

# THE Heritage Society



## A PROMISE TO THE FUTURE

Our vision is a world that is a community free of alcohol and other drug addiction, misuse, and related problems. Commitment to upstream prevention education, early intervention, and comprehensive community support is a promise to our community's young people and future generations that we will not stop fighting for a better world for them.

A planned gift to PreventEd ensures that a cause you believe in always has your support. Join the Heritage Society with a planned gift to pave the way for a better tomorrow.

For more information about legacy giving, contact Mike Foley at [mfoley@prevented.org](mailto:mfoley@prevented.org).



## Join our motley crew.

PreventEd is all about people. We care about the people we serve, and we care about each other. Our employees are passionate, professional, and serious about providing innovative and critical services and programs. That said, it's worth noting, we appreciate a good sense of humor! We are looking for teammates who are all about people, passionate about their work, and fun to be around.

View and apply for available positions at [prevented.org/about/employment/](https://prevented.org/about/employment/)



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## conversation starters

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## Hear Us

By Emily Wilkerson



As spring rolled around, the excitement for Hear Us was growing. Hear Us is an annual youth advocacy training and trip hosted by ElevatEd Youth Coalition, a group of area teens who are passionate about preventing substance misuse among their peers. Participants were trained in a variety of topics including advocacy 101, current

alcohol, cannabis, and nicotine data, and more. It culminated in an overnight trip to Jefferson City to meet with their local legislators to discuss policies important to the teen. It was a great activity for kids passionate about politics, who wanted to learn more about the prevention world, or who wanted to take

a trip to explore a new topic. Participants reported feeling \more confident communicating with legislators and peers about issues that are important to them and that they can see that advocacy can make an impact on their community. In addition, the teens made connections with their fellow participants, creating a network of youth leaders from schools all around the region. Teens left feeling more competent, confident, and knowing that their voice is important. Young people will change the political landscape in the years to come and Hear Us can be a part of their story. ElevatEd invites any high-school-aged teens of all backgrounds, passions, and experience levels to join Hear Us or the coalition.

For more information about ElevatEd Youth Coalition or Hear Us, check out [prevented.org/programs/elevated](https://prevented.org/programs/elevated)



### UPCOMING TRAININGS

PreventEd continues to provide our regular roster of trainings virtually. For more information, visit: [prevented.org/events](https://prevented.org/events)

# conversation starters

SPRING 2024

The newsletter of PreventEd

## In the Weeds

By Nichole Dawsey



Nichole Dawsey  
Executive Director

Over one year ago, Missouri voters legalized adult use cannabis. As I have written about here, PreventEd's phone immediately began ringing with calls from concerned parents, business owners, elected officials, and school administrators. Questions about how to navigate the legality of cannabis, while at the same time protecting youth, are nothing new for us at PreventEd. What is new, however, are the seemingly insurmountable hurdles that the legalization, and more detrimentally, the commercialization has created.

So what are we doing about it?

Because we are, first and foremost, a prevention agency, we are continuing to go on the offensive. Our school-based prevention programs are nearly back to pre-pandemic levels. Requests for cannabis and vaping education (beginning in 5th grade) far outweigh other primary prevention requests from area schools. We are harnessing the power of peers through our high school cannabis peer education program, aptly named "It's Complicated." Results from a randomized control trial demonstrate statistically significant increases in knowledge and perception of harm among the peer teachers and the students receiving the peer-taught lessons. With local funding, PreventEd staff are currently implementing It's Complicated throughout the eastern region. Because the demand is great, but funding is scarce, we are working hard to find funding to implement the peer program statewide.

Further downstream, PreventEd's GuidEd program has exploded in the wake of the cannabis legalization. During one evening in January, we welcomed 23 high schoolers at an educational workshop. These are 23 young people who have started experimenting with substances (overwhelmingly cannabis) and have started experiencing difficulties at home and school as a result.

In the last several months, a handful of local middle and high schools have made the news for unfortunate reasons. Cannabis edibles and vape cartridges brought onto school property have led to overdoses (not deaths) and "greening out" incidents, sending young people to the hospital. In those instances, the local media has contacted PreventEd, so that we can prevent future incidents, educate the public about the marketing tactics employed by Big Cannabis, and direct families to our Talk About It website ([talkaboutitmo.com](https://talkaboutitmo.com)).

And speaking of websites, we know we must do more. Our region, and the entire state, is hungry for a fact-based, non-judgmental clearinghouse of resources and talking points to confidently have conversations with young people. To that end, we have engaged Magnetize, a marketing agency, to develop a public health messaging campaign called "In the Weeds." Funding challenges have delayed this initiative, but we are resolute in our efforts to bring this to our region's families, and to families across the state. Stay tuned for the campaign's rollout in the coming months!

What else can we be doing to lean into our mission of prevention and education in this space? Got ideas, "complicated" or otherwise? Please contact me at [ndawsey@prevented.org](mailto:ndawsey@prevented.org).



Because we are, first and foremost, a prevention agency, we are continuing to go on the offensive.



