

THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

# RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 154

Approved April 17, 1989

WHEREAS, Providence Firefighters Local 799 has been selected as the third city in the country to institute the "Better Things to Do" Drug Abuse Education Program for inner city youths, and

WHEREAS, Providence is the first city on the East Coast to be given this opportunity, and

WHEREAS, This program will allow students to air their concerns and problems and will open the line of communication between the Group and their parents,

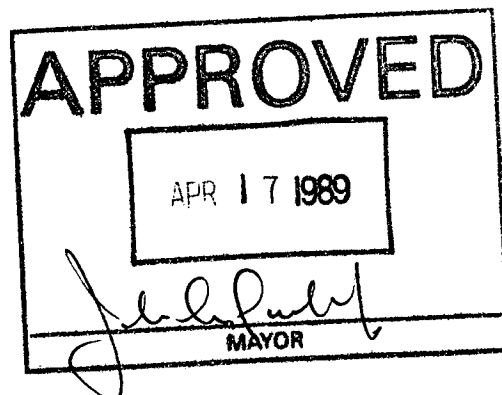
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the members of The Providence City Council hereby endorse the "Better Things to Do" Drug Abuse Education Program for inner city youths and extend their best wishes that this worthy cause be a great success.

IN CITY COUNCIL  
APR - 6 1989

READ AND PASSED

PRES.

CLERK



Guinalupua Brazil and Council  
President Easton and members of the City Council

# PROVIDENCE FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 799

## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

### • OFFICERS

STEPHEN T. DAY  
President

FRANK T. BROTHERS  
Vice President

Scott G. Mello  
Secretary/Treasurer



### Affiliations

American Federation of Labor and C.I.O.  
Canadian Labour Congress  
Rhode Island State Federation of Labor  
Providence Central Federated Council

### • OFFICE

FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL HALL  
90-92 Printery Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02904  
(401) 272-7999

March 16, 1989

Carolyn F. Brassil  
Chairwoman Finance Committee  
93 Governor Street  
Providence, R.I. 02906

Dear Mrs. Chairwoman:

Providence Firefighters Local 799, have been selected as the third city in the country to institute the "Better Things To Do" Drug Abuse Education Program for inner city youths.

Providence is the first city on the East Coast to be given such an opportunity to get involved with this program. We feel it is an excellent opportunity for you as Chairwoman of the Finance Committee and other members of the City Council that we have selected to get involved in such a public program.

Living in the City all your life, we are sure that you have seen the problems that drug abuse can cause. One of our Union Officers, Scott Mello grew up in Fox Point and he wants to make sure that it is one of the areas of the city that can be helped by such a program is where he spent his childhood.

The publicity for public officials throughout the country who have gotten involved in the program has been tremendous. We want to work with the City Council to rid this great City of the horrible problem of Drug Abuse.

Enclosed please find a complete package of materials. There is also in the package of material our own Local 799 outline of how we would like to see our program function.

We will meet with you at any time to discuss the whole program with you. We trust you will be willing to join us in this worthy cause.

Sincerely,  
*Stephen T. Day*  
Stephen T. Day, President  
International Firefighters  
Local 799

STD/sgm

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## B E T T E R   T H I N G S   T O   D O

**SPONSORED BY:** LOCAL 799, PROVIDENCE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

**PARTICIPANTS:** The program will be graded to the Junior High School Level. The Group of approximately 15 students, will be specially selected by the principal and counselors at each school.

**STAFF:** Principal and Counselor's from each respective school will aid approximately 15 Providence Firefighters.

All Firefighters will receive formal training from the Drug Education Center, in conjunction with ...

### G O A L S ! ! !

1. To provide a positive role model to Jr. High School Students.
2. To provide some alternatives to drug and alcohol use.
3. To have some parent involvement
4. To help reduce drop out rate.

**CURRICULUM:** The BETTER THINGS GROUP will meet 1 hour weekly during the school year.

The counselors will decide the topics and meet with the Firefighters before and after each session.

The curriculum will also include some after school activities, such as a trip to Providence College Basketball Games.

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The Providence Fire Department has a FUN BUS available for some of these trips.

Each participant will receive a "BETTER THINGS TO DO" "T" shirt.

**OBJECTIVES:** To build self esteem within the Group. to build a team concept. The sessions will allow the Group to air their concerns and problems. This enables the counselors to address these problems, to open the lines of communication Between the Group and their parents. This program reassures the student that there are people who are concerned about to their counselor's, while offering some alternatives.

