

Thank you for attending the 6th Opioid Awareness Walk on Saturday October 27th, 2023. This year, we again, walked to share about the dangers of opioid use and the fatality of fentanyl poisoning we are witnessing throughout New Jersey, especially in Essex County. Essex County has the highest rate of overdose deaths of all the Counties in New Jersey. #takestridestosavelives2023

Thank you to those who help make this Walk happen, thank you to those who walk with us, and thank you to all of the agencies who came out to share their services and programs that assist those struggling with Substance Use Disorder.

Thank you to law enforcement who ensured our safety on the Walk route. We back the BLUE!

A special thanks to our Board Treasurer, Susan Ferrullo, for all she does at the luncheon presentation and all the behind the scene work she does for the Walk. Thank you to our Board President, Jamie Hunt, (retired

SAC DEA/New York office) for his support, experience and knowledge.

Thank you to Pastor Travis for your support and his beautiful, talented wife, Chaniece Clark, for singing our National Anthem. Pastor Dave and the First Baptist Church for their generosity. Thank you to Ricci’s Easy Way Catering and all our volunteer servers – Nita and Ray Kearney, Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, and Women’s Club of Caldwell. Thank you to the Rotary JCHS Interact Club students.

Thank you to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, New Jersey office, under the leadership of Special Agent in Charge Cheryl Ortiz. Thank you SAC Ortiz for attending. SAC Ortiz was one of the walkers who walked the entire way – Newark to Caldwell! Thank you Special Agents Timothy McMahon, Robert Slavkovsky and Richard Grosfelt. Thank you to the U.S. DEA pilot of the Air Wing that flew over us today, Special Agent Bill Sheehan. And to the U.S. DEA Special Agent Pipers and Drummer who respectfully opened up our presentation today. Thank you Cedar Grove Elks for presenting the American Flag.

Thank you to the police departments who participated in DEA Take Back Day.

Thank you to Morris County Sheriff Gannon who came out to kick off the Walk at 8am Saturday morning, as he has every year!

Thank you to Allison Stangeby, VP of Community/Corporate Relations of the NY Giants. And Darren Waller #12 for his donation.

Thank you to our location managers; Hazel House Sober Living, Montclair Police Department, Rubber Ducky Organization, and Better Life Recovery.

Thank you to Hope One Newark and Hope One Morris County!!! Mobile life savers!

Thank you to those who placed ads in the ad journal, supported the t-shirts, Turnbridge Recovery for desserts and Mayor Melham for the balloons.

A huge thank you to Belleville – the only town in Essex County where the Mayor, Police Chief and staff,

Superintendent of Schools and staff participated fully in the Walk. Thank you Mayor Melham, Chief Minichini, Superintendent Tomko, Nicole McCrea, Student Assistance Counselor and Percy Pineda, teacher. Thank you to the DeFrance Family for their unending support. Thank you to Mr. and Miss Belleville for speaking today. Thank you to JT Putrino-Pastor for designing our tshirt. And all the chaperones and students that attended today – spreading awareness, saving lives.

Thank you to Mayor Tamburro, Verona and Mayor Jones, Caldwell who joined us. Newark PD came out strong, thank you. Great to see Bloomfield PD, Belleville PD, Verona PD, Montclair PD – thank you Chief Conforti and Lt. Cunningham for your presence and continuous support. Lt. Cunningham biked the entire route. Thank you Caldwell PD and Fairfield PD – Officer Frank Patierno was out again this year walking the entire route!

We were proud to recognize and thank Officers Nicole Skelly, Belleville and Antonio Nogueira for their live saving administration of Narcan throughout the year.

And thank you to our Organizational Team – Better Life Recovery, Pastor Travis, Nancy Lentini, Captain Matt DeAngelo, Caldwell PD, Lieutenant Charlie Cunningham, Montclair PD, Captain Paul Watkins, Verona PD, Belleville HS SAC, Nicole McCrea and teacher Percy Pineda, and The Michaud Group. (We missed retired Essex County Sheriff’s Office, Captain Anthony DeMeo this year!

We hope to see every Essex County township involved in next year’s Walk.

The Walk does spread awareness and assist those struggling with Substance Use Disorder get the help they need. Since the Walk we have had dozens of phone calls from individuals struggling asking for help and loved ones searching for support.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS Please contact me for below contact information

DEA Community Outreach – No cost to schools and other community organizations. <https://www.dea.gov/education-prevention/community-outreach> <https://www.dea.gov/onepill>

Partnership for a Drug Free NJ [https://www.drugfreenj.org/school/school-based-programs](https://www.drugfreenj.org/school/school-based-programs/)/ [https://www.drugfreenj.org/child-break/15-minute-child-break](https://www.drugfreenj.org/child-break/15-minute-child-break/)/

Family Support Group of NJ - Speakers will come out and talk to parents who have children struggling with substance use. Parents are welcome to attend online and in-person support groups

Operation HOPE of Montclair and West Orange – 24/7 you can walk into either police station and ask to meet with a recovery angel to receive assistance in finding detox, treatment and recovery options.

Essex Health and Wellness Recovery Center – prevention programs, intervention strategies, detox and treatment assistance, recovery support programs, alcohol and other drug assessments and individual counseling for adults and adolescents through community partnerships.