Super Bowl LI, NCADA III

NCADA Public Service Announcement will debut during 2017 Super Bowl

For the third consecutive year, NCADA will use the Super Bowl as a vehicle to bring attention to the regional opioid epidemic. This year’s ads will not mention heroin, but will instead focus on prescription pain medication and the importance of storing it safely.

While the safe storage of pills may not sound like a compelling subject, we intend to deliver, once again, a powerful message that will do more than just shock or anger viewers: we believe the ads will incite people to make a simple but effective change that will save lives.

This year, the DEA360 Strategy is purchasing the Super Bowl airtime for NCADA. The DEA’s significant financial investment in and sponsorship of NCADA’s efforts further demonstrate their commitment to raise awareness, engage the community, and do everything they can to reduce the demand for, and the misuse of, prescription opioids and heroin.

And for the third consecutive year, the team of Mark Schupp and Scott Ferguson will produce and direct the ads.

Watch for them. One, sometime late in the first quarter. The other, just after halftime.

First responders receive opioid overdose training

On November 28, NCADA hosted the first MO-HOPE training for first responders. The training included information on recognizing opioid overdose and instruction on using Narcan (naloxone), the opioid overdose reversal drug.

MO-HOPE (Missouri Opioid-Heroin Overdose Prevention & Education) is a collaboration between the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Missouri Department of Mental Health, NCADA, and the Missouri Institute for Mental Health at the University of Missouri–St. Louis.
Grass, feed, and drugs

Less than a month after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, anonymous letters laced with anthrax spores began arriving at media companies and congressional offices. Over the ensuing months, 22 people were infected by anthrax and five of them died. The White House asked Congress to appropriate $643 million for the purchase of Cipro, a powerful antibiotic effective in the treatment of anthrax exposure. The president wanted enough to treat 12 million people for 60 days in the event of a broader bioterrorism attack.

Of course, Cipro isn’t just used to prevent death from anthrax. It’s used to treat infections like prostatitis or sinusitis. It’s a weapon against Campylobacter, a bacterium that causes food poisoning and can lead to chronic problems such as Guillain-Barre and reactive arthritis. Campylobacter infects 2.4 million Americans and, without antibacterial treatment, can be fatal.

Since 1996, an antibiotic quite similar to Cipro has been used in poultry to enable huge industrialized farms to produce chicken and turkey at the lowest possible prices. Similarly, cows receive antibiotics so that they can survive on a diet of corn (something cows were not designed to digest) while standing immobile—shoulder to shoulder with thousands of other animals in a sea of their own waste.

Global sales of antibiotics exceed $45 billion, and today, nearly 70% of all antibiotics sold in the U.S. are used in livestock. The market for continuing to give these drugs to animals is enormous and the biggest beneficiaries are not cows or chickens or the millions of Americans who eat them. The only winners here are the most dominant agricultural and pharmaceutical companies.

As the use of Cipro and other antibiotics has become more widespread in animal feed, bacteria have increasingly found ways of becoming resistant to them. Death from antibiotic-resistant infections is becoming a public health crisis big enough to involve the CDC, the WHO and the presidents of a dozen Western countries. This man-made health crisis should sound familiar.

The explosion in the number of opioid prescriptions written by doctors followed the exact same basic pattern, with similarly disastrous results: Use led to overuse led to untoward consequences led to a public health emergency. It is mystifying how we, as a country, can be so naive that we repeatedly allow drug companies to kill or addict us. How we fail to recognize that, while they are generally full of deceit, ethical, hard-working individuals, corporations become sociopathic in their insatiable need for profitability.

One of the worst examples is Purdue-Pharma. In the mid-1990s, Purdue apparently thought it insufficient that its then new and powerful opioid, OxyContin, proved helpful in end-stage cancer patients. The patients did not have long to live, so the risk of addiction was irrelevant. The drug improved the quality of patients’ remaining days, but the marketplace was small. So Purdue turned OxyContin into a money-machine by finding new patients. The patients did not have long to live, every year, tens

of thousands die or lose everything to a drug they probably never should have been prescribed and while communities across the country lay in waste due to the opioid crisis, big Pharma prospers.

The same big Pharma that brings narcotics to the masses has helped make pork, beef and poultry cheaper than ever by encouraging the overuse of antibiotics in animal feed. Unfortunately, the consequence of cheap food is (oops) the global threat of mass death due to antibiotic-resistant infections. Thanks to big Pharma and Big Agriculture, the Cipro that was, in 2001, our last line of defense against a bioterrorist attack or a fairly common infection, won’t save us today.

And in saying all of this, I have buried the lead.

There are those who believe that the war on drugs has failed. That it now makes sense to legalize everything (or at least marijuana) and introduce another legally marketed, legally purchased drug to the American economy.

Illegal drugs are a problem in this country; they ruin lives and come with terrible social costs. The war against them has terrible unintended consequences and has damaged almost as many lives as the illegal molecules themselves.

But make no mistake: it’s the legal drugs, manufactured and marketed by huge corporations in epic quantities that destroy lives and put whole countries at risk.

If a national, legal marijuana marketplace enables corporations to sell us an endless amount of marijuana, grown on an industrial scale, we’ll see lower prices, stronger and more addictive products that will be marketed aggressively and, inevitably, we’ll see a few unintended consequences. In other words, legalization of marijuana should not be the primary focus of our concerns. It is, rather, the commercialization of legal marijuana that will, invariably, lead to highly undesirable outcomes. It happened with pharmaceuticals, with tobacco, with beer and spirits, and even with sugar. And it’ll happen with marijuana, because our free market takes no prisoners on the way to increasing profits and market share.

