

ACLC's Effective Drug Education Tools program in Brooklyn NY

Bruce Grodner
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The American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC) joined with Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and the Foundation for a Drug-Free World in holding a program entitled "Effective Drug Education Tools." This very successful program on drug education, prevention and treatment was inspired by the late L. Ron Hubbard, founder of the Church of Scientology.

The event was held from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 21, 2016 at the Ceremonial Courtroom of Brooklyn Borough Hall. The free program included lunch for the sixty participants and offered a valuable opportunity for networking.

Dr. Bernard Fialkoff, president of Foundation for a Drug-Free World and an oral surgeon from the Bayside neighborhood in the New York City borough of Queens, opened the meeting. He thanked each participant for attending and noted how drug abuse has devastated the lives of so many people, crossing all lines of age, race, ethnicity, social and economic backgrounds.



Bishop Orlando Findlayter was the master of ceremonies. An ACLC supporter, he is the senior pastor of New Hope Christian Fellowship Church and the founder of the New Hope Academy Charter School, both

located in the borough of Brooklyn. Rev. Bruce Grodner, the ACLC National Outreach director, offered the opening prayer.

Introductory remarks were given by Rev. Massimo Parrino, the East Block public relations director for the L. Ron Hubbard Foundation. Rev. Parrino cited his friend, Rev. Tom Cutts, the national executive director of ACLC, who said: "The scourge of drugs is too big for any single church to solve. We need to work together." Rev. Parrino added that the problem is too big for any one nation to solve, and is even too big for the United Nations.

Rev. Parrino offered some alarming statistics. "Two hundred forty-six million people internationally consume illegal drugs or misuse prescription drugs; 200,000 people die from drug overdoses each year; and every 12 seconds another school-age child experiments with illicit drugs for the first time."

The Foundation for a Drug-Free World has created a curriculum that any organization can use to educate young and old on the dangers of drug abuse. The curriculum includes lesson plans for 18 sessions. These out-of-the-box lesson plans are available free of charge. A growing number of organizations are using these materials, and Dr. Fialkoff noted the many endorsements for the program from assorted organizations, police forces, and religious, civic, social and political leaders.



Throughout the event, a series of short, engaging and professionally produced public service announcements (PSAs) were shown. These were created by the Foundation for a Drug-Free World to teach about various illegal and prescription drugs, and included testimonials about how drug abuse can ruin lives, families, communities, and beyond.

The Honorable Eric Adams, Brooklyn Borough president, gave a few encouraging words and presented a proclamation recognizing the work of the Foundation for a Drug-Free World. He came with his director of Faith-Based and Clergy Initiatives, Rev. Gilford Monroe, who lent his support throughout the planning of the program.

Mr. David Tidman, a lead presenter of the curriculum for the foundation, gave an introduction to the 18-lesson plan and materials offered; included are a facilitator's guide, DVDs, and handouts for students. This is a free, turnkey program that can be used with little to no training.

Bishop Lubin Moise, founder of Universal Mission Network Ministry and a good friend of ACLC, is a spokesperson for the Foundation for a Drug-Free World. He leads drug-free educational programs in both Brooklyn and Haiti, and encouraged everyone to get involved and support this important effort.

After a period of questions and answers there was a call to action as President Fialkoff gave final remarks. Together with its Los Angeles headquarters, the foundation is poised to support the participants' needs to further promote the work. He would like to conduct a drug-free awareness concert in New York City's Central Park sometime in September.