



The Hudson Community Foundation and Hudson Community First announce the hiring of Jamie Messenger, who will occupy the position of **drug and alcohol community outreach specialist**.

The primary responsibilities for Messenger, who began in a part-time role Jan. 3, include the establishment of positive and responsible relationships with various community organizations and resources to better assist those who are living, working and going to school in Hudson with drug and alcohol concerns.

“We believe this new position will help those in Hudson confronting addiction concerns by developing community outreach activities as well as connections to meet prevention, crisis, treatment and rehabilitation needs,” said Mayor David Basil.

Messenger, who will ultimately be employed by Cover2 Resources, will facilitate the Drug Safe Hudson Coalition and represent Hudson on the Summit County Opiate Task Force to stay current on available resources and research best practices implemented by other communities.

Lori McCleese, president of HCF, said the hiring process began last June, when HCF and Hudson Community First decided to assemble a group of local representatives in order to delve into the drug and alcohol issues affecting Hudson.

“A number of organizations were involved in the recruitment and hiring of this position, including members of Christ Community Chapel, Hudson City Schools, the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office, Hudson Community First, Cover2 Resources and the Summit County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board,” said McCleese.

The position is being funded by HCF and Hudson Community First, both dedicated to providing support to the Hudson community and reinforcing the need for this role.

“We are thrilled to be able to fund this position with the monies raised from the 2017 Toast to Hudson event,” said Laura Gasbarro, co-executive director of Hudson Community First. “We hope it makes a great difference in our community and provides people with the right person to reach out to in order to receive assistance.”

Messenger also works as the program coordinator for Oriana House in Akron, which is a nationally renowned chemical dependency treatment and community corrections agency. She has also worked as a resident supervisor and lead caseworker for Oriana House.

Messenger will ultimately be an employee of Cover2 Resources and collaborate with an advisory group who assisted the hiring process, plus several other community members.

“With the hiring of this position, we will have someone who is 100 percent dedicated to creating a collaborative approach to planning, coordinating and evaluating anti-drug efforts in Hudson,” said McCleese.

While there is already a multitude of programs and resources currently available for people in Hudson who suffer from alcohol and drug issues, Messenger's position was created to better facilitate the ov

"Hudson is a wonderful community, but we are not immune to the drug and alcohol issues that are so prevalent in today's society," said McCleese. "There was a general feeling from the group that we can do better for our residents and our community."

"We are fortunate in our community to have schools, charities, churches, social service organizations and city government that recognize that we all play a crucial role in preventing substance abuse and in offering support and assistance to those struggling with addiction," added Superintendent of the Hudson City School District Phillip Herman. "With so many organizations and individuals working to address the challenges, it will be very helpful to have someone in a position that pulls all of us in the same direction."

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