



This year's honorees (from left to right) Charles Anderson, Larry Williams, La Shawn K. Ford

PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP 35TH ANNIVERSARY AWARD DINNER

Prevention Partnership will be hosting its 35th Anniversary Award Dinner on September 29, 2022. This event is held to honor and recognize some of our most outstanding partners and advocates in the community. This year our honorees are:

Matthew E. Creighton, S.J. Educational Leadership Award

Charles Anderson, Principal of Michelle Clark Academic Prep Magnet High School

VC League Community Leadership Award

Larry Williams, State Farm Insurance

Prevention Person of the Year

La Shawn K. Ford, State Representative 8th Legislative District

The Prevention Partnership's 35th Anniversary Awards is a great opportunity to celebrate the community and inspire our collective efforts.

The ceremony will be held at the Chicago Park District, Columbus Park Refectory Boulevard. The community is invited to support our honorees as well as our prevention work in the field. Community members may show support by purchasing an in-person ticket to attend the event (\$55.00), purchasing a livestream pass to the event (\$25), sponsoring a ticket to the event, and/or purchasing ad space in the anniversary program book (Full Page \$250; Half Page \$125; Quarter Page \$75 and Business Card \$50) that will be distributed during the event and to our mailing list of over 1,000 individuals and agencies.

In-person seating is limited. Please contact Diamond Green at (773)-378-4195 ext. 17 to RSVP or obtain a livestream pass. Chicago Park District COVID Guidelines will be adhered to during the ceremony.

We wish to see you there for this festive occasion of community building and celebration.

Our Mission is to:

"Promote positive habits through education, prevention, and intervention enabling individuals and communities to gain the power to preserve."

WHY SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING IS SO IMPORTANT IN SCHOOLS

By: Rosario C. Pesce, PhD., NCSP

The passage of the [Illinois Children's Mental Health Act of 2003](#) made Illinois the first state to establish social and emotional learning standards. The legislation was supported by the Chicago Public Schools, The Large Unit District Association, The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, and all of Illinois' professional associations representing School Counselors, School Psychologists, and School Social Workers. Today, these standards are listed among the other academic standards found on the Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE) website.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children develop awareness and management of their emotions, set and achieve important personal and academic goals, use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships, and demonstrate decision making and responsible behaviors to achieve school and life success. There is a strong research base indicating that these [SEL competencies improve students' social/emotional development, readiness to learn, classroom behavior, and academic performance](#).

Standards related to the first goal of developing awareness and management of emotions and setting and achieving important personal and academic goals are to:

- Identify and manage one's emotions and behavior.
- Recognize personal qualities and external supports.
- Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals.

Standards related to the second goal of using social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships are to:

- Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.
- Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.
- Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.
- Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.

Standards related to the third goal of demonstrating decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school and community contexts are to:

- Consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions.
- Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations.
- Contribute to the well-being of one's school and community.

The ISBE site goes on to break down the standards and the benchmarks (ways to measure progress) by age and grade levels starting from pre-school until the end of 12th grade. Although previously thought of as two distinct domains of functioning, there is evidence that mental health (or social emotional competence) and academic achievement are interrelated. Fostering positive mental health in students has been shown to enhance academic growth and several curricula exist that aim to grow academic competencies through social and emotional learning. Just like regular instruction, the more frequent the exposure to social emotional learning, the greater the effect on academic achievement.

Finally, the development of social emotional learning contributes to psychological safety often overlooked when considering safety issues in schools. The emphasis has been on physical safety. Psychological safety is equally important and adds to a climate where students feel connected to school, respected by others, comfortable to express concerns, and vigilant to their own and others' well-being. Social emotional learning mastery also enhances resilience in students and problem-solving skills so important in dealing with crises and other challenges.