# Celebrating 50 Years of Impact: PreventEd's Spring Awards Luncheon

We are thrilled to announce the milestone 50th Annual Spring Awards Luncheon hosted by PreventEd, scheduled to take place on Friday, April 26, 2024, at the Hilton – St. Louis Frontenac. This special event aligns with Alcohol and Drug Awareness month, serving as a testament to five decades of unwavering commitment in combating substance use disorder in the St. Louis Region.

## WHY ATTEND?

This year's luncheon promises to be a commemoration like no other, honoring individuals, organizations, and community partners who have played pivotal roles in shaping a substance-free community. As we mark this significant milestone, we invite you to join us in celebrating the impactful strides made over the last 50 years.

## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES: MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

We extend a warm invitation to organizations and individuals to become sponsors, contributing to the success of this momentous event. Various sponsorship levels are available, each offering unique benefits, including VIP tables, prominent ad placements, and recognition across all media platforms. Your support will not only highlight your commitment to a substance-free community but also position your brand prominently in front of a diverse and engaged audience.

## HOW TO ATTEND

Individuals interested in attending the luncheon can purchase tickets directly on our website. Your presence will not only contribute to the success of PreventEd's largest fundraising event in 2024, but also be a testament to your commitment to a substance free community.

Don't miss the opportunity to be part of this historic celebration. Let's come together on April 26, 2024, at the Hilton – St. Louis Frontenac, and make a lasting impact on substance use disorder awareness in the St. Louis Region.

For sponsorship inquiries and ticket purchases, visit [prevented.org/event/50th-annual-spring-awards-luncheon](https://prevented.org/event/50th-annual-spring-awards-luncheon)



Scan the QR code to purchase your tickets today!



## Keynote Speaker

**Donny Fandango**

105.7 The Point and 106.5 The Arch Radio Personality

## 2024 Spring Award Recipients

### PIONEER AWARD

**LEAN STL**

Laborer's Union Peer Support Program

### GATEWAY AWARD

**St. Louis on the Air**

### SERVICE AWARD

**Scenic Regional Library**

### VOLUNTEER AWARD

**Easterseals Midwest**

### HOWARD POTRATZ ALUMNI LEADERSHIP AWARD

**Beth Elders**

Executive Director of the American Red Cross, Greater St. Louis Chapter

### TASCH-KOPOLOW SCHOLARSHIP

**Ben Leach**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit our website for the most up-to-date event information and registration: [prevented.org/events](https://prevented.org/events)

# Vending Machines - An Answer to Community Narcan Access

By Alicia Smith

The community has spoken and PreventEd listened! The lifesaving overdose drug – Narcan – should be conveniently available around-the-clock in order to save lives. Community coalitions and partners researched the idea of vending machines to meet this need.



“We need this here and don't let anyone try to talk you out of keeping it.”

-FRANKLIN COUNTY RESIDENT

Grant funding supported the purchase of three machines for placement in Franklin County. In October, these machines were placed in Union at the Franklin County Resource Center; at the St. Clair branch of the Scenic Regional Library; and at Mercy Hospital in Washington. Each machine holds 150 boxes (300 doses)

of Narcan. Since the machines have been installed, over 1,200 boxes have been distributed within the community through vending machines. There is one documented case of a life being saved by the medication received from the dispenser.

A fourth machine was purchased in November and placed outside of PreventEd's main office in St. Louis County. In addition to Narcan, this particular machine also offers intra-muscular naloxone with syringes and fentanyl and xylazine test strips – all completely free of charge.

# Helen B. Madden Award Nominations

The Helen B. Madden Award is given to individuals in the seven county region of Eastern Missouri (St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles, Jefferson, Franklin, Lincoln, and Warren counties) working professionally in the counseling, Certified Peer Specialist (CPS), Certified Alcohol and Drug Counseling (CADC) or related fields addressing and treating substance use disorders.

Helen was a pioneer in addiction in St. Louis and worked for NCADA (now PreventEd) from 1965 until her death in 1976. Since 1977, the award has been presented to a local counseling professional that has dedicated themselves to the field.



Do you know someone who deserves recognition for exemplary work in the field of alcohol and drug misuse?

If so, let us know! Scan the QR code to nominate them for the 2024 Helen B. Madden Award by April 8th.



# 10th Annual Legislative Forum

By Kim Rodriguez

PreventEd's 10th Annual Legislative Forum on Friday, February 9th was full of engaging conversation! Elected officials in the eastern region served as panelists during this policy-oriented conversation. Six legislators were able to share their priorities and speak about substance-related issues. Nearly 80 community members were in attendance to ask questions and raise concerns to the legislators. A special thank you to Senator Tracy McCreery, Senator Doug Beck, Senator Brian Williams, Representative Deb Lavender, Representative Wendy Hausman, and Representative Brad Christ for attending.

# New Leadership for the New Year

We're thrilled to announce that 2024 brings two new presidents! Tom Etling, CEO and founder of ESP, is now the President of our Board of Directors, and Larisa Malley, Nonprofit Development Consultant at CCS Fundraising, is now the President of the Young Professionals of PreventEd!

Both Tom and Larisa have been strong supporters and good friends of the agency for years, and we're excited to work with both of them in their new capacities!



Tom Etling, President of Board of Directors



Larisa Malley, President of the Young Professionals of PreventEd