

SUMMER IS HERE, HAVE A SAFE ONE

"In the good-old summertime," more American teens try marijuana for the first time than at any other time of year, according to a report from the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

The report, "Seasonality of Youth's First-Time Use of Marijuana, Cigarettes or Alcohol," from the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) shows a 40 percent increase in first-time youth marijuana use during June and July, compared to the rest of the year. Each day in June and July an average of 6,300 youths try marijuana for the first time. The number of new underage drinkers and cigarette smokers also jumps during the summer months.

According to officials from the Office of National Drug Control Policy "Kids may equate summer with freedom, but for parents, it's when they need to be even more involved in their teens' lives. As soon as they pack up their locker for the year and step out of school, kids are much more likely to try marijuana. By keeping teens busy, knowing who they're with and making sure they're supervised, parents can help prevent their teen's summer from going to pot."

"Marijuana use damages lungs, impairs learning, and decreases motivation. Kids who use marijuana in early adolescence are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, such as delinquency, engaging in sexual activity, driving while high or underage drinking. They are also more likely to perceive drugs as not harmful and have more friends who exhibit deviant behavior," said Daniel Angres, M.D., founder and director of Rush Behavioral Health in Illinois.

Research shows that unmonitored teens are four times more likely to use marijuana or engage in other risky behaviors.

Following are a few tips on how to take action and keep your kids engaged during the summer.

- **Connect With Other Parents.** Getting to know other parents and guardians can help keep closer tabs on your child.
- **Keep Track of Your Kid's Activities.** Be aware of your kid's whereabouts and plans. Generally kids will be more open to supervision if they feel you are keeping tabs because you care, not because you distrust them.
- **Develop Family Rules about Underage Drinking and Drug Use.** Establish clear rules and expectations about "no alcohol," "no smoking," and "no drug use." Kids are less likely to begin these unhealthy habits if there are rules in place.
- **Set a Good Example.** Use alcohol in moderation. Serve non-alcoholic drinks at parties too, exercise with your kids and show them other ways to cope with stress and still have fun.
- **Encourage Healthy Alternatives to Alcohol and Drugs.** Encourage your kids to participate in recreation, swimming, church, and other community programs. A summer job or volunteer opportunities are another option. Keep them engaged and busy, and they will have less time to be bored.

Source: NSDUH Report, Office of Applied Studies (OAS) SAMHSA, and "MAKE A DIFFERENCE" U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

In This Issue

What L.I.T. Has Meant To Me (Student Essays)	Pg. 2
Honoring Leadership and Service	Pg. 3
15th Annual Family Fun Day	Pg. 4-5
Showcasing Community Service Projects	Pg. 6
Celebrating Academic Improvement with our Partners	Pg. 7
WNY United at the Erie County Fair	Pg. 8
Mystery Ball is Coming	Pg. 8

What Is WNY United?

WNY United Against Drug & Alcohol Abuse, Inc. is a grass roots initiative designed to increase awareness, educate, and mobilize area residents to participate actively in proven strategies to prevent substance abuse. We are your prevention connection. Funded by the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services through the Erie County Department of Mental Health. Additional funds provided by the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County, the Rich Family Foundation, the John R. Oishei Foundation, the WNY United Foundation, the Erie County Youth Bureau, and private contributions.

WHAT LIT HAS MEANT TO ME

Meghan Doyle, School #43

Being in LIT has been a wonderful experience! It is by far one of the best programs I have ever participated in. While in LIT I have made friends and learned valuable skills. Let me share some of my experiences with you. Before LIT I wanted nothing to do with anyone but myself. I kept to myself and my esteem severely dropped. My grades plummeted and I really didn't care. I didn't care what high school I would go to, or what people thought of me.

Then at the end of sixth grade I was chosen to attend LIT's summer program, my original reaction when I brought back the form was the sense of "oh man, what am I getting myself into?" Little did I know that I would change for my life for the better? The first day of summer program is one of my favorite memories. My class had worked with Mr. Bennett before, and he could be pretty funny. Ms. Beth introduced herself once we are all in the cafeteria, and then we went to our classroom. That's when I met my new family. LIT is a family and we act like one. We step on each other's toes and still share in good times. You don't fight with your family, if you have problem you talk it out. That was proven to us many times in seventh grade. While in summer program we learned how to set goals, character building, how to operate as a team, and self esteem building in Boys Only/Girls Only. All of the teachers are amazing and willing to do anything for us. These are useful skills that I will never forget.

