

# Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association

## BUILDING THE FUTURE

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SPRING  
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### STUDENT SERVICES

Coaches'  
Education

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Service

Sportsmanship

Student  
Leadership

Wellness

## Summit Cracks Down On Marijuana Use



Wesley Hudson, 27, crashed the Tippy Toes Learning Academy van into a highway bridge support, killing himself

and four toddlers....

An Ohio man crashed into an automobile, killing Victoria Rogers and seriously injuring her two young daughters and niece....

The driver of a charter bus in New Orleans crashed and killed 22 people....

A man beheaded two women in their neighborhood with an axe....

Special Agent Tina Murphy of the Drug Enforcement Administration, New England Field Division, read these headlines at the Ninth Annual Wellness Summit held May 11 at the MIAA office, revealing that all of these tragedies had one factor in common: marijuana was involved. An audience of Wellness Coordinators from across the state attended the Summit, obtaining information on marijuana, gambling, alcoholism and classroom resources.

According to the DEA, marijuana is the most widely used illicit drug in America. More young people are now in treatment for marijuana dependency than for alcohol or for all other illegal drugs combined. Agent Murphy said



*Tina Murphy of the DEA presents facts and figures.*

many parents don't realize that marijuana today is far more powerful than it was 30 years ago. Despite the dangers, studies show that approximately 1 in 6 high school students drive under the influence of marijuana. A roadside study of reckless drivers who were not impaired by alcohol showed that one third tested positive for marijuana.

According to another study, twelfth graders who smoked marijuana daily scored well below their peers on standard verbal and math exams, even though they had scored equally well in fourth grade. Agent Murphy said that marijuana users are eight times more likely to try cocaine and

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## Franklin Educator Earns Wellness Award

Mardi Donovan, Wellness Director, Director of Physical Education and Director of Health Education for the Franklin Public Schools, was chosen as the 2004-2005 "Wellness Coordinator of the Year." She accepted the award during the Ninth Annual Wellness Summit held May 11 at the MIAA office in Franklin, and received an additional plaque presented by Norfolk County District Attorney William R. Keating for her efforts in the Greater Franklin community.

"This is the first time we received three nominations for one Wellness Coordinator," said Mike Kane, MIAA Director of Student Services.

Ms. Donovan's accomplishments include organizing the annual Peace Takes Practice Peer Leadership Conference at Dean College, a student-run violence prevention conference that focuses on bullying, harassment, Internet safety, hate crime prevention, student mediation and other topics. The conference has been in existence for five years and involves 10-12 area high schools.

She also belongs to the Norfolk School Partnership, a networking organization which meets monthly to hear



*Mardi Donovan accepts an award from Norfolk County District Attorney William R. Keating.*

from experts on different prevention-related topics such as substance abuse, underage drinking and suicide.

"I have worked with Mardi for the past seven years at Franklin High School and have always been impressed

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# Crucial To Get Students Facts On Gambling, Drugs

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15 times more likely to try heroin. Teenage tobacco users are 14 times more likely to use marijuana than their non-smoking peers. According to the American Lung Association, there are 50-70 percent more cancer-causing materials in marijuana smoke than in cigarette smoke.

Agent Murphy discussed the controversy over legalizing marijuana in the country for medical purposes. She pointed out how the American Medical Association has rejected pleas to endorse marijuana as medicine and instead has urged that it remain a prohibited Schedule 1 drug. Other associations, including The Institute of Medicine, National Multiple Sclerosis Society and the British Medical Association, have also expressed concern about legalizing marijuana. Marinol, a safe pill form of synthetic THC which has the same properties as cultivated marijuana without the high, has been shown to be more effective in promoting health than smoked marijuana.

“Legalization of marijuana, no matter how it begins, will come at the expense of our children and public safety,” said Agent Murphy. “My concern is that when kids think something is medicine, they think it’s okay and we’ll see more use of it.”

