

Manhasset Time



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CASA asks ed board for financial aid

*Substance abuse organization to
lose 80% of funding in 2018*

BY MAX ZAHN

The Manhasset Community Coalition Against Substance Abuse, or CASA, last Thursday asked the Manhasset Board of Education to help fill a funding shortfall of almost 80 percent that will hit the group in September 2018 when its federal grant runs out.

The grant currently funds a full-time project coordinator, also known as a prevention provider, who plans and supervises the organization's programming, much of which takes place in Manhasset schools. CASA officials said the anticipated loss of the position is best offset by the district's hiring or funding a replacement to start in the 2018-19 school year.

"We think the best option would be for the Board of Education to fund the position through the district and make it a perma-

nent part of the community," the CASA executive director, Jennifer DeSena, said at the meeting. "You've seen how much we've been able to do under the federal grant since 2008. We want to continue that work."

The group was founded in 2001 but officials from both the organization and the district agreed that its services improved

substantially after receipt of a federal Drug Free Communities grant in 2008. The organization aims to "reduce the

illegal, underage use of alcohol, tobacco, prescription and other drugs among youth," according to its website.

"We saw a quantum leap after 2008," Manhasset Superintendent Charles Cardillo said. "We need to closely examine this as we go through the budget. It's imperative we look at the priority list and see

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BATTER UP



PHOTO BY JAMIE WEISS VIA FACEBOOK

Manhasset High School senior Jamie Weiss, who committed to play baseball at Tufts University.

3 Manhasset H.S. seniors win science research prize

BY MAX ZAHN

When the Regeneron Science Talent Search competition posted its first-round winners online last Wednesday, Kenneth Massetti, the supervisor of

Manhasset High School's social science applicants, was teaching a class.

He received a knock on the door from his mentee Riya Gilja, one of three seniors at Manhasset High School and 58

on Long Island to receive the designation.

"I went outside and congratulated her," he said. "She was very excited."

The two other Manhasset
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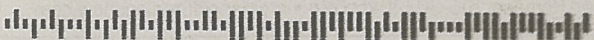
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CASA asks ed board for aid

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where it falls. I can't say enough about [CASA's] efforts and programs."

Because CASA's services are largely preventative, you "can't measure the impact of the benefit internally to these kids who have been affected. That's our responsibility in going through all this," Cardillo added.

CASA officials said the organization plans to alleviate the 2018 shortfall by eliminating its full-time executive director position and cutting some other operational costs. Those cuts will reduce the organization's budget from \$160,000 to \$115,000.

The group will need approximately \$75,000 from the school district to pay a prevention provider as well as additional funds to give the employee health insurance.

The school district currently provides \$25,000 per year to CASA.

The group puts on three assemblies a year at Manhasset schools on the risks of substance abuse. It also provides programming for addiction prevention events at the school like Red Ribbon Week and Drug Facts Week as well as regular parent education gatherings called CASA coffees.

A 2015 study by CASA found

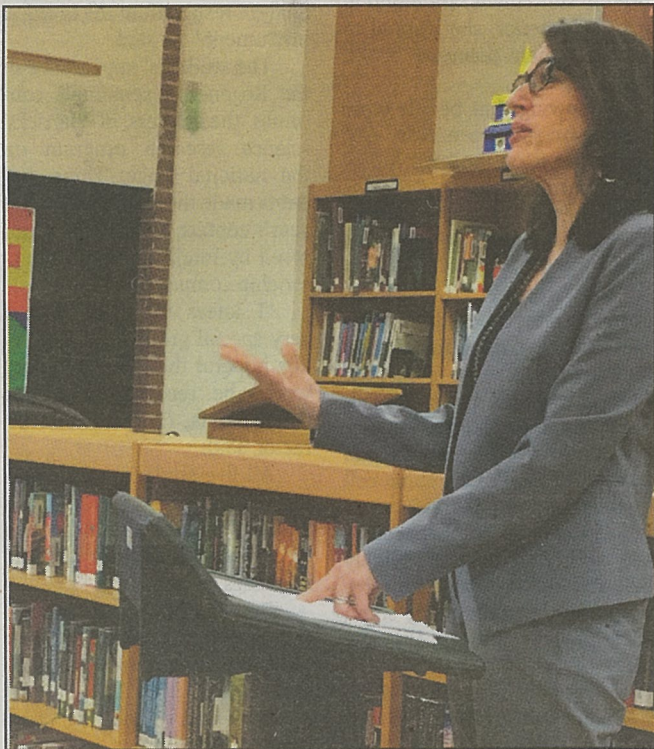
that 65 percent of Manhasset 12th graders reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days. Almost 30 percent of Manhasset 12th graders reported using e-cigarettes or marijuana in the

THE GROUP WILL NEED APPROXIMATELY \$75,000 FROM THE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO PAY A PREVENTION PROVIDER AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO GIVE THE EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE.

past 30 days.

"I hope the community will recognize the importance of a prevention provider because it's prevention that can help us avoid the tragedies we read about in the news," said DeSena, who took over as executive director in November.

"Health and wellness of kids is important," she added. "It's worth something, just like academic performance is worth something. Health and wellness lasts a lifetime."



Manhasset Community Coalition Against Substance Abuse board member Dr. Caryn Sawyer addresses the Manhasset Board of Education.

3 H.S. seniors win science research prize

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High School students recognized were Michael Lee and Parker Van Roy, who were supervised by Alison Huenger, a teacher in the school's science, technology, and health department.

Lee and Van Roy are exceptional students, said Thomas Elkins, the district coordinator for science, health and technology. "They would come in early and leave late," he said. "They're really fine young men."

The contest, formerly sponsored by Intel, recognized 300 first-round winners nationwide, whom it refers to as "scholars."

Forty of the scholars will be named competition finalists later this month. Finalists receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in mid-March, where they compete for a top prize of \$250,000.

Lee and Van Roy received the award for research conducted in the traditional sciences, while Gilja was recognized for a study that drew upon the social sciences.

Massetti said it has been 10 years since Manhasset High School had a social science student recognized in the Science Talent Search. After reading titles of the studies of all 300 of this year's first-round winners, Massetti estimated that just 16 of them concerned social science.

For her study, Gilja examined the American medical profession's slow adoption of new technology available for stents, which are small tubes placed in narrow or weak heart arteries to improve blood flow. She spoke to doctors and patients about their experiences with recently developed forms of the instruments in order to determine why the Food and Drug Administration has been reluctant to grant approval for them.

Lee's study is entitled "MFT: Improving Shallow CNN Object Tracking with Domain-Separated Feeds" and Van



Riya Gilja, one of three Manhasset High School seniors recognized last Wednesday as a Regeneron scholar.

Roy's is called "Differing Forms of Capillaries on Liquid Draw Height and an Expansion upon Young's Law."

Manhasset students who compete in the Regeneron Science Talent Search, and related contests like the Siemens Competition, develop their work in a research course taken every semester of their high school education, Elkins said.

The Siemens competition bases its evaluation solely on a student's research, while the Regeneron Science Talent Search takes into account the student's grades, extracurricular activities and standardized test scores, he added.

"Because [Regeneron] looks at the whole student, we have less control," Elkins said.

For each Regeneron first-round award given, the recipient and his or her school each receive \$2,000 prizes. The Manhasset High School prize money will be split between the science research program and the social science research program.

Elkins said the science research program will invest the winnings in student resources.

"The money will be used to buy equipment, almost exclusively," he said.

Massetti said he had not thought about what the social science research program would do with its prize money, reiterating the tall odds the program's students face.

"It's a labor of love," he said. "You don't do it to win."

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