Going into seventh grade all of us were a little nervous. We had new teachers, and every class was in a different room. Mr. Bennett took the time at the first few meetings to listen to our concerns, and hear what we thought of the teachers and other students. The eighth grade LIT students gave us pep talks and advice, and suddenly it didn't seem so scary, at least to me. In 7th grade I still wasn't taking my work seriously, and I still isolated myself from others, which caused me to fall into depression. My LIT family didn't judge me because of it; they supported me and tried to cheer me up when I was down. Towards the end of the year I allowed myself to open up and the shell that encased me began to shed. I started to buckle down and focus on my school work, and I started to worry about high school. I would talk to my new found friends about it and it turns out some of them were worried too, but we weren't going to freak ourselves out over it. I spent that summer writing and reading, thinking about what I wanted to accomplish in 8th grade. I made a list of my goals:

1. Make honor roll at least once
2. Win an Award
3. Master my public speaking skill

So far I've gotten the first two down pat; I'm still working on the third. But I wouldn't have gotten the first two without LIT.

Since I started 8th grade, I have made a complete turnaround. My grades are way up, and I'm even taking algebra! Around March Mr. Bennett took a leave of absence, and he still isn't back. Our entire family misses him, but we know he wants us to keep trying our best each and every day. He would be proud to hear how we're going to Leonardo DaVinci, Hutch Tech, McKinley, South Park, Canisius, Burguard and so many other great schools.

I'm going to DaVinci, and I wouldn't have strived to get there without the LIT program. And now to be going to graduation, I could have never dreamed of it! I want to say thank you all to the teachers, Ms. Beth, and especially Mr. Bennett and my LIT family.

Donald Terrell III, School #56

You asked me what LIT means to me and I answer. LIT doesn't always mean Leaders In Training, to me it tells me how to help people, how to listen and understand the situation in front of me. LIT showed me how to become a better student, son, and friend. LIT started with me from Life Skills when Mr. Dave came into the classroom and showed us things we never thought of and then when I got accepted to the summer program I was determined to become a leader. When the day finally came when I walked into the classroom and introduced myself in front of everybody I knew it was going to be a great summer. I had the best teachers Mr. Dave, Mr. Jim and Ms. Watson. My favorite period was Boys Only, Girls Only, it was a time for the boys and girls separating and talking among ourselves. When LIT ended I thought that was it and we were done, but when Mr. Dave came back I was happy. The best part of the reunion was when I got to see all of my LIT friends again. In 8th grade there was a big change, Mr. Dave left to become a teacher but now we have Mrs. Ulmer and she is very nice. So I was writing this essay to show you my gratitude towards you and LIT.



LIT Essay Readers from left to right Meghan Doyle from School #43, Angeliz Martinez from School #33, Beth Anzalone WNY United Program Director, & Donald Terrell III from School #56.

Angeliz Martinez, School #33

I cannot leave without saying thank you to all my teachers, and all my friends in LIT. Throughout these past two years, LIT has made me realize that anyone can achieve their goals as long as they believe they can. This program has helped me in a massive way by helping me reach my goals. My favorite year in LIT was my 7th grade year because we did so many projects. I love the fact that this program is all about helping others and not just ourselves. It has been a great experience, but now it kills me to have to say that my journey has come to an end. I know that even though LIT is over, I will not stop helping others. I am going to keep my LIT spirit up and continue to help others. This program has really inspired me to help others and that is why I will always keep my LIT spirit up. Thank you again to all my teachers and friends in LIT for helping me to become a better person.





