
Schools

Grant helps Team Delta Max share anti-alcohol message

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By SARA R. JOHNSON

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Team Delta Max, an Upper Arlington High School organization, is gearing up for Alcohol Awareness Month in April

It's got some financial help in doing so after recently receiving a \$1,000 grant.

The grant money will be used to bring more awareness to the club's purpose of the reduction of drug use and underage drinking in UA. The Drug Free Action Alliance and the Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws Task Force awarded the grant in February.

April activities will start with the mailing of several informative postcards to community members in regards to the issue.

The group -- including students, parents and community members -- also will print yard signs for residents to display during the month, said Erin Mayne, Team Delta Max adviser.

The message: "Don't Conform -- Shift the Norm."

"I'm a big believer that this is one of the most consistent issues that our kids face in their high school years, and we would really like to make an impact on the lives of the students and families," she said.

"One of our major goals is to build a dialogue with the community, and have people talking about the topic and issue to really create the change."

Ten students will attend the Pride International Conference from April 8-11 in Louisville, Ky. It's the largest drug and violence prevention conference in the world as about 1,000 people attend, Mayne said.

Students will host a clinic at the conference to give attendees the history of Team Delta Max.

"We are very excited to share our program with others and be able to help, but also to see what other people are doing and bring back ideas that we can implement here," Mayne said.

The group also is organizing the Team Delta Max 5K race on April 25.

In addition to the grant, the group was recognized in January when it was awarded the Community Youth Award at the Upper Arlington State of the City Address for contributions to the city during 2008.

In March, about 40 UA students who are in Team Delta Max attended a retreat held at the Heartland Country Resort in Fredericktown.

Also, the club's community task force will experience a little bit of change. In the past, the task force has consisted of community leaders, from the city and schools.

UA Assistant City Manager Joe Valentino will lead the task force.

"He is going to help be a champion for a cause, and bring all the people together who are passionate about the students and the issues itself," Mayne said.

He will seek out individuals who have a vested interest in the purpose of the club, and maybe have more of a personal tie with the cause.

"One of the goals of pulling this task force together is to build a relationship in the task force, so folks committed not only to the purpose, but to the individuals who make up the task force, Valentino said.

"The reason we want to go into that direction is because we have found that when people are connected together, it is a powerful tool to have them stay involved over the long haul."

He's had a consistent interest with the Delta Team Max movement, he said.

"Delta Team Max is close to my heart, and I really think that's what Upper Arlington is all about -- creating a safe environment for kids and families," he said.

For more information visit the Web site teamdeltamax.com.

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--Joe Valentino