



MEDIA RELEASE

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919 N Broad Street • Brooksville, FL 34601

Nature Coast Junior to be featured youth speaker at CADCA event in Orlando

Brooksville – Jennifer Bliska met Robert Kordon when she first started working as the project director for the Hernando Community Coalition (HCC). He was in the fifth grade at Challenger K8, and a member of Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT), a school club overseen by HCC. She immediately noticed how he was different from the other fifth graders. "Robert has always stood out," Bliska said. "He is a go-getter, willing to try new things and go the extra mile to make an impact. He truly wants to make a difference."

So when the Hernando Community Coalition made plans to attend CADCA's 21st annual Mid-Year Training Institute July 17-21 at Gaylord Palms Hotel and Conference Center in Orlando, Bliska reached out to the nonprofit organization to see if they would cover or waive Robert's registration fees so he could attend. After reading about Kordon's work with HCC and within the community, they not only agreed to cover the cost, but CADCA (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America) has requested him to be the featured Student Speaker at the event!

"It is amazing," Kordon said. "It really is such an honor. I feel very blessed and very happy." Although he is not sure what the topic of his speech will be about, Robert is hoping to "touch on the big issues, like vaping," he said. "So many become addicts before they graduate high school. Peer pressure – that's the main reason for it."

Kordon, 16, is about to enter his junior year at Nature Coast Technical High School. Through the years volunteering in HCC-sponsored clubs, since entering high school has allowed him to become a student organization for the organization itself, expanding his efforts for the group. "Now I'm working with the coalition directly," he said. "I get to touch on a broader scope – not just tobacco, but drugs and alcohol, too. ... I'm talking to people and getting to know their stories. It's a perfect way for me to help make a change in the community."

At school, Kordon is involved with the ImPACT (Positive Action Change Team) a program offered at the middle and high schools. Students in the club work to make positive changes in areas such as mental health, substance abuse and bullying. They also encourage positive behavior, such as being kind, uplifting other students and volunteering/service to the community. "These groups and clubs are not only to preach, but great way to make friends, life experiences, and helping with public speaking," Kordon said. "It's a great way to develop great life skills while making change."

"Robert is definitely going places," Bliska said. "He is a passionate youth leader with just this go-getter attitude. ...He likes his voice being heard on issues, and being an overall good person. He is as good as they come!"

For information about the Hernando Community Coalition, visit <https://hernandocommunitycoalition.org/>

To learn more about CADCA, visit <https://www.cadca.org/>