



News Release

**Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth
MICHIGAN LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION**

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April is Alcohol Awareness Month

MARCH 31, 2011 (LANSING) – April is Alcohol Awareness Month so the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) is encouraging community leaders to take this time to focus on the devastating consequences of underage drinking in their communities. Alcohol Awareness Month is intended to educate people and communities about the consequences of alcohol-related problems. There are over 18 million individuals or 8.5% of Americans who suffer from alcohol-use disorders. In addition, there are millions of individuals who experience the devastating effects of the alcohol problem of someone in their life. In fact, 25% of U.S. children are exposed to alcohol-use disorders in their family.

“During Alcohol Awareness Month we want to draw attention to the dangers related to alcohol abuse and underage drinking and connect our youth with resources that can help them,” said Nida Samona, chairperson of the Michigan Liquor Control Commission. “We are making you aware that underage drinking can have devastating consequences on them, the people they love, as well as on others.”

Statistics show that every year over 6,500 people under the age of 21 die from alcohol-related injuries involving underage drinking and thousands more are injured. Almost 2,400 youth under 21 die in drinking and driving crashes; almost 2,400 die from other accidents, falls, fires etc., 1,500 die in alcohol-related homicides and 300 die to suicide.

Some important basic facts about underage drinking:

- alcohol is the number one drug of choice for America’s young people, more than tobacco or illicit drugs;
- those who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcoholism than those who begin at age 21;
- each day, 7,000 kids in the United States under the age of 16 take their first drink; and
- underage alcohol use costs the nation an estimated \$62 billion annually.

"The commission understands that we are a critical component to the hospitality and tourism industry, and we need to balance that with our role as regulators of state laws and Commission Rules which address selling/serving minors and overconsumption," said Samona. "We are sensitive to the issues of economic development, job creation and growing the economy and revenue and how they all are intertwined. We promote good, safe and responsible business practices. Our licensees are encouraged to be better educated, and arm themselves with all the tools available to be a successful, yet responsible business."

For more information about responsible consumption, visit our website www.michigan.gov/lcc, or visit The Century Council Web site at www.centurycouncil.org.

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