## Gambling And Young People

Jim Wuelfing made a presentation on behalf of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling. The council’s mission is to provide information, education and referral services for problem gamblers, their families and the greater community. Studies indicate that about 6 percent of Massachusetts’ general adult population has had some significant adverse effect from gambling in their lifetimes. About 4 percent, or nearly 250,000 Massachusetts residents, have had a gambling problem within the past year. According to the council, anecdotal accounts suggest increasing number of teens in trouble with gambling. Young people gamble for many reasons, including: seeking excitement, the opportunity to be in an adult environment doing an adult activity, the powerful influence of advertising, and parental and other adult influences and role models.

They might experience debt and credit card problems, conflict and anger surrounding lost/owed money, losing and chasing losses, a magical and “quick fix” mentality, and progress with their frequency of gambling, amount of money and the form of gambling. These problems might lead to a limited circle of friends, family conflict, truancy, slipping academic performance, lying, stealing, loss of self esteem and depression.

The Council Helpline, 1-800-426-1234, provides live confidential caller responses 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. For information, visit <http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org>.

## Reaching Out To Kids

Jeanne Blake represented Family Health Productions, a non-profit organization that promotes family and public health by creating research-based books, videos, DVDs, About Health TV, and Abouthealth.com. These resources are produced with technical assistance from the U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Harvard Medical School. Ms. Blake, founder and president of Family Health Productions, is a television medical reporter, author and affiliated faculty member of the Division on Addictions at Harvard Medical School. She showed excerpts



*Paul Stewart (left), and Jim Wuelfing (above) speak at the Summit.*

of several DVDs available to schools, with each program emphasizing personal stories from teenagers. All attendees received free DVD copies of Boys on Bullying and The Power of Girls: Inside and Out, as well as the booklet Words Can Work: When Talking With Kids About Alcohol. Other available products include: Alcohol: True Stories hosted by Matt Damon, In Our Own Words: Teens and AIDS, Raising Healthy Kids: Families Talk About Sexual Health, and an upcoming program about steroids. Discussion guides included with each program help educators lead kids in lively conversations about the issues affecting kids’ lives. For information, visit <http://www.abouthealth.com>.

Paul Stewart, Director of Development for the Boston Bruins Foundation as well as a former NHL referee and player, spoke about how educators can make a difference. The Boston Bruins Foundation was established to assist charitable organizations that demonstrate a strong commitment to enhancing the quality of life for children in the community. Mr. Stewart discussed his late father, a school administrator who helped students to reach their full potential.

“You have kids who dress the way they want, talk they way they want and do what they want,” he said. “Is it our right as administrators and as mentors to disregard them? These are individuals. You have to establish with these young people some idea of a relationship. When you think Columbine can’t happen again, Minnesota happens. That’s where we need to focus our attention. We’re mandated to go the extra mile to reach the unreachable.”

A presentation by The Improbable Players concluded the Wellness Summit. The Improbable Players is a company of 25 actors who present eight different plays that spotlight tough social problems as they relate to substance abuse: alcoholism in the family, relationship violence, HIV/AIDS, and many others. All of the actors and staff are in recovery from alcohol or other drug abuse. Information is available at <http://www.improbableplayers.org>.

Massachusetts Partners in Prevention exhibit tables included SADD, Greater Boston PFLAG, radKIDS, Inc./Eric’s Story, Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts, MEDA, Inc., Need to Lead, Outside The Classroom, and the Massachusetts Department of Education – School

## Survey Nets 226 Responses

The MIAA Student Services Department has announced the results of the Wellness Advisory Committee's Strategic Planning Survey. Ninety-one schools responded to the survey last fall, yielding 226 responses. The goal was to solicit feedback on which issues are prevalent in schools today and what type of wellness programs would be most useful for educators to attend through the MIAA. Alcohol and drugs emerged as the biggest issues to be addressed, at 84.1 percent and 77.4 percent respectively.

The MIAA Student Advisory Committee commented on the survey at the Ninth Annual Wellness Summit. Panelists were: Claire Arena and Katie Finigan, Reading Memorial High School; Matt DelVecchio, Britney Cullen and Colleen Hill, Milford High School; Kristin Forget and Jennifer Raymond, Easthampton High School. The students expressed surprise that the figures for alcohol and drugs weren't higher.

"We thought that was low," said Claire Arena. "For schools that don't recognize it as a prominent problem, it must be ignorance if they think it doesn't exist – because it does."

