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**BARRY GLASSMAN**  
HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE



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DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Winners Announced in Harford County's Anti-Heroin Video Competition for Youth; Top  
Entries Debut in Local Movie Theaters June 30**

**BEL AIR, Md.,** (June 29, 2017) - "How would you keep your friends from abusing drugs?" Winners in Harford County's video competition for youth answered that question in gripping public service announcements set to debut in local movie theaters on June 30. The video competition invited young people ages 11 - 18 to create 30-second videos warning their peers about the devastating impact of heroin and other drugs. Developed by the county's Office of Drug Control Policy under the Dept. of Community Services, the competition was created to build a library of peer-to-peer messages that will resonate with youth, a sometimes-elusive age group. Peer-to-peer messaging is recommended by experts in the field of addiction and by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan's Heroin Task Force.

"The response to our video competition was overwhelming," Amber Shrodes, director of Harford County Community Services, said. "As the deadline approached a steady stream of videos came pouring in, each with thought-provoking, poignant messaging. We were very impressed by the caliber of the entries."

The winning video, entitled "Drugs Shatter," was produced by Emily Dietz, 18 years old at the time of the contest, and her sister Allison Dietz, 15. It featured their younger brothers Benjamin Dietz, 10, and William Dietz, 5, and family friend Jared Richard, 18. With their heartbreaking

video, Emily and Allison wanted to convey how drug abuse hurts families and friends. Emily will attend Towson University this fall. Allison is home-schooled and taking classes at Harford Community College. Their winning PSA will debut in Harford County's Regal and Horizon theaters Friday, June 30 and run through July.

Fallston Middle School students Brennan Steffes, 13, and Charlie Perri, 13, produced the second place video entitled "Charlie." An adaptation of their PSA will run in theaters in August through September 2017.

Towson University student Ben Toppi, 18, produced the third place winning entry entitled "Know the Signs of Drug Abuse" with assistance from Cora Solle, 18, a student at Community College of Baltimore County and Fallston High School students Mark Neil, 17, Jeremy Haney, 17, Ryan Brown, 15, Hannah Pugecheski, 15, Liam Arnold, 15, and Brayden Piccolo-Klein, 18.

All three winning entries can be found on the county website at <http://bit.ly/2u9hFsB>, on YouTube at <http://bit.ly/2tdexyY>, and on the Office of Drug Control Policy's Facebook page @HCODCP.

APG Federal Credit Union sponsored the competition and provided gift cards to the winners, \$500 for first place, \$250 for second, and \$100 for third.

"We were pleased to partner with Harford County government's Office of Drug Control Policy on this meaningful effort," Brian Wilcox, chief marketing officer for APG Federal Credit Union, said. "Supporting programs that help youth remove negative influences from their lives is in line with our mission to build stronger families for a stronger community."

Other partners in the video contest included Harford County public schools, libraries, the sheriff's office, health department, and PTAs.

"I would like to thank all of our partners and especially the young videographers who entered our competition," County Executive Barry Glassman said. "By lifting their voices among their peers, they have mobilized a powerful force against the scourge of heroin and other drugs in Harford County."

Last summer, the Glassman administration developed public service announcements shown in local theaters to help bridge the “summer gap” in countywide drug prevention messaging. That campaign reached an estimated 170,000 moviegoers.

If you, or someone you know, is struggling with addiction, contact the Harford County Office of Drug Control Policy for more information at 410-638-3333, online at <http://bit.ly/2sUjg6g> or on Facebook @HCODCP.



*Pictured from left, back row: Charlie Perri; Brian Wilcox, Chief Marketing Officer, APG Federal Credit Union; Barry Glassman, Harford County Executive; Emily Dietz and Allison Dietz; front row: Brennan Steffes; William Dietz; and Benjamin Dietz.*

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