HONORING LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

On May 26th, WNY United partners celebrated the graduation of 90 Leaders In Training students who had become family to one another as well as WNY United. These 8th grade students successfully completed five weeks of intensive summer training and two years of service learning projects. The graduation was held at Hearthstone Manor in Cheektowaga and attended by the graduates, their families, WNY United Prevention Specialists and staff. Program Director Beth Anzalone delivered the keynote address where she congratulated the graduates on their growth and



Shaleah Cox, former L.I.T. member at Dr. Lydia T. Wright, 2010 Inductee into the L.I.T. "Hall of Fame"

accomplishments, and encouraged them to stretch their “wings” as they continue their journey. As one of the last LIT assignments the students were required to write an essay about “What LIT Has Meant To Me”. Meghan Doyle from Lorraine Elementary School #43, Donald Terrell III from Fredrick Law Olmsted School #56, and Angeliz Martinez from the Bilingual Center School #33 all shared their essays during the ceremony. You can read their essays on page 2.



Jalissa Fuller, from Hillery Park Elementary, Inductee into the L.I.T. "Hall of Fame"

For the third year a current and former student were inducted into the Leaders In Training “Hall of Fame”. The two inductees were: Jalissa Fuller from Hillery Park Elementary #27; and Shaleah Cox former LIT member of Dr. Lydia T. Wright School #89. As LIT “Hall of Fame” members, the students will occasionally speak on behalf of the program and their names will be placed on the “Hall of Fame Plaque” that will be displayed at program events.

All “Leaders In Training” students deserve recognition not only for the character they have demonstrated and good work completed, but also for acting as positive role models for their peers and younger children. WNY United is proud of all the 2010 graduates and is looking forward to seeing you fly!

Congratulations 2010 LIT Graduates

#18 Dr. Antonia Pantoja

Juan Garcia
De'Ante Johnson
Milton Mezquita

#27 Hillery Park

Shawnique Austin
Jalissa Fuller
Labraun Maddox
Shaiheem Storey
Victor Swiatkowski

#31 Harriet Ross Tubman

Jamari Hall
James Medley
Tiffany Merritt
Keisha Oldham
Deshia Paulk
Vondale Walker

#33 Bilingual Center

Jaime Arroyo
Jazmin Hiraldo
Francis Laluz
Angeliz Martinez
Dana Partlow
Tiphany Rivera
Zayarisbe Rivera
Thalia Romero
Charlies Santos

#39 Martin Luther King

Toriana Harris
Gina Rodolph
Leeann Roland
Dajeann Sullivan
Jamarr Wiggins

#43 Lovejoy Discovery

Angela Delano
JeVante Glover
Ashia Krieger
Brandon Loyd
Tauhid Nur

#56 Olmsted

Katelynn Barlow
Ashley Bryant
Ballah Burch
Jade Edrington
Janelle Gordon
Vermonica James
Safi Kayembe
Keanu Lyles-Hale
Kayleigh Patnella
Jolie Perry
Kalin Price
Tyler Raymond
Donald Terrell
Ashley Whiteside

#72 Lorraine Academy

Tesfaye Adella
Kalie Bell
Matthew Bosque
Connor Dougherty
Meghan Doyle
Deanna Espada

Dominique Ferris

Jenny Gawlak
Danielle Handley
Heather Hastings
Jordan Minor
Amber Swartzwood
Cody Titterington
Kaylynn Torres
Aurora Vazquez

#89 Dr. Lydia T. Wright

Tyree Bell
Tonycia Bradberry
Airicka Brown
Nyasia Green
Isaiah Griffin (Performing Arts)
Monet Kendrick
Crystal Lewis
Ahmad Ramadhan
Ryan Richards
Normaris Rosario
Maurisha Williams

#91 BUILD

Da'Quan Barnes
Romello Franklin
Diamond Herndon
Sharell McDade
TaJanae McNab
Erin Mendez
Nikosi Spate

#93 Southside

Ashlee Albrecht
Christopher Antowski
Julieana Guash
Brandon Harriger
Adham Kasem
Laura Mitchell
Bryce Phillips
Tiana Stitt-Ford
Lucus Maciejewski





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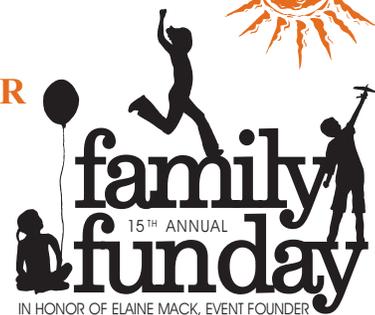


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15th ANNUAL FAMILY FUN DAY A SUCCESSFUL KICK-OFF TO SUMMER

“Family Fun Day” launched a new format this year. WNY United teamed up with the Buffalo Bisons to present the event and game simultaneously and give families an afternoon of All-American Fun for only \$8! Attendees received a free lunch, access to the carnival and a game ticket. Approximately 1500 people attended the fifteenth annual event on May 30th at Coca-Cola Field. Family Fun Day, WNY United Foundation's largest fundraiser, is chaired by Jean Toth, sister of the late **Elaine Mack** who was WNY United Foundation Vice-President and Family Fun Day creator.