Other topics that received attention were: hazing and bullying at 68.1 percent; healthy life choices at 63.7 percent; eating disorders at 57.5 percent; harassment at 57.1 percent; steroids at 53.5 percent; dating violence at 52.7 percent; tobacco at 45.1 percent; obesity at 40.3 percent; and gambling at 30.1 percent.

Written suggestions from respondents included programs on: nutrition/supplements; home safety and communication; injury prevention and weight training; Internet safety; anger management and conflict resolution; sexually transmitted disease and pregnancy; concussions; depression, mental health, stress and suicide; self-inflicted injuries; respect, morals, diversity, racism and self esteem; peer pressure and responsible decision-making; freak/grind dancing; strengthening and review of MIAA policies; role of the high school captain; coaching ethics; real life addiction stories; coaches' first aid; statutory rape laws; time management and goal setting; and college recruitment.

Also noted were: competitiveness; sexuality and homophobia; professional development for coaches; parent and spectator behavior; party alternatives; community service; seatbelts and safety equipment; high school to college transition; sun safety; and gangs/violence prevention. According to the survey, 73 percent of respondents believed the MIAA should provide workshops on sportsmanship, 66.8 percent on leadership and



*Pictured are members of the MIAA Student Advisory Committee.*

50.4 percent on citizenship. The Student Advisory Committee commented on programs that have worked in their school, such as a mandatory Decisions Course, mock drunk driving accidents before the prom, substance abuse speakers who have experienced alcohol and drug problems firsthand, and all-night graduation parties where seniors are locked in the school and cannot leave unless their parents are informed. Most of the students agreed that sixth and seventh grades are the ideal time to introduce prevention topics in the classroom.

"Then once they step into ninth grade, they know this is bad, this isn't, and recognize that when people are doing it they're hurting themselves," said Kristin Forget.

## Coordinator Of The Year

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with her commitment to her profession," wrote Principal John Lucas in his letter of recommendation. "She takes deeply to heart the wellness program and is committed to it as a way of helping the students of Franklin High School learn and prepare for their lives. Her direct involvement in the establishment of our curriculum, activities and her work with new teachers is one of the ways in which she has furthered these goals at our school. She readily makes herself available to assist with matters that arise in the physical education/health department and strongly supports the students and teachers. She is the school's connection to many out-of-school social/educational agencies which support the school's educational programs."

MIAA Wellness Partners of the Year Awards were presented to Jim Wuelfing of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling and Doreen Iovanna of the Massachusetts Department of Education – School Nutrition and Health. Mr. Wuelfing is the Director of Prevention for the Council and owner of the New England Center specializing in prevention, community awareness, peer education, stress management and problem gambling. Both recipients are members of Massachusetts Partners in Prevention.

"Jim helped us frame the vision and mission statement for the Massachusetts Partners in Prevention," said Mike Kane. "He also has had extensive input into a position paper on prevention. Jim is a caring professional who gives freely of his time and expertise. He is an excellent reference, colleague and resource. When he speaks, everyone listens. Doreen is passionate about getting the message out on nutrition and healthy eating habits. She looks for and finds ways to spread the message. She was familiar with the MIAA tournament structure and suggested that we allow the distribution of materials at various sites. Last year, material was distributed at the state wrestling finals. She not only distributed flyers, but she had conversations with many parents, athletes and spectators about healthy eating habits. The program was successful and expanded to basketball this year. Attendance at our state finals exceeded over 10,000. What a great place to get the message across."

*Director of Student Services:* Michael Kane  
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# Workshop Addresses Suicide, Drug-Testing, Bullying

## Wellness

Giving away prized possessions. Quitting a beloved sports team. Honor roll grades dropping to Cs and Ds.

If your student exhibits any of these symptoms, experts say this could be a sign of suicide. Often, an embarrassing episode triggers a suicide attempt, such as breaking up with a boyfriend, being disciplined at school or being arrested.

