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**JANUARY, 2024 NORTHPORT/EAST NORTHPORT - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Northport/East Northport Community Drug and Alcohol Task Force Awarded \$900,000 to Expand Vital Services with Local Youth**

Amidst a record-setting drug overdose crisis fueled by a surge in fentanyl deaths that claimed more than 112,000 lives nationally last year, the *Northport/East Northport Community Drug and Alcohol Task Force* (“NENDATF”) has secured a Suffolk County Opiate Settlement Award for \$300,000 per year for three years to support its critical mission of combating substance misuse in area communities. The need persists: as recently as September 2023, SCPD 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct (covering East Northport) reported overdoses are up 40% from last year.

This award will empower NENDATF to expand outreach and engagement to the area’s marginalized and/or underserved and non-English-speaking communities and beyond through parent and youth education workshops, presentations, and innovative bilingual programs.

“We are thrilled to receive this award which will enable us to strengthen our efforts in tackling drug and alcohol use and misuse and mental health issues within our community. We see this grant award as a testament to the dedication and effectiveness of the organization’s prevention work and its commitment to creating a safer, healthier community by addressing complex issues associated with substance use/misuse.” explained taskforce spokesperson Linda Oristano.

“I am deeply honored to accept this prestigious award on behalf of our dedicated team at NENDATF. This recognition is a tribute to our unwavering commitment to combating the devastating impact of drug and alcohol misuse in our communities. Together, we have worked tirelessly to bring hope, healing, and positive change to those affected. This award inspires us to continue our mission with even greater passion and determination,” said NENDATF President, Pastor David Czeisel.

A long-time partner of the taskforce, CN Guidance and Counseling Services (“CN Guidance”), will continue to provide fiscal oversight and support the program administratively to aid NENDATF’s efforts.

“We are so grateful to Suffolk County for committing this much needed support to our ongoing partnership with NENDATF and to help address the effects of opioids and fentanyl on marginalized communities,” said CN Guidance CEO, Jeffrey Friedman.

The award from Suffolk County will fund a variety of NENDATF initiatives aimed to:

1. Prevent adverse outcomes – to reduce the rate of opioid and substance misuse in Northport and East Northport by increasing community education, while promoting skill building among youth.
2. Improve health equity – to engage communities with underserved populations in Northport and East Northport with special emphasis on youth.
3. Sustain safe choices – to build a comprehensive support network that promotes long-term recovery and wellbeing for all youth of Northport and East Northport, minimizing stigma surrounding substance use and misuse.

NENDATF expresses its gratitude to Suffolk County for providing the resources necessary to make a lasting impact. NENDATF remains committed to working collaboratively with community members, organizations, and stakeholders to build a healthier and safer environment for all.

**About NENDATF:** Formed in 2006, the vision of NENDATF is to prevent, educate and protect youth in an alcohol and drug free community. The mission of the taskforce is to prevent and reduce the use and misuse of drugs and alcohol among area youth using a comprehensive approach to engage and educate children, parents and community.

**About CN Guidance:** Serving children and adults with mental and emotional disorders since 1972, CN Guidance delivers NY-State licensed mental health and substance use treatment services. With deep, localized knowledge of Long Island communities, a mobile fleet, and telehealth capabilities, CN Guidance maintains an exemplary track record of delivering outreach and high-quality behavioral healthcare to more than 30,000 individuals per year.