



Ken Cockayne
Mayor

City of Bristol

RESPICE, ADSPICE, PROSPICE

Look to the Past, Look to the Present, Look to the Future

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BRISTOL COALITION OFFERS REHABILITATION HELP TO RESIDENTS

(Bristol, CT – November 2, 2017) The drug epidemic is affecting every corner of the country as people of all ages struggle with addiction. Unfortunately, Bristol is no different. This past year the unprecedented death toll continues to dominate the news with one major issue being finding free or low-cost treatment for those who cannot afford help. Rehabilitation services are now available to any eligible local Bristol family looking to prevent themselves or a loved one from becoming another tragic statistic. A coalition of current and former City officials including Mayor Ken Cockayne and former City Council member Eric Carlson of District 1, in conjunction with the Bristol Police Department and the Mississippi Drug and Alcohol Treatment Center (MSDATC), has formulated a \$100,000 Scholarship program for Bristol residents who qualify.

The issue of drug addiction isn't new. Last year, Bristol's Youth Services department received a \$125,000 grant to address the growing problem. The grant specifies the funds must be used for prevention and education on specific categories of abuse which are prescription drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana misuse. As a result of the grant, the Bristol Prevention Coalition got enhanced support. Today the coalition's members come from all 12 community sectors: school, law enforcement, youth (age 18 and younger), parents, business, media, civic/volunteer groups, healthcare, religious organization, local, state governmental agency, youth-serving organization and other concerned organizations. Leadership and guidance comes from the Coalition's Executive Committee.

"We have known addiction affects our City like all others. The Youth Services coalition received a federal grant last year but those funds and efforts are earmarked for educating pre-teens and teenagers from getting hooked on different 'introductory' drugs," said Mayor Cockayne. "This timely and generous program helps fill in the gap for those we couldn't reach in time and it has the cooperation and support from our City leadership and law enforcement."

Scholarship money is designated for those residents that suffer from addiction and/or alcoholism as evaluated by professionals at the MSDATC. The Biloxi, Mississippi-based facility is a licensed, inpatient program with all levels of care. Family-owned and operated by former Bristol resident, Mike Carlson and Dr. Sandi Barnes, MSDATC has long been a safe haven for struggling addicts and alcoholics seeking affordable and effective treatment.

“Addiction must be dealt with as soon as possible,” says Carlson, “If we cannot combat it nationally, I will do my part to make treatment more accessible here in Connecticut. Individuals applying for this scholarship will be assessed by the clinical addiction team and then be placed according to medical necessity.”

With the help of former Councilman Eric Carlson, MSDATC has agreed to provide \$100,000 in services to residents seeking help. Carlson believes this is a step in the right direction for fighting addiction on the home front.

“We are all very well aware of this epidemic, which has no boundaries. When we were approached by Mike Carlson we were eager to provide any assistance that we could; namely in the sense of being a force multiplier by facilitating relationships with our other partners. The Bristol Police Department remains committed to fighting this epidemic on numerous fronts and we will assist in any way that we reasonably can,” said Bristol Police Chief Brian Gould.

MSDATC is a 16 Bed co-ed program in the heart of Biloxi, Mississippi. The MSDATC philosophy is concentrated on individualized care, ensuring the best outcome for long term recovery based on each individual’s specific goals, and needs. Some of the other treatment programs include primary substance abuse specializing in PTSD, trauma, grief and loss, severe depression, and High Anxiety. The coalition advises residents who qualify can apply for this scholarship by sending an introductory email to Mike@MississippiDATC.com or call toll-free to (855) 334-6120

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