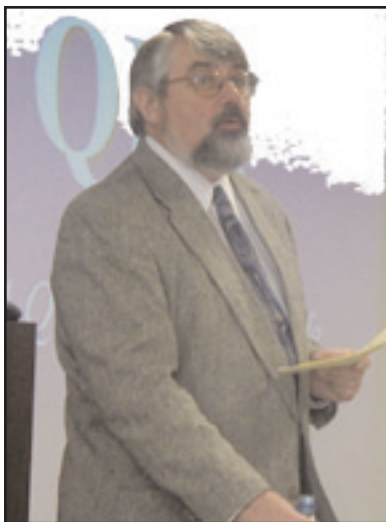
“Teens are nothing if not impulsive,” said Alan Holmlund, suicide prevention coordinator for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. “Many teens complete suicide after making the decision a half hour ahead of time.”

And the odds are that, too late, they might regret their fatal decision. According to psychological interviews with people who survived jumps off the Golden Gate Bridge, every single one of them said they were happy they lived.

“Most of them reported that the thought passing through their head on the way down was ‘I wish I hadn’t done this,’” said Mr. Holmlund. “We’re talking about a very significant public health problem and one that is largely preventable.”

Suicide prevention was one of the topics at the March 11 Wellness Coordinators workshop held at the MIAA office. According to the Massachusetts Department of Education Youth Risk Behavior Survey, in 2001 suicide was the third leading cause of death among young people aged 15-24 in the United States; in Massachusetts, it was the fourth. One risk factor is untreated depression, yet only a small percentage of Americans who suffer from depression are accurately diagnosed and treated.

Mr. Holmlund discussed the QPR Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training. The QPR Institute and its over 1,200 certified trainers offer



*Alan Holmlund makes a presentation on suicide prevention at the Wellness Coordinators workshop.*

suicide prevention training throughout the United States. QPR consists of three life-saving skills: explaining how to Question a person about suicide, Persuade the person to get help and Refer the person to the appropriate resource. Information about the program is available at <http://www.qprinstitute.com>. A gatekeeper is defined as anyone in a position to recognize a crisis and warning signs that someone may be contemplating suicide.

Research shows that the majority of those who attempt suicide give some warning signs, verbal or behavioral, of their intent to kill themselves.

## QPR

### Tips For Asking the Suicide Question

**If in doubt, don't wait, ask the question.  
If the person is reluctant, be persistent.  
Talk to the person alone in a private setting.  
Allow the person to talk freely.  
Give yourself plenty of time.  
Have your resources handy: QPR card, phone numbers, counselor's name and any other information that might help.**

#### Less Direct Approach:

“Have you been unhappy lately?”  
“Have you been very unhappy lately?”  
“Have you been so very unhappy lately that you've been thinking about ending your life?”  
“Do you ever wish you could go to sleep and never wake up?”

#### Direct Approach:

“You know, when people are as upset as you seem to be, they sometimes wish they were dead. I'm wondering if you're feeling that way, too?”  
“You look pretty miserable. I wonder if you're thinking about suicide?”  
“Are you thinking about killing yourself?”

Young people might show signs of anger, irritability or restlessness. Sudden happiness in someone who has been depressed for a long time is also cause for suspicion.

Mr. Holmlund outlined ways to ask a individual if they are unhappy enough to be contemplating suicide. The next step is persuading the person to get help.

“If you're worried about a youngster and can't get yourself to ask the question, find someone who can,” he said.

If in doubt about whether or not to apply QPR to someone you think might be thinking of suicide, call 1-800-SUICIDE for advice and direction. For more information about QPR training, contact Alan Holmlund at 617-624-5476 or [Alan.Holmlund@state.ma.us](mailto:Alan.Holmlund@state.ma.us).

## Drug Testing Programs

Jerry Luster, senior vice president of Calloway Drug Testing Laboratories, Inc. in Wakefield, discussed how schools can implement a

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## Lions, Leos Clubs Offer Opportunities For Youth

### Community Service

If you're looking to implement a positive youth program into your school, you may have to look no further than your local Lions Club. Doreen Martel, Franklin Lions Club Member currently serving as Vice District

Governor of the Massachusetts District 33K Lions, spoke at the March 11 Wellness Coordinators workshop.

She described the various programs that the Lions of Massachusetts sponsor, including: the Massachusetts Lions Speech Contest, which gives high school students an opportunity to practice writing and public speaking; the Peace Poster Contest, which gives youth ages 11-13 a chance to express themselves and share their vision of peace; and the Massachusetts Lions All State Band, in which students gather at a hotel for a few days and prepare to perform a program at the Massachusetts Lions State Convention.