If we pay attention or, in a few years, we’ll be saying “oops” again. rwessman@ncada-stl.org, or (314) 962-3456 (unless otherwise noted in the event listing).

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POSTPONED PRESENTATIONS

- Jan, 2011 – Ladell Flowers: Missouri Coalition of Recovery Support Providers: Organizational Overview and Member Benefits
- Feb. 8 – Darcy Gleidwee: The Next Step Financial Support for Education Opportunities in the Recovery Community
- Mar. 8 – Richard Grucza: Trends in Substance Use, Crime, and Other “Problem Behaviors” Among Adolescents
- Apr. 12 – Shaina Sowles: Health Risk Behavior on Social Media: Marijuana
- May 10 – Michelle Roberts: Applying Health Literacy Principles and Practices in a Substance Use and Treatment Context

The Coalition on Addictions (COA) meets the second Wednesday of each month (except December) – 1:00 at NCADA, 2005 Olive Blvd. in Olivette. No RSVP is required. Lunch is provided. Join us for an hour of learning and conversation for $5.00. COA is a service of NCADA and the Community Academic Partnership on Addictions (CAPA) an affiliate organization of Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis.

St. Louis County Coalition on Addictions
Once again, it’s time to make New Year’s resolutions. For some, it’s to eat healthier or lose weight, and for many of us this is the year to exercise regularly and get into shape. Well, NCADA can help jump-start your motivation, and get you to your New Year’s goals!

NCADA is proud to be a charity partner in the 2017 GO! St. Louis Marathon and Family Fitness Weekend on April 8 & 9. When you participate with Team NCADA, you can raise funds and help us work toward a community free from the harms of substance use. Why not start training for a half or full marathon (or maybe something a little shorter) and support a great cause at the same time? Members of Team NCADA receive:

- A link for easy online registration with a special code for a discounted registration fee!
- Team NCADA swag!
- A personal webpage for convenient online fundraising.
- Tools to help you reach your personal goal.

Register today at gostlouis.org and choose your challenge: Marathon, Half Marathon, Marathon Relay Team (four person), 7K, or 5K.

Come 2017, the SPIRIT program will celebrate its 10th year in the Ritenour school district. SPIRIT – School-based Intervention and Resources Initiative – is a substance use prevention project sponsored by the Missouri Department of Mental Health’s Division of Behavioral Health.

SPIRIT was launched to improve school performance by preventing the use of alcohol and other drugs, and reducing incidents of violence. There are four SPIRIT sites in Missouri; Ritenour – which includes six elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school – is the only one in the St. Louis area. An NCADA prevention educator is assigned to each Ritenour school, delivering the SPIRIT lessons and collaborating with the principals, counselors, and teachers throughout the year. Students in the Ritenour district begin SPIRIT in 3rd grade and continue the program through high school. The lessons build on the knowledge acquired by students in their previous years of SPIRIT.

Here’s what students have to say about SPIRIT:

- “The SPIRIT program has taught me how to stay away from harmful things like drugs. It’s taught me how to handle peer pressure.”
- “SPIRIT made me stop smoking.”
- “It teaches me to be calmer and to live a healthy life.”
- “Think before you do and don’t get caught up with people who don’t benefit you in a good way.”

With generous support from the Missouri Division of Behavioral Health and the Ritenour School District, we have been able to provide a comprehensive program that develops skills and promotes healthy behaviors. NCADA is proud of our 10-year partnership with Ritenour, and we look forward to working together for years to come.

A self-esteem handout, completed by a 5th grader at Marion Elementary.

Do you know someone who deserves recognition for exemplary work in the field of substance use disorder? If so, let us know!

The Helen B. Madden Memorial Award is presented in April at NCADA’s Spring Awards Luncheon. Helen was a pioneer in the local addiction field and worked for NCADA from 1965 until her death in 1976. Since 1977, the award has been presented to a local professional who has dedicated himself or herself to this field.

A nominee must be currently employed as an addiction practitioner, and be passionate, knowledgeable and dedicated to helping those who suffer from addiction disease.

Submit nominations online at ncada-stl.org. All nominations must be received by March 20, 2017.

A big “Thank You” to two new partners

On November 7, we held our first annual Heroine Awareness & Remembrance Dinner, a “dine out” event created by Rich and Terri LoRusso of LoRusso’s Cucina. Nearly 100 guests joined us, each bringing their own story about how our region’s opioid epidemic has affected their lives and the lives of those they love.

Though primarily an awareness-raising event and an opportunity to honor the memory of those lost to this epidemic, proceeds went towards supporting our ongoing Curiosity+Heroin campaign. Huge thanks to the LoRussos, and stay tuned for details on the 2017 Remembrance Dinner, set for November 6. Save the date!

Our friends at Kendra Scott, Plaza Frontenac, held a Kendra Gives Back event on December 9, with 20% of all evening sales donated to NCADA. The company was founded with the idea to give back to the community. Simply by buying their holiday gifts (or splurging on themselves), shoppers were also supporting NCADA programs and services.
Tributes and contributions

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INDIVIDUALS
Elizabeth Marie Sneed
Base Funeral Home Co.
John and Julianna Desmuke
James and Heather Huggett

TRIBUTES
Bobette Figler
Patrick and Daina Kinlen


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