

Rochester, NY – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) today announced \$250,000 in awards to Western New York organizations aimed at combating and preventing youth drug use.

The HEART Coalition for a Drug-Free Rochester and Community Action of Orleans and Genesee each received a \$125,000 grant through the Drug Free Communities Support Program (DFC) of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). The two organizations distinguished themselves through a competitive, peer-reviewed process that saw a total of 87 new grantees selected from 452 applicants.

"Early education is really so vital to preventing and reducing incidents of drug abuse among our youth," said Slaughter. "The good work done by the people of the HEART Coalition and Community Action of Orleans and Genesee helps our youth to stay on the path to becoming productive citizens. I'm so pleased to see our Western New York organizations receive this funding to continue their tireless work to reduce substance abuse."

To qualify, awardees must have at least a six-month history of working together on substance abuse reduction initiatives, have representation from 12 specific sectors of the community, develop a long-term plan to reduce substance abuse, and participate in the national evaluation of the DFC program.

"The HEART Coalition for a Drug-Free Rochester is thrilled to be able to receive yet another year of funding from the Drug-free Communities Grant," said Director Kristina Heiligenthaler. "We are looking forward to continue our work providing Rochester's young people and their families with information and resources that will help them to live a healthier, substance free lifestyle. We are especially excited to continue to highlight the real truth about Rochester youth with our "Be Proud, Join the Crowd" campaign, which uses Youth Risk Behavior Survey data to show that the majority of our city's youth are living healthy lifestyles. In the upcoming year, we look forward to getting more people involved in our initiatives and spreading the message that our youth really are on the right track."

The DFC program was created by the Drug Free Communities Act of 1997, and was reauthorized by Congress in 2001 and 2006. Since 1998, ONDCP has awarded approximately 2,000 Drug-Free Communities grants to local communities in all 50 states.