Other programs include the Leo Club, a junior version of the Lions; Lions-Quest, a life-skills curriculum that focuses on civic values, drug prevention, goal-setting, problem-solving and respect for others; the Lions Young Ambassadors of the 21st Century Award program, which recognizes young people for their outstanding community service



*The Lions Clubs and Leos Clubs teach civic values through their contests and other programs.*

involvement, leadership accomplishments, public speaking skills and scholastic achievement; and the Lions Young Leaders in Service Awards, which recognizes young people for their community service within a 12-month period.

For more information on Lions programs, contact Doreen Martel at 508-541-5353 or [Doreen\\_Martel@yahoo.com](mailto:Doreen_Martel@yahoo.com).

## Coordinators Discuss Ways To Combat Harassment

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drug testing program. As a result of a 2002 Supreme Court decision, public middle and high schools are free to use random drug tests. Drug testing was previously available only for students involved in sports. In the 2002 ruling, the Court broadened the scope to include all students who take part in after-school activities – teams, clubs and other organizations – in which the participants compete against students at other schools.

Before beginning a drug testing program, Mr. Luster recommends consulting legal counsel and enlisting support within the school and community.

"All procedures and protocols for drug testing have to be written down and set in stone," he said. "It has to be a group effort. Get your local congressman and state representative involved in this process also. If there's money out there for you, they can get it."

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, schools with drug-testing programs on average submit approximately 10-25 percent of their eligible students to drug tests each month.

Mr. Luster recommends using a lab that offers GC/MS testing, which he says is the gold standard of testing and is defensible in court. He also advises choosing a lab that provides supplies, expert witnesses, confidentiality and insures security throughout the collection and testing process.

"If you walk into a courtroom, the first thing the opposing lawyer will say is let's see the chain of custody," he said.

For a copy of the booklet "Starting A Student Drug-Testing Program," visit <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov> or call 1-800-666-3332.

### MARC Bullying Program

Dr. Elizabeth Englander told Wellness Coordinators about the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center program based at Bridgewater State College. The center provides anti-bullying programs for schools and offers other related services, including conferences on a variety of topics. Teachers can also request information on a particular disorder that relates to aggression and how to cope with a child. Dr. Englander said that schools considering an anti-bullying program face many barriers, including cost, union issues, training not being available for support staff, time issues and lack of support from parents and faculty.

"A lot of bullying programs emphasize the target standing up to the bully and saying 'I'm not going to take it anymore,'" said Dr. Englander. "That's a laudable goal, but 99 percent of the time, it's not going to happen. Many programs are one-time things – they come talk to the kids in an assembly, and then they leave. It has to be something ongoing. It has to be in the clubs, in the teams, in the faculty and in the classroom. You have to train everybody – support staff, the lunch ladies, the students."

Dr. Englander noted that one benefit of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center program is that college students work with the kids.

"The belief is that if you want social change for teenagers, it has to come from teenagers," she said. "It cannot come from adults. I use my resources, the students at the center. Having peers talk to the kids makes all the difference in the world."

For information, visit <http://www.bridgew.edu/marc/> or e-mail [MARC@bridgew.edu](mailto:MARC@bridgew.edu).



Left, Karen Nardone speaks as her brother, Eric, looks on.

## Sister Tells “Eric’s Story”

Karen Nardone was on vacation with friends when she got the call that her brother had been in a terrible car crash and was near death.

“As we drove there, I thought please let me have a chance to say goodbye,” she said. “When I got there, I saw my whole family gathered in the lobby and I thought, ‘Dear God, I’m too late.’ We called the priest in, we did last rites and we went in to say goodbye. It was the saddest thing I’ve ever been through.”

Ultimately, her brother Eric survived, but he suffered a long road of pain and heartache and his life has never been the same since. Eric Nardone and his sister Karen shared “Eric’s Story” during the March 11 Wellness Coordinators workshop, describing how Eric’s life was shattered at age 22 by a friend who was driving drunk and speeding. Eric, a 1984 graduate of Newton North High School and a former carpenter, was a passenger in a car driven by a friend who was driving drunk. Eric was critically injured in a crash and was hospitalized for seven and a half months. He has had numerous operations and continues to be in a rehabilitation program involving physical, occupational and speech therapy.

