



**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
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WHITE HOUSE DRUG CZAR AWARDS \$72 MILLION TO DRUG-FREE COMMUNITY COALITIONS

\$10.5 Million to be distributed to 107 Communities

(Washington, D.C.) - John Walters, Director of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), today awarded \$10.5 million in Drug-Free Communities (DFC) grants to 107 communities across the country. An additional \$58.8 million will support the continuation of awards to 602 existing community coalition projects operating in 49 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The goal of the 709 local coalitions is to work together to prevent and reduce drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse among youth.

In addition, 17 new grants totaling \$1.18 million were awarded through the DFC Support Mentoring Program. These funds will advance existing DFC grantees to develop more self-supporting community anti-drug coalitions. Under the Mentoring Program, \$1.57 million has been awarded to support 21 continuation grants.

Director Walters said, "Youth drug use has declined by nearly 20 percent over the last three years. The tireless work of community anti-drug coalitions across the Nation is an important part of our prevention efforts and our recent success reducing youth substance abuse. The 107 coalitions receiving new grants this year will help ensure that even more community organizations join the effort to keep our children healthy and drug-free."

"We are pleased to be working with ONDCP to administer the Drug-Free Communities Program," said Eric R. Broderick, D.D.S., M.P.H., Acting Administrator, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). "Some of the most important work to reduce drug use comes from our Nation's grass-roots community coalitions. These coalitions, combined with our Strategic Prevention Framework effort, create a powerful force that will continue to drive down the numbers of young people using illicit drugs."

The DFC program provides grants of up to \$500,000 over five years to community organizations that serve as catalysts for citizen participation in local drug prevention efforts. Coalitions are comprised of diverse groups of people, including community leaders, parents, youth, teachers, religious and fraternal organizations, health care and business professionals, law enforcement, and the media.

The 107 new grantees were selected from 353 applicants through a competitive peer review process. To qualify for matching grants, all awardees must have at least a six-month history of working together on substance abuse reduction initiatives, have representation from twelve specific sectors of the community, develop a long-term plan to reduce substance abuse, and participate in a national evaluation of the DFC program.

Created under the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997, the Drug-Free Communities Program has earned strong bipartisan support from Congress and is one of President Bush's major funding priorities. In December of 2001, Congress passed and the President signed into law a five-year extension of the Drug-Free Communities Act.

ONDCP administers the DFC program in conjunction with SAMHSA.

More information about the Drug-Free Communities Program is available at:
www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov and <http://drugfreecommunities.samhsa.gov/>