

**Associated Texans Against Crime**  
***A Today Foundation Program***  
**Anti Drug Awards for Texas Schools and School Districts**  
**2006 – 07 Winner and Finalists**

• **COURAGE PROGRAM**

Winfrey Academy Charter School/Irving, Texas

**First Place – Recipient of a \$1,000 award**

WACS, located in Irving, Texas, is this year's winner of the ATAC Anti-Drug Award. The school focused on serving an at-risk population of students -- those with a history of substance abuse. To that end, the Courage Program was developed to provide a recovery classroom for students who requested or were required to attend a drug-free environment.

Students returning to school after being in treatment were identified as high candidates to relapse because of peer pressure and/or a lack of sober support. To decrease these students' exposure to substance abuse triggers, a self-contained, supportive classroom with other recovering students who express a desire for sobriety was created.

The program is a self-contained unit within the academy, in which students attend classes Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. and are allowed to participate in in-school AA/NA meetings, substance abuse classes, support groups, community service projects, multi-sensory learning and art therapy.

The program addresses academic and recovery needs of students and holds them accountable through random drug testing and mandatory parent/teacher conferences. The program is an effective means in increasing student motivation for school, satisfaction toward learning and lowered truancy issues.

ATAC is proud to contribute \$1,000 to the Courage Program, which is primarily funded by the Texas Foundation School Program.

• **DUCK TOBACCO PREVENTION PROGRAM**

Brazosport Independent School District

**Finalist – Recipient of a \$500 award**

The Brazosport Schools identified a high incidence of tobacco use among students and determined traditional lessons about the harm of tobacco use were not effective. As a result, the DUCK Tobacco Prevention Program was born.

Using the "power of youth," the program got students involved in creating solutions to this problem. After attending workshops on the topic and participating in brainstorming sessions hosted by the Statewide Tobacco Education Program Summit, Texas teens (including one from

Brazoswood High School) generated more than 2,000 ideas that were narrowed to 35 potential tobacco prevention campaigns.

DUCK was a mascot originating in this teen summit, which a number of local students have attended through the years. Eleventh and 12<sup>th</sup> grade participants return and serve their district as Peer Assistance and Leadership Students, bringing preventative programs to their target of elementary and middle school students.

Several themed programs are presented during school years, providing anti-tobacco materials and presentations to students in a fun, informative way. The district attributes heightened anti-tobacco awareness and declined tobacco use to the district DUCK program.

#### • **SHATTERED DREAMS**

Muenster High School/Muenster ISD

**Finalist – Recipient of a \$500 award**

Muenster High School decided to target underage drinking in its community, in conjunction with the Cuenster Volunteer Fire Department, which had witnessed first-hand the dangerous results of drinking and driving at crime scenes.

Inspired by a program at Carrollton/Farmers Branch ISD's Newman Smith High School, MHS and MFD decided to do whatever it took to bring Shattered Dreams to local students. About 50 meetings and 150 volunteer hours went into the training and preparation for Shattered dreams at MHS.

As is well-known, Shattered Dreams is a multi-day event during which some students agree to be victims of a mock alcohol-related accident. A video is created showing incidents leading up to the accident and then the accident is recreated on campus. Students must attend classes among the "living dead" peers, witness the accident itself – complete with police, paramedics and parent response to the scene – and then share their reactions to the incident.

A project of this enormity was impressive for this small, German-Catholic community, and adults and youth alike seem deeply touched by the Shattered Dreams program which addressed the problem of students and adults choosing to drink and drive.

#### • **SAFE SCHOOL AMBASSADORS AND VIKE SQUAD**

Dulles High School/Fort Bend ISD

**Finalist – Recipient of a \$500 award**

Dulles High School principal and staff wanted to harness the power of students to create a culture of inclusion yet also honor the diversity of the school. Safe School Ambassadors was developed to empower students to not be bystanders, but to take positive action when they learn of potential confrontation among their peers. The VIKE Squad was the adult arm of the program, making parents responsible for monitoring possible conflict within the community.

Using 40 carefully selected student leaders who attend intensive training, SSA equips students to notice cruelty and violence on campus and to take safe and appropriate action. Participants meet weekly to submit action logs, trouble shoot problems, bond and interact. The VIKE Squad meets monthly to plan and implement community drug- and alcohol-free family events and speakers.

The program is credited in part with DHS falling significantly below national and district averages concerning violence and gangs and above average in students feeling safe at school. Parental involvement has increased, with VIKE having adult volunteers on campus regularly interacting with students and staff.

• **MONTHLY THEMES**

Forest Hill Elementary School/Amarillo ISD

**Finalist – Recipient of a \$500 award**

While it also provides traditional drug prevention programming, FHE hoped to increase the overall age of alcohol and drug use for those who ultimately choose to use these products. FHE utilized the well-established Red Ribbon Week program in an effort to reach this goal.

Red Ribbon Week began in 1988 in honor of a Drug Enforcement Agency special agent killed in the line of duty. In 1989, it was introduced in Amarillo ISD. During this week the school creates and facilitates fun, age-appropriate activities for its 572 students focusing on the legal consequences of underage drug and alcohol use and the effects of such use on children.

At the end of the most recent RRW, more than 50 percent of the school's faculty reported a belief that their students benefited from the program based on student feedback. Remaining faculty agreed that the program would serve to diminish student illegal drug use now or in the future.

• **WASTER DREAMS**

New Diana High School/New Diana ISD

**Special Recognition**

Simulated drunk driving accident much like the Shattered Dreams program referenced in the Muenster High School finalist entry.

• **LONGHORN AMIGOS**

Caprock High School/Amarillo ISD

**Special Recognition**

Twenty high school students trained to visit elementary and middle schools, break into small groups, participate in skits, modeling and fun activities, focusing on the effects of drugs, tobacco, alcohol and bullying.

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