

Drug abuse taskforce now forming



**LANA CAUSLEY, DIRECTOR,
UNIT II**

I would like to begin this report by saying how grateful I am for all the members of the tribe; we have been presented the official election results for the 2012 General Election. A sincere Chi Miigwech to my family, elders, community and our unit that had the confidence in me to continue to serve the people of our tribe, I am very humbled and honored to a part of our leadership and that confi-

dence from you will be my driving force for a successful tribal nation moving forward.

Congratulations to all the new members of the board and the new tribal chairman, I look forward to serving with you and continuing to move in a direction forward. I would also like to say thank you to tribal members who ran in their respective units and did not place on the board; I have a relationship in some way with all and respect them in their efforts. It's hard work and your desire and drive are commended and I know members appreciate all that is done in the election process.

Chi Miigwech to Tom Miller, Patrick Rickley and Bernard Boucher for the many years of service and dedication to our tribe. You gentlemen did make a difference in our tribe and I know that many are proud of you; it was an honor to work with you at the board level.

Last but not least, Mr. Joe Eitrem, an elder, mentor and true leader, we worked side by side for eight years and he

always showed the best interest for our members and worked very hard for our tribe. Many people love and care about Joe and he will always be a leader to them and me. Chi Miigwech, Joe! There will be a loss at our board level without you there.....simply....thank you for all you have done.

I wrote about our the tribal nation's rising drug issue a few reports ago and explained that I have been working with our health director to address the issues and develop a plan (a drug abuse task force committee, with staff and members participating side by side) that will reduce drug abuse along with efforts to aid the process of recovery. Since that report we have had many tragic events within our own tribe due to drug abuse and the effects of addiction. At this time we have gathered information and material from other tribes that have the same concerns. I have requested a day-long open workshop in which our Law Enforcement, Health Division (behav-

ioral health), Anishnaabek Community and Family Services, Education (STAY: Sault Tribe Alive Youth), Housing, Tribal Court and our Cultural Division will present on our resources. And, most importantly, the plans moving forward to start the "Drug Abuse Task Force Committee" and ACTION plans to reduce increasing drug abuse.

We need input from the members on what is needed in their communities, easier access to the resources we have available and better safeguards in our communities and places of employment. It will not be popular but it's time for a zero tolerance with the abuse of prescription drugs in our workplace and on our tribal land! If we truly want to help those in need we need to make it our top priority. It's time for our entire tribe, its board and all its departments to "STEP UP" and get the resources to those who are in need in a timely manner and not accept anything less. Many team members work hard for this

— that's why we need to talk about it and get it right.

This workshop will be open to the membership and I have requested that the date, time and location be posted on our website and a group email go out to all on our mailing lists. It's time! I speak to many members about these issues, talk to those on the board who represent you — we need all the input, education, the experiences of many families affected so that we can get this right. Please attend and have input as to the needs in your communities.

Director Hollowell and I are planning to schedule unit meetings in all areas. We will post the dates on the tribe's website, www.saulttribe.com, so you may attend. I will be in attendance at area elders monthly meetings. Please call if you have anything you would like to discuss and if you want to meet.

Hope to see all of you at our upcoming unit powwows.

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