[More Information on Social Emotional Learning:](#)

[Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning, located here in Chicago at UIC](#)
[Harmony for Social Emotional Learning: Training for Educators and Families](#)
[Second Step, a popular school wide program with significant research backing its success](#)

[An Extra Resource Given the Prominence of National Attention to Mass Shootings this Summer Talking To Children When Scary Things Happen](#) (from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network).



WEST SIDE HEROIN/OPIOID TASK FORCE UPDATE

By: Lee Rusch

July 1, 2022 marked the beginning of Year 4 for Prevention Partnership's coordinating role with the West Side Heroin/Opioid Task Force. Convened in 2016 by State Representative La Shawn K. Ford, IL-8, the Task Force brings together community- based agencies, faith-based organizations, governmental entities, recovery groups, health care providers and persons with lived experience to confront opioid overdoses and resultant deaths in Chicago's West Side communities.

At the close of Year 3, the Task Force accomplishments included:

- Expanding to over 600 members including West Side substance use and mental health treatment providers, housing organizations, advocacy groups, harm reduction organizations, business, and faith leaders, PWUD, and state, county and city agencies and legislators.
- Training over 5,000 residents on how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose and distributing over 10,000 doses of Narcan, the overdose reversal drug.
- Expanding and refining the direct intervention street outreach effort, with over 10 collaborating agencies providing "warm handoffs" to treatment, including Medicine-Assisted Recovery, and other services.
- Established a "Sobering Center" Pilot site in collaboration with UIC's Community Intervention Outreach Program (COIP)

In year 4 we will continue the work noted above and

- Support the expansion of Harm Reduction Services with programs like the Sobering Center and Overdose Prevention Sites.
- Establishing a directory of Recovery Residences on the West Side.
- Confronting the deadly impact a drug supply of containing fentanyl, and opiate 50 -100 times the strength of heroin.

Throughout our many months of work with this Task Force, we have found that West Side residents and service providers are ever more focused on doing what is needed to confront the overdose epidemic. "Our partners, especially those who may still be using, realize that we must all work together to save lives, to encourage family and friends to get help when needed, and to support recovery", says Luther Syas, P2 Co-Founder and Task Force Outreach Director, "and we will work along-side them every step of the way."



Spotlight: Rosario Pesce and Andrew Thomas

Each quarter we feature an interview with a board member and an employee of Prevention Partnership. Read our interview with Board Member Rosario Pesce and Prevention Specialist, Andrew Thomas.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your work with Prevention Partnership?

Rosario: I feel like I am part of a team, a team where we are all on the same page regarding the important work of prevention.

Andrew: I would have to say the most rewarding aspect of working with Prevention Partnership would be that through this agency I get to do what I love, working with our youth and making an impact on their lives, full time with a staff full of people who truly enjoy working with and for our youth.

How did you first become involved with Prevention Partnership and what excited you most about working with Prevention Partnership?

Rosario: I met Al over 30 years ago as he and I worked with others on some education/training in the area of prevention. Our paths crossed as the high school district in which I worked secured a Safe Schools Healthy Students Community Grant. This energized the Cicero/Berwyn community. In serving on numerous committees with Al, I also sensed comparable energy around the work he and the staff at the agency did and the support given by members on the Board. I was made to feel welcome in the roles I played over the years with the agency and I take it as quite a privilege to now serve on the Board.

Andrew: I was hired August of 2021, and what inspired me to work for the agency was their impact on the Westside Chicago communities through peer leadership and education programs.

What initiatives with Prevention Partnership are you most excited about?

Rosario: I am intrigued by the work of the Heroin Opioid Task Force. In my work in the past, I enjoyed getting out there in the community and being involved directly with families and agencies. Members of the Task Force are taking on the challenges faced by those who are truly in need and wishing to turn their lives around.

Andrew: I am the most excited about the work we will do on the Englewood Plus project with the new schools we have engaged to deliver Youth Prevention Education. Also, I am excited to see what is next with our Westside Heroin/Opioid Task Force, they have been doing amazing work in the community.