

07/20/2016

Event: Designated Driver Campaign

Agencies Involved: Ventura Police Department, Ventura County Sheriff's Department (Thousand Oaks Police, Camarillo Police), Simi Valley Police Department, Ventura College, Cal State Channel Islands, California Lutheran University, Project Safer, Straight Up Ventura, Smart Shuttle, Ventura County Behavioral Health and Grace Spearman Foundation.

Narrative:

In July 2011, Ventura County Behavioral Health, Project Safer and the Ventura Police Department collaborated to develop and implement a campaign to recognize and reward designated drivers. The campaign was known as, "Be the DD and Win". The "DD" acronym is short for Designated Driver. During the campaign, local alcohol establishments in Downtown Ventura would provide wristbands for designated drivers. The "Prize Posse", a group of volunteers armed with candy, mardi gras beads, and prizes, would show up to the establishments, identify the designated drivers and reward them with thanks and prizes. The prizes, all donated by retailers from all over Ventura County, included jewelry, concert tickets, professional sports tickets, hotel stays and more.

Over the last five years the campaign has spread to Camarillo, Thousand Oaks and Simi Valley. The Ventura County Sheriff's Department (Camarillo Police and Thousand Oaks Police) and Simi Valley Police Department also joined in to support the Be the DD and Win campaign in their respective cities.

Project Safer, a local prevention provider, spearheaded the campaign. According to Project Safer's records, over \$77,000 in prizes have been given away to designated drivers in Ventura County; all of which was donated by local businesses. Over 6,200 designated drivers were identified during the nights of the campaign. Over 16,000 people were driven home safely by the designated drivers and countless others got home safely because those intoxicated persons were not driving.

The Be the DD and Win campaign not only set out to identify and reward designated drivers but to also change the perception that being the designated driver was "cool" and "important". Over the last five years thousands upon thousands have been reminded about the importance of the designated driver and not driving while impaired.

Also, over the last five years there has been a growth in the use of online transportation network companies (TNC) such as Uber and Lyft. Although there are still designated drivers getting their friends home safely, more and more people are using the online TNCs in lieu of a designated driver.

The Be the DD and Win campaign had its final night on July 15, 2016 in Ventura. Although the campaign will not continue on a monthly basis, Project Safer and the Ventura Police Department will continue to encourage the public to plan ahead and have a safe ride when deciding to drink alcohol. The Be the DD and Win campaign will continue its message at large weekend festivals and holiday weekends.

With summer in full swing and festivals each weekend throughout the county, it is important to remember, that although there are still folks who make the wrong decision to drink and drive, you still have time to make the right decision. You can be a designated driver. You can take a cab or an online TNC.

The Ventura Police Department thanks all of the Downtown businesses that participated in the Be the DD and Win campaign over the last five years. Additional thanks to Ventura County Behavioral Health and Project Safer for their funding and commitment to the campaign.

Lastly, thank you to all of you who were designated drivers; to those who planned ahead to have a designated driver and those that ensured they did not drive impaired.

Remember, DUI is 100% preventable.