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San Rafael Alcohol and Drug Coalition Sponsored by Alcohol Justice Awarded Federal Drug Free Community Grant

5 Year Renewable Award Will Help Grow the Canal Alcopop-Free Zone, Prevent Youth Alcohol Use, and Educate On the Harms of Underage Marijuana Use

WASHINGTON, D.C. (September 9, 2013) – Gil Kerlikowske, Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), announced that the **San Rafael Alcohol and Drug Coalition** from San Rafael, California was one of the grant recipients in the \$19.8 million new Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program. Alcohol Justice will receive \$125,000 per year (renewable for 5 years) to involve and engage their local community to prevent substance use among youth through the new community coalition.

“We have the power to challenge alcohol and drug use among young people here in our own backyard,” said Jorge Castillo, Advocacy Director at Alcohol Justice and Program Director of the San Rafael Alcohol and Drug Coalition. *“Research shows that prevention is the most effective tool we have to reduce the terrible consequences associated with drug and alcohol use among young people. This new funding will allow our community coalition to help place more Canal kids on the path toward success and enable them to live healthier and safer lives.”*

The DFC Program provides grants of up to \$625,000 over 5 years to community coalitions that facilitate citizen participation in local drug prevention efforts. Coalitions are composed of community leaders, parents, youth, teachers, religious and fraternal organizations, healthcare and business professionals, law enforcement, the media, and others working together at the local level. Today’s awards to 147 communities and 19 new DFC Mentoring grants across the country are in addition to the \$59.4 million in continuing grants released to 473 currently funded DFC coalitions and 4 DFC Mentoring coalitions.

“President Obama believes in the pursuit of an America built to last – a Nation with an educated, skilled workforce that has the knowledge, energy, and expertise to succeed in a highly competitive global marketplace,” said Kerlikowske. *“For too many young people, this future is clouded by drug use, which inhibits their ability to remain healthy*

and safe and to achieve their full potential. We congratulate this coalition on its work to raise a generation of young people equipped to remain drug free and ready to meet the challenges and successfully compete in the 21st century.”

The San Rafael Alcohol and Drug Coalition will specifically work to establish and strengthen community collaboration in support of local efforts to prevent youth substance use in the Canal District of San Rafael, a California community of 12,000 residents.

“The key to preventing substance abuse is harnessing the talents, resources, and interests of all segments of our local communities,” said SAMHSA Administrator Pamela S. Hyde. *“America’s families, schools, places of worship, healthcare providers, community centers, and other civic organizations all play an essential role in helping our youth avoid illicit substance use. SAMHSA’s partnership with the Office of National Drug Control Policy in supporting community coalitions has proven effective in uniting communities to develop effective approaches for fostering drug-free environments for young people across our Nation.”*

The DFC Program was created by the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997 and reauthorized by Congress in 2001 and 2006. Since 1998, ONDCP has awarded nearly 2,000 DFC grants to local communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Palau, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

For more information about the San Rafael Alcohol and Drug Coalition, contact Jorge Castillo at 415 257-2488. For more information about the Office of National Drug Control Policy or the Drug Free Communities Support Program, visit: www.WhiteHouse.gov/ONDCP

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