**FUNDING:** Providence Fire Fighters Local 799

Federal funding will also be available, later in the program, if Providence is named as the third recipient of this grant.

With the sources of the "BETTER THINGS" program we hope to add at least four new schools in 1990, along with setting up an exchange program with other cities involved in the BETTER THINGS GROUP.

We are looking forward to providing this program in the Fall of 1989.

Respectfully,

Stephen T. Day, President,  
International Firefighters  
Local 799

# "Better Things"®

*A Cooperative Project with the  
International Firefighters Association*

*"I've Got  
Better Things  
To Do"*

February 10, 1989

Mr. Steven Day  
President, International Fire Fighters Association  
Local 799  
92 Printery Street  
Providence, RI 02904

Dear Steven:

Enclosed are three BETTER THINGS prospectuses, which include a project description, an initial curriculum plan, an evaluation summary, and a sample questionnaire from the 1988 evaluation. If you decide to proceed with the program, we require that the curriculum, planning, and evaluation be done in coordination with our overall direction. This is important to insure consistency and maximum effectiveness.

Please read over the enclosed material and get back to me so we can plan the introduction of the program into Providence.

Good luck and congratulations on your efforts.

Sincerely,



Eddie Kurtz  
Project Director, BETTER THINGS

EK/ms

Enclosures

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**Board of Directors**

*Congresswoman Lindy Boggs  
Councilman Lambert Bossiere  
Phyllis Landrieu  
Ray Baas  
Danae Columbus*

**Project Directors**

*Sandra Miller  
Eddie Kurtz*

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**Better Things, Inc.**  
*A Non-Profit Foundation  
4332 S. Prieur Street  
New Orleans, La. 70125  
(504) 821-0420*

*An Alternative Based Alcohol & Drug Abuse Education Program*



TRUE STORIES: Five youths who have been hurt by drug abuse tell their stories at Cumberland High School yesterday.

# Teens warn peers about drugs

Group shares sobering tales with students in Cumberland

By SUZANNE ESPINOSA  
Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer

CUMBERLAND — Five teenagers sat on the edge of the stage, looking nervous, probably scared. They were at Cumberland High School yesterday to tell their stories, their drug tragedies, in an effort to change attitudes about drugs and alcohol.

Atty. Gen. James E. O'Neil introduced the five to the nearly 300 students in the high school auditorium.

"I've been to about 60 schools and have spoken to some 16,000 kids," O'Neil told the group. "You're tired of hearing from me. It's time you hear from your peers."

John, a student from Hope High School in Providence, spoke first.

The sounds of chattering and muffled giggles quieted as John spoke, swallowing hard as if to fight off emotion.

"I want to clarify some things. I don't drink or smoke. I've never been arrested," he said. "I learned my lesson from watching my family die from drugs."

John had 15 brothers and sisters. Four remain.

And his parents were killed in an alcohol-related automobile accident last April.

"Yes. Sixteen. Eight boys and eight girls. Now there's only five. I'm one of the five," he said. "There have been so many black limousines going to funerals and so many bodies. I decided I would not end up that way. You, too, have a choice."

Dina started using drugs when she was 11. Dave began in the seventh grade. Scott started drinking when he was 9. Jay still occasionally drinks at parties.

"I've been sitting in an audience like you many of times and I'd see



ATTENTIVE CROWD: Atty. Gen. James E. O'Neil tells Cumberland students that the group will try to visit schools across the state to spread the message about drug abuse.

people up here, and I'd say, 'Shut up, what do you know?' All I can tell you is I don't ever want to be like that again — ever," Dina told the group.

The program is called Straight to School with Peers Educating Peers.

"We don't plan to stop until we've visited all the high schools," said Pamela Gutlon, a drug education coordinator for O'Neil.

The five youths spent at least one year at a rehabilitation camp in Exeter, where they lived in tents and chopped their own firewood to keep warm.

The camp is an alternative to the state Training School for juvenile offenders, operated by the Department for Children and Their Fam-

ilies. Two of the five teens are still at the camp.

The youths agreed to speak at high schools with permission from the DCF. Their next visit is March 16 at Ponaganset High School in Gloucester.

Yesterday they told stories of stealing and being arrested, of attempted suicide and death.

