



State of New Jersey

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
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Governor

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Lt. Governor

NEIL VAN ESS
Acting Chairman

CELINA LEVY
Executive Director

MINUTES

Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

December 14, 2021

Attendance: Neil Van Ess (Chairman), Celina Levy (Executive Director), Betty Ann Cowling-Carson (Public Member), Donna DeStefano (Public Member), Frank Greenagel (Public Member), Jeff Carrick (DCF), Kate Butler (DCA), Adam Cortes (DOC), Lu Pereira (DOE), Lashunda Harden (DOH), Annette Riordan (DOH), Rebecca Glinn (DOL), Craig Sashihara (LPS)

Call to Order

The three hundred and fifty fourth 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). In addition, Mr. Van Ess stated that public comments were to be provided electronically, through the GCADA website contact portal between the hours of 10am and 1pm on the day of the meeting.

Roll Call

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

Chairman's Report

Chairman Van Ess welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared that the Volunteer of the Year Awards is his favorite meeting of the year. He stated that although we would be holding the ceremony via Zoom, he was glad to be able to recognize the work done by the GCADA municipal alliance volunteers. He said he was truly grateful that there are individuals such as the

ones being honored today along with many others who are part of this great program, helping build healthy and safe communities.

Presentation: “2021 Volunteer of the Year Awards Ceremony”

Sara Thode, Director of Prevention and Planning shared with everyone that the Alliances represent the largest network of community-based anti-drug coalitions in the nation with over 320 Alliances encompassing over 425 municipalities statewide. Ms. Thode stated that these volunteers being honored today have worked to change and save lives within their communities and throughout New Jersey and have tirelessly worked to make their programs meet the challenges of this difficult year. Ms. Thode introduced the County Volunteers of the Year, and each volunteer will be mailed a framed certificate in recognition of their service.

Ms. Thode announced that Nancy Horowitz had been posthumously awarded as the 2021 W. Cary Edwards Statewide Volunteer of the Year. Nancy Horowitz was the Chairperson of the Marlboro Alliance for 30 years and a founding member of the Alliance. Nancy passed away in August 2021. Nancy’s goal was for the Marlboro Municipal Alliance to be a catalyst to raise public awareness about substance use and to provide high quality prevention interventions for the community. Through Nancy’s leadership, the Marlboro Alliance developed and implemented prevention programs and services that educate and empower all residents with the knowledge needed to safeguard and promote wellness in their community. Her leadership and dedication to the Marlboro Alliance made a significant difference in the lives of so many. Nancy’s commitment to the health and resilience of the Marlboro community make her a deserving recipient of the W. Cary Edwards Statewide Volunteer of Year Award.

Robbin Kollin, Ms. Horowitz’s daughter accepted the award on behalf of her mother. Jonathon Hornik, Mayor of Marlboro Township and Susan Kiley, Monmouth County Commissioner Deputy Director also read proclamations honoring Ms. Horowitz’s service to the Alliance.

Ms. Thode acknowledged Monmouth County Coordinator, William Horbatt as well as the following County Alliance Coordinators who had retired or accepted new positions in 2021: Jennifer Pielhau of Atlantic County, BettyAnn Cowling-Carson of Camden County, Sharon Modzelewski of Cape May County, Edward Meara of Mercer County and Jenn Sorenson of Somerset County. She also thanked all the volunteers for their dedication and commitment to the Alliance Program.

After the awards presentation, Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro introduced the First Place Winner of the New Jersey Shouts Down Drugs Prevention Concert (held virtually for 2021), Samantha Yannarelli to share a video performance of her song “You Swore”.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Celina Levy thanked Samantha for her performance and said she was very grateful to the W. Cary Edwards award winner, Nancy Horowitz for her selfless dedication to her community and thanked her family, friends, colleagues, and dignitaries who helped honor her today. She also shared her appreciation to all the volunteers honored at today's ceremony as well as all the volunteers across the state.

Ms. Levy shared that she and Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro continue to have conversations with the Governor's office, OMB, and Treasury to explore ways in which to ensure long term sustainability for the Alliance Program.

Ms. Levy wished everyone a happy and healthy holiday season and thanked the Council Members, County Coordinators, volunteers who have persisted despite ongoing challenges. She also thanked GCADA staff for their strong work ethic. She thanked Chairman Van Ess as well for his support and strong leadership.

Adjournment

Mr. Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:20.