



1 DiPronio Drive • Waterloo, NY 13165 • (315)-539-1985

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: MARY GRACE  
315-539-1985**

## **Local Youth Wins Underage Drinking Billboard Contest**

The Seneca County Community Counseling Center Substance Abuse Prevention Program has received a 2010 award of \$20,000 from New York State, to enforce underage drinking laws. This award will allow both increased enforcement by local police agencies and education and awareness, through the “Underage Drinking – Not a Minor Problem” campaign developed by the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS). The Enforcing Underage Drinking Law Block Grant is administered by the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) program, Combating Underage Drinking.

The underage drinking prevention campaign is designed to raise awareness of the serious consequences of drinking and deliver prevention messages to community leaders, public officials, health and prevention professionals, parents, educators, and youth.

“Prevention and education are the best tools we have to combat the dangerous effects of teen drinking. Working with community members, we can address the harmful effects of alcohol use both inside and outside the home environment,” said OASAS Commissioner, Karen Carpenter-Palumbo.

The Seneca County Community Counseling Center Substance Abuse Prevention Program, in partnership with the Seneca County Substance Abuse Coalition (SAC), is working on several initiatives to address the problem of underage drinking. In an effort to increase awareness during the upcoming holidays, graduations and other summer celebrations, SAC has decided to launch a billboard campaign that will take place from May 17 to September 5, 2010.

SAC held a youth billboard design contest where individuals were asked to promote and include the message “Underage Drinking – Not a Minor Problem.” Entrants included: Kiersten Adams, Meredith Beardsley, Jasmine Delong, Amber Greer, Olivia Jabaji, Chelsey Marsh, Nate Mott, Amanda Porter, Nikki Reese and Kelly Stephens, all from Seneca County high schools and Luke Buccio, Morgan Eastlack, Christina Eaton, Gina Lannucci, Danielle Rizzo, Melody Smith, Benjamin Quigley and Sajitha Veettilakath from Roberts Wesleyan College.

Jasmine Delong, a 10<sup>th</sup> grade student from South Seneca High School, submitted the winning entry. Each entry received a \$10 gift card for their efforts and Delong received a \$100 award. The first round of billboards will be on display May 17th to June 13th on Waterloo-Geneva Road, Route 96 (South of Ovid) and Route 96A (South of Geneva). Following that at least one billboard will be displayed in Seneca County until September 5<sup>th</sup>. Other community awareness projects include Town Hall meetings that are expected to take place in the fall.

*The mission of the Seneca County Substance Abuse Coalition is to unite efforts toward attaining the best quality of life for every Seneca County resident and visitor, through the promotion of healthy lifestyles, community awareness and protection from harm. In recent years, SAC has merged as a subcommittee of Seneca County Partners for Children, Youth and Families for mutual benefit. The Coalition, formerly the Seneca County Substance Abuse Task Force was established in 1989.*