The siblings present a program at high schools, encouraging students to make safe decisions about driving and riding with other drivers, examine their own values and develop a personal safety plan. Typical length of the presentation is 45-60 minutes.

Eric told Wellness Coordinators how he went to a party shortly before he was scheduled to leave for boot camp. Although he didn’t drink, his friends did. After the accident, doctors didn’t think Eric would survive his traumatic brain injuries. He was in a coma for three months and doctors recommended that the family take him off life support.

“Do you know what it’s like spending seven months in a hospital not knowing when you’re going to go home, when you’ll see your friends or your dog again?” Eric asked. “It stinks. I stress the point with kids to not ever take a ride from someone who’s been drinking. Everyone thinks nothing like that can happen to them. It can and it did.”

Karen showed graphic slides of her brother in the hospital and commented that if he had been wearing a seatbelt, his injuries probably wouldn’t have been as life-threatening.

“According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 2003 data, two thirds of teens who were motor vehicle passengers killed in crashes were not wearing seatbelts,” she said. “We can’t reach all the kids, but maybe we’ll reach five, 10, 15 or 20.”

For information visit <http://www.eric-story.org>, or call 508-314-8431.

## Citizenship Days Honor 350 Student-Athletes



The MIAA and Northeastern University’s Center for the Study of Sport in Society presented the Massachusetts Student-Athlete Citizenship Awards in conjunction with National Student-Athlete Day. Awards were

handed out April 5 at Northeastern University’s Blackman Auditorium and April 13 at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield. A total of 350 athletes from 84 schools received awards.

High schools were invited to choose two males and two females who demonstrated leadership through community service, athletic excellence and a minimum 3.0 grade point average.

This year’s theme was “Educating Our Student Leaders,” featuring the

panels “Athletics: Your School, Your Team and Yourself,” “Academics: Focus, Discipline and Time Management,” “Community Service: The Importance of Giving Back,” and “The Pressure to Perform: What’s Behind the Steroid Story.” Ed Berliner and Phil Burton, co-hosts of The Comcast Network’s CN8 Sports Pulse, each hosted one of the awards ceremonies.



From left are Pittsfield High School’s Matthew Jamula and Minnechaug Regional High School’s Vanessa White, two Citizenship Day panelists.

## Bullying Workshop Held

The MIAA and the Anti-Defamation League’s “A World of Difference Institute” co-sponsored the workshop “Becoming An Ally: Interrupting Name-Calling and Bullying,” held March 21 at the MIAA office. More than 50 people attended this Seventh Annual interactive anti-bias workshop designed for middle and high school administrators, teachers, athletic directors, coaches, health and wellness educators.

Facilitator was Rob Jones of the Anti-Defamation League. Despite assertions by the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Justice Department in their report “Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2004” that school violence has declined by 50 percent between 1992 and 2002, the report demonstrates that the number of students impacted by hurtful behaviors from their peers continues at an alarming rate. Seven percent of surveyed students ages 12-18 revealed they had been bullied at school during the previous six months. Twelve percent reported that during the previous six months, someone at school had used hate related words against them because of their race, religion, ethnicity, ability, gender or sexual orientation.

Attendees discussed the cycle of name-calling and bullying, examined the escalating progressive nature of hateful behavior and developed strategies to deal with these issues. Participants who completed a four-hour follow-up action plan after the workshop were entitled to 10 Professional Development Points.

## **MIAA Participates In Faneuil Hall Prevention Event**

Comcast and the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, with assistance from Court TV and CN8, The Comcast Network, hosted a March 22 forum at Faneuil Hall for more than 250 area parents, children, doctors and substance abuse counselors to talk about youth drug abuse issues and the related challenges facing young people in Massachusetts today.

The MIAA participated in the forum, with Mike Kane, Peter Smith and Bob Delisle representing the association at the event. To solicit interest in the forum, the MIAA Student Services Department distributed a memo to Boston area schools, inviting substance-free programs, clubs and groups to participate. The Student Services Department also contacted members of Partners in Prevention, a collaborative group of agencies, organizations, professionals and volunteers who work with youth in Massachusetts.

