



For Immediate Release:  
October 22, 2020

Darryl A. Brake, Executive Director  
Summit County Community Partnership  
[dbrake@cpsummit.org](mailto:dbrake@cpsummit.org)  
330-374-0947

### **Summit County Community Partnership Celebrates Summit County's Success in Safely Disposing Unused Opiates**

Summit County Community Partnership along with its 100+ community partners are celebrating four years of increasing safe disposal of unused prescription opiates through distributing **140K+ drug deactivation pouches**.

The Fourth Annual Community Drug Prevention Celebration was held on October 22, 2020. The virtual event highlighted the accomplishments of The Deterra® Project's efforts to save lives by safely disposing unused opiates before they can be misused, abused or diverted.

Michael Evans, Event Co-Chair and Director of Government Relations, Cleveland Clinic, describes the importance of the event and the project. "This year's event was especially significant as our community remains committed to tackling prevention while navigating the COVID-19 pandemic. It has presented new challenges, but the goals remain as important as ever: to prevent the misuse of opiates and other dangerous substances."

Local leaders Dan Flowers (Akron Canton Regional Foodbank), Brian Gage (Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority) and Karin Lopper Orr (The Blick Center) shared their experience in supporting drug prevention efforts through this project.

Local mayors Gerard Neugebauer (City of Green), John Pribonic (City of Stow), Don Walters (Cuyahoga Falls) and Chief John Dalessandro (Norton) starred in a video highlighting the creative ways cities are using Deterra Pouches as a tool to address the opioid epidemic.

Akron native, Alisha Nelson, Director of Governor DeWine's Recovery Initiative, spoke on the leadership role that SCCP's project has provided for prevention in the state and nation. She also urged everyone attending to not neglect their own mental health while they are taking care of others.

"Summit County is doing amazing work when it comes to prevention efforts across the life span. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is the best expression to use to describe the work

that is being done here.” Said RecoveryOhio Director Alisha Nelson. “I am proud of the prevention work this team has done and look forward to seeing what will be next.”

Congressman Tim Ryan celebrated the work SCCP and community partners are doing to get unused medicines properly disposed. He encouraged partners to keep up the good work, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic where deaths of despair are expected to rise significantly.

Senator Rob Portman shared how heartening it is to see everyone coming together to address addiction in Summit County. He congratulated partners on their success and urged them to continue the hard work preventing substance use disorder.

General Arthur Dean, Executive Chairman of Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, congratulated SCCP on the success it has experienced bringing the community together to make meaningful change.

Darryl Brake, SCCP’s Executive Director, shared that with the help of more than 115 community partners, the project has distributed over **140k+ pouches** with the capacity to safely deactivate up to **5.5 million pills**.

Postcard surveys show that 68% of survey respondents are prompted to clean out their medicine cabinets when they receive a pouch. “We are seeing Summit County residents changing their behavior around medicine disposal. People are no longer keeping medicines indefinitely.” said Darryl Brake “Rather, they are disposing them as soon as they finish. This small action prevents accidental overdoses and poisonings.”

## **Project History**

The Deterra™ Project launched in August 2016, a month after carfentanil was discovered in the local drug supply, doubling and tripling the amounts of overdoses and fatalities overnight. The Summit County community was working non-stop to increase Naloxone distribution, treatment beds and recovery supports. By providing free at-home medicine disposal pouches, SCCP provided a tangible way for every resident to make a difference.

“Reducing access to unused and outdated medicine is an evidence-based strategy to prevent prescription medicine misuse” says Darryl Brake, Executive Director of SCCP. “Summit County and surrounding communities have demonstrated that communities working together can prevent prescription medicine misuse and overdoses.”

The project expanded to a regional collaborative in 2018 which has worked in neighboring counties to distribute medicine disposal pouches and coordinate efforts to promote SafeRx usage, storage and disposal.

The Deterra™ Project, by every measurement, has been a success. According to survey respondents, people are prompted to clean out their medicine cabinets when they receive a free pouch. Close to 80% of all medicine disposed is a prescription medicine. One survey respondent

wrote: "I received this package with my daughter's script for a narc following knee surgery. She had only used 2 pills. I don't need or want those pills in my house." Another respondent shared that the "Pouch encouraged us to finally dispose of Mom's narcotics - have had for years!!"

## **Event Sponsors**

The Community Drug Prevention Celebration was generously sponsored by the following organizations:

### Trailblazer Sponsors: (\$2,500+)

RALI Ohio  
Summa Health

### Champion Sponsors (\$1,000)

AUI (Associated Underwriters Insurance)  
Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority  
County of Summit ADM Board/Summit County Opiate & Addiction Task Force  
City of Cuyahoga Falls  
Deterra System, Inc.  
Sandra Kurt/Clerk of Courts

### Pioneer Sponsors: (\$500)

Acme Fresh Market Pharmacy  
CHC Addiction Services  
Cleveland Clinic Akron General  
Oriana House  
Summit County Public Health

### Ally (\$250)

Akron YMCA  
BrightView Health  
City of Green Drug Task Force  
Dietrich Family Orthodontics  
Summit County Police Chief's Association

Free medicine disposal pouches are available at all Acme Fresh Market Pharmacies, Summit County Discount Drug Marts, and all Summit County libraries

## **\*\* Summit County Community Partnership Background Information\*\***

Summit County Community Partnership was founded in 1990 as a consortium of community individuals, businesses and organizations committed to preventing substance abuse in Summit County. Our mission is to facilitate coalitions of community resources in order to prevent alcohol and other drug abuse in Summit County. We use evidence-based prevention techniques, information, and activities in an attempt to infuse them into every community system. More information is available at [www.cpsummit.org](http://www.cpsummit.org).

