st century depends in part on our ability to help young people make decisions that will keep them healthy and safe,” said Gil Kerlikowske, Director of National Drug Control Policy. “We congratulate this coalition on its work to raise a generation of young people equipped to remain drug free and ready to prosper in school, in their communities, and in the workplace. While law enforcement efforts will always serve a vital role in keeping our communities safe, we know that stopping drug use before it ever begins is always the smartest and most cost-effective way to reduce drug use and its consequences.”

“Efforts to keep our youth drug-free are critical to healthy and safe communities here in [CITY].” said [COALITION REPRESENTATIVE]. “The Drug-Free Communities Support Program recognizes the great potential of [COALTION NAME] to help save young people’s lives. This new funding will allow [COALITION NAME] to mobilize and organize their community to prevent youth substance use.”

“The driving forces of substance abuse prevention are the local community prevention and treatment programs that engage youth and their families in every facet of their lives – home, school, places of worship, health care settings, playgrounds, and community centers,” said SAMHSA Administrator Pamela S. Hyde. “SAMHSA is pleased to work with the Office of National Drug Control Policy to support community coalitions, which effectively bring people together from all parts of the community, to develop innovative ways of creating healthy and drug-free environments for our young people.”

[COALITON NAME] will specifically work to address [brief description of drug threat].

The DFC Program was created by the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997, and reauthorized by Congress in 2001 and 2006. Since 1998, ONDCP has awarded more than 2,000 Drug-Free Communities grants to local communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Palau, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

In April, President Obama released the [*2012 National Drug Control Strategy*](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/2012_ndcs.pdf)*,* the Administration’s primary blueprint for drug policy in the United States. The new *Strategy* promotes a “third way” approach to drug policy that supports alternatives to a law-enforcement-centric “war on drugs” or drug legalization. The *Strategy* alsooutlines specific actions to be undertaken by the Federal Government to reform U.S. drug policy through innovative and evidence-based public health and safety approaches, which include expanding access to drug treatment and recovery support programs, breaking the cycle of drug use, crime, and incarceration, and supporting youth outreach programs that prevent drug use before it begins.

The rate of overall drug use in the United States has declined by roughly 30 percent since 1979. To build on this progress and support public health approaches to drug control, the Obama Administration has requested over $10 billion in FY 2013 for drug prevention programs and support for expanding access to drug treatment for people suffering from substance use disorders. This will build upon the $30 billion already spent over the past 3 years on drug use prevention and treatment.

For more information about the Office of National Drug Control Policy or the Drug Free Communities Support Program, visit: [www.WhiteHouse.gov/ONDCP](http://www.WhiteHouse.gov/ONDCP)

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