

Letter: Community makes Drug Store Project a success

To the community,

So, how did you spend your day? I spent mine with the most amazing group of people who care about our youth. I am humbled by the amount of work and effort provided by so many community members, our service clubs, and agencies that serve the Lake Tahoe area.

On March 29, we had our 13th annual Drug Store Project at the campus of Lake Tahoe Community College. This is a comprehensive anti-drug and alcohol program for our sixth-grade youth. It takes a lot of people and resources to make this event occur. To each and every person involved; I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Not sure why, but this year's event was met with more challenges, yet as the day concluded, it proved to be the most powerful.

Our kids are faced with so much these days; our families are under more stress. Drugs and alcohol for many are seen as a fix. It is our belief that they are not. The message to our youth is simple; the choices they make will ultimately be theirs. They have the choice to ignore negative peer pressure when something doesn't feel right. They have the choice to choose the direction they want to take their lives. They have the choice to let adults know when they need help with tough situations. They have the choice not to get involved with drugs and alcohol.

Drugs and alcohol are a problem. They are a problem for our kids and a problem in our community. The adults at our program kept a close tab on our youth throughout the day. We could visibly see the many who struggle because the information we

are talking about is something they know too well. Many have siblings, parents, and people they love whom use and abuse. We make it very clear to our kids that good people can make bad choices. We want them to stop and think before acting.

As I sit here and think of what the day was like, I am overwhelmed with the passion everyone shared that day. On behalf of the kids, I thank you. The hope is that the parents of youth that attended our event will begin to openly discuss drugs and alcohol. We know that many of you do because your kids tell us so. Our message to you is to keep it up. Learn together what the problems are in our community. Learn from the vast amount of information on the Internet. Learn together.

Trust me when I say no family is safe from the pain of losing a child to drugs and alcohol; no one. This is a problem that crosses all spectrums in our society. Don't be complacent. I've been in prevention for more than 30 years and I've learned something: drugs and alcohol will always be a problem if we are unable to change the choices of our kids. Our 14th annual Drug Store Project will be on April 4, 2017, at LTCC. If you would like to volunteer, you may sign up now and I'll be in touch. Simply go **online**.

I'd like to share with you the many who made March 30 possible: Atwater DSP, Barton Health, Barton Health Foundation, California Conservation Corps, California Highway Patrol, Calstar, Douglas County Search and Rescue, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, El Dorado Community Foundation, El Dorado County District Attorney's Office, El Dorado County Mental Health, El Dorado County Probation, El Dorado County Public Health, El Dorado County Search and Rescue, El Dorado County Sheriff's Office, El Dorado County Sheriff's Office-STARS, El Dorado County Superior Court, Harrah's Harveys Lake Tahoe Foundation/H.E.R.O.s, Joint Task Force Domestic Support-CD, Kiwanis Club of Lake Tahoe, Kiwanis Club of Tahoe Sierra, Lake Tahoe Community College, Lake Tahoe Resort Hotel,

Heavenly, Lake Valley Fire Protection District, Lake Valley Fire Fighters Association, McFarlane Mortuary, NAS Fallon, Optimist Club of Lake Tahoe, Pro Leisure, Rotary Club of South Lake Tahoe, SLEDNET, Soroptimist International of Tahoe Sierra, South Lake Tahoe Fire Department, South Lake Tahoe Police Department, SLTPD Explorers, SLTPD K9, South Lake Tahoe Police Officers Association, South Tahoe Drug Free Coalition, South Tahoe High School, South Tahoe Middle School, Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, Tahoe Douglas Rotary Club, Tahoe Turning Point, and Tahoe Youth & Family Services.

Lisa Huard, Drug Store Project