

## Sustainability Awards for the *DARE to be You* Program

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(Cortez, Colo.)

Nearly 40 years ago, a small group of dedicated people envisioned an outreach program that they hoped would strengthen youth and reduce potential problem behaviors such as substance misuse. The Colorado State University *DARE to be You* Program recently announced the recipients of the first two Sustainability Awards.

The Sustainability Awards recognize the ability of communities implementing the *DARE to be You* program to sustain the program in their communities for over 15 years.

“This is a remarkable achievement for these agencies considering variable funding available to private nonprofit groups in the past 20 years,” said co-director Jan Miller-Heyl “It underlines the commitment of these non-profit organizations to provide continuity in excellent programs to serve their communities.”

The first two recipients are the Refugee and Immigrant Center at the Asian Association of Utah in Salt Lake City, Utah as administered by Executive Director Shu Cheng (21 years), and the Eastern Shore Community Services Board in Nassawadox, Virginia (16 years) administered by Preventive Services Coordinator Kelly Bulin.

*DARE to be You* began in 1979 as a program to prevent problem behaviors such as substance use in children. It was selected as one of the first six evidence-based models by **SAMSHA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, [samsha.gov](http://samsha.gov))** in 1995, and currently has two programs on the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices as well as other National and International prevention data bases. DTBY focuses on strengthening youth through family-based programs as well as in the school and community.

The Refugee and Immigrant Center at the Asian Association of Utah (RIC-AAU) was founded in 1977 and is a private, non-profit, community-based organization located in Salt Lake City, Utah. Originally established to support Asian immigrants and refugees in their transition to life in the United States, the organization has expanded its resources and services over the past 37 years to assist refugees and immigrants from around the world. Today, they serve over 2,000 refugees, immigrants, and other community members each year. Their 60 staff members represent 17 countries and over 30 languages.

The Asian Association of Utah was one of the first replication sites for *DARE to be You* for families with preschool youth, funded in 1995 by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Populations initially served included Korean, Samoan, Vietnamese, and Mexican immigrants. They have continuously offered *DARE to be You* family-based programs for 21 years. Families

served have come from Northern Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Somali, India, Bhutan, Pacific Islands, and Middle Eastern cultures, among others.

Sustainability has been made possible by high-quality program management by Executive Director Shu Cheng and Prevention Supervisor Peter Frost. Funding comes from Utah Department of Children Services, Salt Lake County Division of Behavioral Health, and private donations to assist immigrants through the Refugee and Immigrant Center at the Asian Association of Utah.

The Eastern Shore Community Services Board (ESCSB), located in Nassawadox, Virginia, provides comprehensive behavioral healthcare services for the Eastern Shore of Virginia. ESCSB has offered *DARE to be You* to families with preschool youth in the rural Eastern Shore of Virginia continuously since 1999. They have offered three series of program each year for each of those 16 years. They also were participants in a multi-site replication grant with the Colorado State University; this program, called *CARE to Wait*, was funded through the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention. The ESCSB Office of Prevention Services staff also trained for the *Bridges* program, another evidence based component of *DARE to be You* designed to help young children and their families make a successful transition to elementary school. The implementation has been skillfully managed by Prevention Services Coordinator, Kelly Bulin.

Populations reached have included families from Accomack and Northampton Counties. The families served come from a diverse mix of cultures, races, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds. Sustainability of the program has been made possible by funding through federal grants distributed by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the Strengthening Family Prevention Initiative (1999-2013), and the Family Wellness Grant (2013-2017).

Prevention Services has presented DTBY with collaboration partners including Project Head Start, Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, Department of Juvenile Justice/Family Court Service, Accomack and Northampton Counties' Department of Corrections Adult Probation and Parole Office, the Eastern Shore Health District, the Eastern Shore Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and the Community Partners of the Eastern Shore. They have also collaborated with several local churches.

The *DARE to be You Program* originated in 1979 through CSU Extension's 4-H youth development. Jan Miller Heyl was the original developer and has continued in that role. Throughout the years, numerous programs have been developed under that name, including the *DARE to be You Program* for families and their preschool children ages 2-5, and the *DARE to be You Bridges* program for families and their children and teachers in grades K-2. These both earned as national "model" programs under several national and international initiatives. The preschool program has been implemented in over 125 sites nationally. The *Bridges* program has also been implemented in many national sites. Colorado State University professor David MacPhee has served as the evaluator and co-investor on federal grants since 1985. Aimee Walker and Jan Miller-Heyl have served as co-directors of the program since 2012.

For information on DTBY go to [www.coopext.colostate.edu/DTBY](http://www.coopext.colostate.edu/DTBY) or contact co-directors [jan.miller-hey1@colostate.edu](mailto:jan.miller-hey1@colostate.edu) or [aimee.walker@colostate.edu](mailto:aimee.walker@colostate.edu) or evaluator [david.macphee@colostate.edu](mailto:david.macphee@colostate.edu).