

## Team Delta Max wraps year's events with May 23 gathering

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*ThisWeek* Staff Writer

Team Delta Max, an Upper Arlington High School drug- and alcohol-free student group, will conclude its school year activities with a May 23 gathering at the high school cafeteria.

Team Delta Max was formed in November 2006 to bring students together to combat underage drinking. The group held a series of teen dance parties called The Max to provide recreational opportunities in a substance-free environment.

The group held a variety of activities in April, which was Alcohol Awareness Month.

"We believe our multi-faceted, comprehensive, community-wide approach to addressing the underage drinking issue is beginning to shift the norm in our community," said Erin Mayne, UAHS teacher and Team Delta Max adviser. "It was a privilege to share our efforts with other communities. Our group was passionate about the campaign we ran in April. We believe it is another important step in making tremendous change in UA and takes us closer to becoming an epicenter of reform for others to follow."

On April 1, Team Delta Max members participated in a town hall meeting at the Metro School to discuss solutions to underage drinking. The event was sponsored by the Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Preventing Underage Drinking and included participation by the UA Parent Team, the Franklin County Prevention Network and other local schools and agencies.

Town hall meetings were held across America during the week of March 31-April 4 to support and meet the goals of the U.S. Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking.

During the first weekend in April, seven students from Team Delta Max presented a workshop at the annual PRIDE World Drug Prevention Conference in Cincinnati. The event attracted more than 1,000 participants from across the country to exchange ideas and develop strategies to work against drug abuse and violence.

"Participating in the PRIDE Conference gave us an exciting opportunity to share the progress of our program with people throughout the United States," said UAHS junior Mark Crawford. "Just as we gained valuable knowledge from attending the event, we also believe our workshop had a positive impact on the people from other communities and assisted them in generating their own ideas for their schools."

As part of her senior thesis, senior Allie Fitz organized the Team Delta Max 5K race on April 19. More than 100 people of all ages participated in the event designed to raise awareness of underage drinking.

"This is a very real issue that affects all of us," Fitz said to participants of the race prior to its start. "The members of Team Delta Max have been working hard to make a positive difference in the lives of our peers. But this issue not only affects students, it also affects parents and the community as a whole. It will take all of us working together for Upper Arlington to reach its full potential and eliminate underage drinking."

During the second week of April, Team Delta Max members distributed colorful yard signs throughout the community displaying slogans such as "Don't Conform—Shift the Norm" and "Find Your Voice—Make the Choice." Junior Zach Steen designed the signs with the assistance of other team members.

The group also designed and distributed postcards to the families of all students in grades 6-12. The postcards contained strategies to combat underage drinking, statistics regarding the issue and a calendar of the month's activities.

Throughout April, a series of PSAs aired on the UAHS television show, "Kickin' It Live." Each PSA challenged students to consider their decisions regarding underage drinking. On April 25, prior to the

UAHS prom, the PSA stated, "Whether it is an ordinary night or a night that means everything, make a good choice -- a choice that could change everything and just might save your life."

Team Delta Max is in the process of planning summer activities. The core group of about 20 students who plan events continues to expand and include more underclassmen, who will continue the group's work after seniors graduate, Mayne reported at the May 12 board of education meeting.

Team Delta Max has also begun educating middle school students and freshmen about the consequences of drug and alcohol use, she said.

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