When the program ended, O'Neil took the microphone and turned to the audience. "I want to ask you two questions," he said.

"This is the first school we've visited. Do you think we should go on with it? Clap if you think so."

A loud rumble of applause filled the room.

"Now, let's just put Chief (John) Partington in a corner of the room for a moment. It's Saturday night and you're going to a party. If you wanted to score some cocaine, could you do it? I want to know how available it is. Say yes if you think you could find some."

The students turned and looked at one another. The voices were scattered. A loud "yes" came from the group.

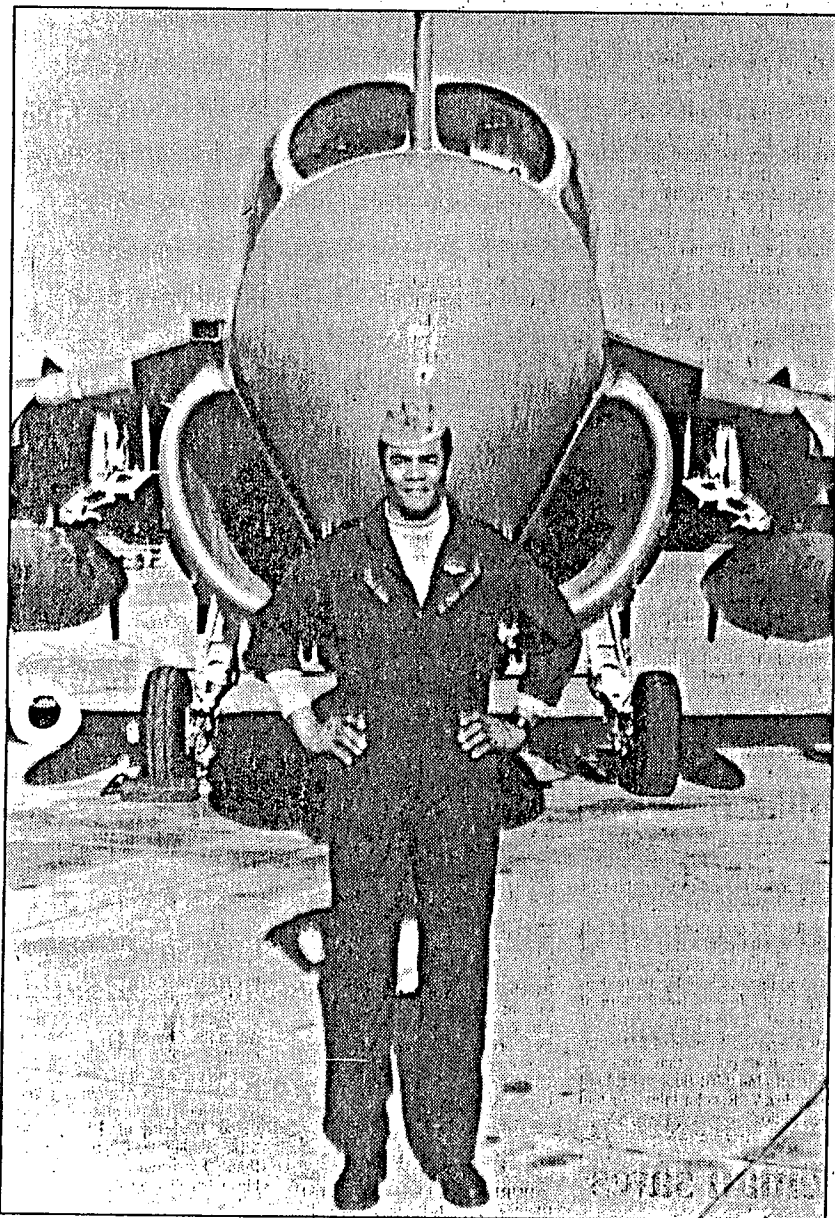
O'Neil estimated that about 75 percent of the group said yes.

The speakers appeared relieved at the end of the program.

"Even if I reached one person, that's good," Jay said later. "I was nervous, but I wanted to do this. I think they really heard us."

Journal-Bulletin Photos by THOMAS D. STEVENS

# Providence



HEIGHT OF EXPERIENCE: Anti-drug crusader Drew Brown worked his way to Navy glory.

