



Who is making a difference in Franklin?

Contributed by the Franklin Mayor's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Task Force

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), the national membership organization representing over 5,000 coalitions and affiliates working to make America's communities safe, healthy and drug-free, describes community coalitions as being made up of parents, teachers, law enforcement, businesses, religious leaders, health providers and other active community members who are working together at the local level to make their communities safer, healthier and drug-free. This description describes the organization and work being done by our very own community coalition perfectly.

The Franklin Mayor's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Task Force (known lovingly and simply as the "Drug Task Force" or "Task Force") is a coalition of individuals and organizations coming together from all sectors of the community to address a common goal: a healthy environment for the drug and alcohol free development of our youth and families. We serve the communities of Franklin and Hill, NH. Our coalition has only one paid staff position, which means that our work relies heavily on volunteer efforts. Members of the Drug Task Force are made up of partners that come from all different areas of the community. Let us introduce you to one Task Force member who has shown strong dedication and support of our coalition's mission and who greatly helps, in a variety of ways, to make our coalition activities and other work run smoothly...

Andrea McFall believes in the power of having people come together to help play their part in making a positive difference in our community. An understanding that the issue of substance misuse and abuse not only effects the communities of Franklin and Hill, but the state of New Hampshire as a whole, is a big reason as to why Andrea became, and remains, involved with the Task Force.

Originally from Massachusetts, Andrea has lived in the state of New Hampshire for about 30 years. Since she began her involvement, for about two years now, Andrea McFall has shown unquestionable dedication as a coalition volunteer. Involved in the community in multiple ways outside of her work with the Courthouse and the Franklin Elks Lodge, she tirelessly works to support the efforts of the Task Force in any way she is able.

As a volunteer, Andrea consistently seeks at-home work and projects to help support the coalition's activities. This involves tasks such as folding newly printed brochures, cutting informational flyers to size, or assembling the coalition's commonly used informational

“New Member Folders” or “Goody Bags.” Andrea has also volunteered her time at each year’s Hazardous Waste Day, where coalition members seek to spread awareness of the proper disposal of medications at the permanent, free and anonymous Medication Collection box located in the front lobby of Franklin Police Department. Similarly, Andrea volunteers at the annual “Rx Take Back Day” events. Volunteers at this event also focus on spreading awareness about the proper disposal of “sharps” and the location of the permanent medication collection box at Franklin PD. In addition, they help to spread awareness of the Franklin Mayor’s Drug and Alcohol Abuse Task Force coalition and about the resources that the coalition makes available.

Andrea explained that she feels the work being done by the Task Force is important in the community. “There is a need to help people,” said Andrea, “the prevention part of it is important: showing middle school kids, or even younger, positivity. And to show that there is a different and happy way of living life.” Andrea wants other people to understand and know that “we are here to help in many different facets; Workshops meetings, pamphlets, and so on... to show that we are trying to stop this epidemic.” Andrea added “and coming to a meeting and not saying anything is fine. You’re not required to speak. Just come.”

Task Force Coordinator Angela Lynch explains that Andrea is a dedicated volunteer that always seeks out ways to help support the coalition’s mission. “Andrea McFall is a wonderful example of how our community members all play an important part to our work, in each person’s own individualized ways that work with their schedules, interests and utilizing their knowledge-base to help the coalition continue forward” said Angela. “Without coalition members like Andrea, it would be very tough to prepare for all of the events and activities that we are involved with in the community.”

“Whether or not what I do as a volunteer [directly] helps that need, like stuffing information folders and bags... It alleviates someone else that may have more knowledge or better experience to be doing something else. I contribute where I can” said Andrea. “It is a team effort; we are a team.”

As Andrea explained so well, there are many opportunities for involvement. Any part that a community member is able to play to help support our coalition’s mission is critical. Whether it is simply spreading awareness with us in everyday lives, doing at-home projects, volunteering at a community event as a coalition representative (or as we call it, a “Coalition Ambassador”), or spear-heading a subcommittee, it is all equally important because if we want to create lasting community change, “it takes a village.” For more information about the Franklin Mayor’s Drug and Alcohol Abuse Task Force community coalition, click on the Drug Task Force icon at www.franklinnh.org.