

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Recovery Speaker Tim Stuart**

On March 13<sup>th</sup>, 138 students in Mr. Tony Gallo and Mr. Jake Freitag's Glen Cove High School Health Education classes received poignant messages of recovery from Mr. Tim Stuart, Recovery Speaker.

Mr. Stuart introduced himself as a recovering alcoholic and drug addict with 31 years of sobriety. He has been speaking to students for over 25 years. Mr. Stuart openly shared his life story, growing up in a middle-class suburb on Long Island and experimenting with alcohol and drugs at an early age. He equated having a good time with alcohol and substance use and sought the high he achieved more frequently throughout his formative years. He dropped out of school and did not achieve his HS diploma until many years later. "Being wasted became a way of life at an early age- I did not live like a normal person".

By the time Mr. Stuart was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade he was a blackout drinker, meaning that he could not recall what had previously happened- sometimes for days at a time. Interestingly, most of his alcohol came from parents or friends' homes which is a common practice for youth to this day.

By the time Mr. Stuart entered residential rehabilitation in his twenties he was a full-blown alcoholic and cocaine addict. "No one aspires to be an alcoholic and drug addict when they are little and not everyone that does alcohol and drugs will become one. In my case, I was born this way". Mr. Stuart credits his time in rehabilitation as his turning point to sobriety. He encouraged students to seek healthy alternatives to alcohol and substance use, self-awareness, self-care and mindfulness.

Mr. Stuart concluded with the question "Do you want to be wasted or do you want to be useful while you are here? Take your keg money and give it to families in need of food and clothing. That's useful! Everyone deserves to be useful!"

Mr. Stuart's presentation was made possible by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) "2026 Communities Talk to Prevent Alcohol and Other Drug Misuse" initiative awarded to SAFE, Inc.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention and education agency in the City of Glen Cove and supports individuals in recovery. Its Coalition, co- chaired by Mr. Gallo and SAFE Executive Director, Dr. Sharon Harris, is conducting Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug prevention awareness campaigns entitled.

“Keeping Glen Cove SAFE,” to educate and update the community regarding substance use and its consequences. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on [www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition](http://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition) or visit SAFE’s website at [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org).