## Talking tough on drugs

Street-kid-turned-fighter-pilot will bring message to Providence

By JAMES M. O'NEILL  
Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer

PROVIDENCE — Naomi Caldwell-Wood, the Nathan Bishop Middle School librarian who helps organize the school's anti-drug programs, saw NBC's *Today* show one morning last summer, and one of the guests caught her eye.

His name was Drew T. Brown, III.

He's a tough-talking, streetwise 34-year-old former Navy pilot raised in Harlem, son of Drew "Buddi" Brown, former boxing champ Muhammad Ali's trainer.

Brown was a street gang member in his teens, got a college de-

gree and flew fighter planes at 550 mph with 28,500-pound bombs under the wings.

And here he was on this TV show, talking about his "American Dream Program," in which he lectured school kids in tough-guy talk about the importance of school and the evils of drugs.

He'd start each speech with a dramatic appearance, sauntering down the auditorium aisle decked out in his fighter pilot uniform, his eyes hidden by reflector sunglasses.

In street parlance, this guy was "bad." He was def. He was different.

Caldwell-Wood told others at the school about Brown. They were hooked, too.

Caldwell-Wood learned that Brown, to appear in a city, requires a letter from the mayor and a session with community leaders, to ensure that his visit isn't just a pleasant one-day exercise and that the community will follow up on it.

So Mayor Joseph R. Paolino Jr. wrote the letter, and the process began to set a date for Brown's visit.

It just so happened that Faye Sanders, vice president for community relations at Citizens Bank, saw Turn to DREAM, Page C-2

## Dream

Continued from Page C-1

the same *Today* show that summer morning.

Citizens figured it could get Brown to speak at Central High School, where the bank volunteers time and resources as part of the city's adopt-a-school program.

So Sanders contacted the American Dream people to set it up.

When she mentioned the program to Asst. Supt. Arthur Zarella one day, a puzzled look crossed his face. Wasn't Nathan Bishop School doing this?

Finally, the Citizens Bank people and the Nathan Bishop people joined forces, and Brown will arrive here Sunday to meet with community leaders at 7:30 p.m. at the Opportunities Industrialization Center in South Providence.

Then he'll give his speech to 4,000 city students in six performances Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

All 7th-, 8th- and 9th-graders will see his presentation, as well as 6th-graders at Fox Point School, as part of its anti-drug series sponsored by the Brown University Drug Free Schools Project.

Sanders said that Citizens Bank will pay the \$10,000 expense of the three-day visit.

In the last year, Brown, who is a pilot for Federal Express and a Naval Reserve officer, has spoken to about 350,000 students across the country.

Caldwell-Wood says that programs like Brown's are not panaceas for the drug problem and the city's dropout rate — now 45 percent. But, she adds, "It tells the students they're special. It builds a sense of self-esteem for them."

One thing appealing about his image is that he's a minority who made it, and not through entertainment or athletics.

Brown's schedule:

• Monday, 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. at Classical High School (for Central High, Classical High and Windmill Intermediate students).

• Tuesday, 10 a.m. at Nathan Bishop Middle School (Alternative Learning Project, Fox Point Elementary, Hope High and Nathan Bishop students).

• Tuesday, 12 p.m. at Mount Pleasant High School (Oliver Hazard Perry and Samuel Bridgman Middle School students).

• Wednesday, 10 a.m. at Mount Pleasant High (Nathanael Greene Middle School and Mount Pleasant students); 12:30 p.m. at Roger Williams Middle School.



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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

# RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 155

Approved April 17, 1989

RESOLVED, That the Chief of the Providence Police Department and the Commissioner of Public Safety are requested to look into obtaining federal funding or a grant for the purchase of automatic weapons to ensure the safety of our Police Officers and the Citizens of Providence.

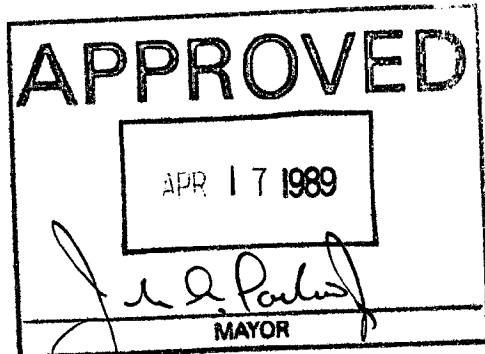
IN CITY COUNCIL

APR - 6 1989

READ AND PASSED,

  
PRES.

  
CLERK



Councilman Brussil, Councilman ~~Miller~~, Councilman Rollins