The MIAA's involvement in the forum came out of an alliance with the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. As a result of this alliance, Massachusetts residents will see and hear anti-drug advertisements on television and radio throughout the Commonwealth. Attached to these ads are the MIAA logo and a toll-free hotline number. The Faneuil Hall forum featured a candid panel and audience discussion about drug abuse prevention, treatment and the importance of communication between parents and teens. More than 21 community organizations from the Greater Boston area participated in the town hall meeting. The forum was part of Comcast's three-year effort to increase exposure of anti-drug messages for the Partnership for a Drug-Free America with \$50 million worth of public service airtime.

To expand the conversation from the forum to the home, Court TV is creating a special that will air nationally on the network and locally on Comcast's On Demand service. CN8 will also air a special one-hour "It's

Your Call with Lynn Doyle" dedicated to the event on CN8, The Comcast Network. Comcast will provide area schools, libraries and Boys & Girls Clubs with educational resource kits addressing this important issue. Comcast will make the forum available On Demand for Digital Cable customers in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Maine this spring.

## **Scoliosis Foundation Supports Area Educators**

School nurses and physical education teachers will find a helpful resource in The National Scoliosis Foundation, a Stoughton-based organization that educates the public about scoliosis treatment and research. Scoliosis, a curvature of the spine, affects an estimated 6 million people in the United States. The primary age of onset is 10-15 years old, occurring equally among both genders. Females are eight times more likely to progress to a curve magnitude that requires treatment. Scoliosis can impact the quality of life with limited activity, pain, reduced respiratory function or diminished self-esteem. Scoliosis patients also have increased health risks due to frequent X-ray exposure.

The National Scoliosis Foundation has opened the Scoliosis Management Alternatives, Research, Treatment and Training Institute (SMARTT) center adjacent to its offices. The center will focus on exploring, developing, teaching and providing suitable detection methods and non-operative interventions for patients.

SMARTT Institute functions include offering postural screening training seminars for school nurses and physical education teachers on a regularly scheduled basis. The center also provides patient education resources and support sessions, as well as conducts patient focus and study groups. On the research and treatment level, the center hosts a variety of alternative programs including yoga, pilates and physical therapy. The institute will utilize a new FDA-approved non-radiographic imaging system, Ortelius800, as a primary tool to safely evaluate and monitor patients. According to the foundation, this system can reduce the number of X-rays that a scoliosis patient needs to a minimum, decreasing the risks of radiation exposure.

"Hopefully we can become an important service point for schools and pediatricians whereby we not only offer a safe method for early detection and monitoring of children, but also an alternative for the traditional 'wait and see' approach," said Joseph O'Brien, president of the foundation. "SMARTT will become a place for enhanced patient education and an opportunity for kids and their families to participate in a positive active intervention program."

For information, visit <http://www.scoliosis.org> or call 781-341-6333.

### **Only Way to Win**

The following individuals and teams received Only Way to Win awards for outstanding sportsmanship. Through the Only Way to Win program, coaches, athletic directors, game officials and school administrators can notify the MIAA about acts of sportsmanship.

Recipients were:

**Stoughton High School Boys Varsity Basketball Team; Allen Huberdeau, Haverhill High School Wrestler; Bart Walsh, Sutton High School Indoor Track; Kate Carlezon and Juliana Tondorf, Scituate High School Girls Varsity Basketball Team.**



**MIAA Web Site**

<http://www.miaa.net>

# Upcoming MIAA Events

## Coaches' Education Dates

**June 11, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.**, West Springfield High School (Preference given to PVIAC)

**June 14 and 16, 4-8 p.m.**, Andover High School, Attendance required both nights for course credits

All participants requesting to attend a clinic must register through the MIAA Office. Athletic directors and/or principals have application forms that are to be returned to the MIAA, or forms may also be downloaded at: <http://www.miaa.net>. Fee for the course is \$105.

**To receive this newsletter electronically, forward your name, title and e-mail address to [miaa@miaa.net](mailto:miaa@miaa.net) and specify “*Building the Future.*”**