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Decatur Township Drug-Free Coalition recognized with 2017 Prosecutor's Crime Fighter of the Year Award

Coalition recognized for addressing heroin epidemic through effective outreach to residents

(Indianapolis, Ind.) Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry announced today that the Decatur Township Drug-Free Coalition has been selected as the recipient of the 2017 Prosecutor's Crime Fighter of the Year Award. Prosecutor Curry presented the award to Decatur Township Schools Superintendent Matt Prusiecki, Decatur Township



The Decatur Township Drug-Free Coalition was recognized today with the 2017 Prosecutor's Crime Fighter of the Year Award. Prosecutor Curry presented the award to Decatur Township Schools Superintendent Matt Prusiecki, Decatur Township Schools Resource Officer Chase Lyday, IMPD Community Resource Officer David Spurgeon, and more than a dozen members of the coalition.

Schools Resource Officer Chase Lyday, and more than a dozen members of the coalition. The presentation took place today at the Annual National Night Out Kick-Off and Crime Fighter of the Year Award Ceremony hosted by the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department.

Prosecutor Curry said the Decatur Township Drug-Free Coalition was selected in recognition of the group's leadership in providing critical information, resources and support to Decatur Township residents who have been affected by illegal drug use, specifically the prolific use of heroin. The coalition focuses on connecting with community members to combat drug use at a grassroots level. A primary goal of the coalition is to raise community members' awareness of the resources available to help themselves or loved ones who may be battling addiction.

"Each year we highlight an individual or organization that is working to provide services to make Marion County safer for all who live, work and visit here. It is our pleasure to recognize the Decatur Township Drug-Free Coalition for the group's direct positive impact on those individuals, families, and neighbors affected by the heroin epidemic," Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry stated.

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“Not only is this a broad group including the schools, law enforcement and concerned community members, it is an effective group. Addressing drug addiction and challenging ripple effects it has on our community is an effort in which we all must play a role,” Prosecutor Curry added. “We wish the Coalition continued success in their work and look forward to assisting in their mission.”

Since 2015 the coalition has been led by Decatur Township School Resource Officer Chase Lyday and IMPD Community Resource Officer David Spurgeon. Under their leadership, the group has become highly active in the Decatur Township community. The group centers around three target areas: drug prevention, treatment and enforcement. The mission of the coalition is “to prevent and reduce substance abuse in Decatur Township by strengthening families through the mobilization of community resources.”

The Decatur Township Drug-Free Coalition was organized in 2012 by IMPD Chief Bryan Roach, in his capacity as Southwest District Commander, in response to a spike in drug overdoses in the area. In 2015, the coalition expanded to include Decatur Township Schools as a partner and the group was successful in securing a federal grant under the Drug-Free Communities Support Program.

In May of 2017, the Coalition hosted a town hall style meeting which brought nearly 100 community members together to discuss community initiatives for drug prevention, recovery and enforcement. Later in June, the Coalition conducted the Mars Hill Neighborhood Enhancement Initiative. This initiative involved teams of 52 volunteers who went door to door inquiring about the specific needs at each residence, such as drug addiction treatment, food assistance, healthcare needs, and smoke detectors.