The gates opened at noon for folks who wanted to enjoy the carnival area before the baseball game started at 1:05 pm. Once the game began attendees could remain in the rear pavilion to enjoy the carnival attractions or head to their seats and watch the game. Lunch was available at any of the five full-service concession stands in the concourse. While in the rear pavilion area children enjoyed making bead jewelry and noodle necklaces, having their faces painted by the staff of EduKids, getting an airbrush or temporary tattoo from Kidzplay, and decorating their own New Era Caps. Kids loved the inflatable attractions of Kidzplay, the rock climbing wall provided by Vertical Reality, and carnival games from Ray Gay Sales. Attendees were wowed with the magic performed by Magician Louis Cirulli, and everyone loves Funso the Clown. Kids could meet Buster Bison, Belle, Chip, and Bills players Fred Jackson and Steve Johnson. Everyone was able to enjoy a free sno-cone to cool down with on such a hot day!



Inflatables from Kidzplay had kids laughing all day!



15th Annual Family Fun Day

The Family Fun Day Raffle and WNY United Wheel of Prizes were located in the concourse giving attendees a chance to win some great prizes for a little extra money. Some of the prizes included a Fisher-Price Power Wheels, autographed Buffalo Bills merchandise, an autographed Buffalo Sabres Hockey Stick, a golfing package from Harvest Hill Golf & Recreation, passes to Darien Lake, and Buffalo Bisons merchandise, among many others. Making its debut was the Distracted Driving Simulator from Kidzplay. This device has complete systems designed with a specific purpose in mind – to engage, teach and measure the tasks, skills, and decisions critical to driving safely - without actually being in danger. **After expenses, this year's Family Fun Day raised approximately \$20,000 to support the WNY United Foundation.**

WNY United gratefully acknowledges the continued support of the Buffalo Bisons staff, especially Mike Buczkowski, Tom Sciarrino, Matt LaSota, Rob Free, Kurtis Brightman, Mike Poreda, Mike Simoncelli, Kevin Parkinson, Roger Buczek, Jim Morrissey, Megan Marmion, Kelsey Landers, and Matt Schwert. Special thanks go to the 2010 planning committee made up of Chris Callen, Linda Zaborowski, Ann Godfrey, Julie Gicewicz, Kim Rich-Lupkin, Urmaz Lupkin, Mary Gurbaccki, Marcy Peterson, and Elizabeth Carey. The committee is chaired by Jean Toth and staffed by Kate Chudoba. Thanks to the WNY United staff of Linda Flowers, Karen Smith, Lynn Burdzy, Samantha Pesono, Jessica Ulmer, Theresa Villano, Don Burch, Beth Anzalone, and Kathy Deet for serving as site captains.



Family Fun Day attendees take advantage of the hill to catch some of the game!

In addition, WNY United also thanks the volunteers who were incredible on the day of the event. Without each of you, the event would not have been such a tremendous success! Those volunteers include:

Aaron Chapnick, Adam Hamilton, Alex Zlateff, Ann Godfrey, Ann Marie Wade, Aungaliq Mack, Brad Gurbacki, Britney Godfrey, Brooke Rickettson, Candi Wade Vrena, Cassandra Couch, Chris Callen, Christina Seitz, Dan Gurbacki, Dylan Gechoff, Ed Flowers, Elizabeth Chapnick, Emma Janicki, Emma Walsh, Eric Simonalli, Erin Burch, Garrett Rettig, Jackie Ickowski, James Walsh, Jamie Peters, Jane Brown, Jason Vrena, Jeff Gurbacki, Jennifer Renzoni, Jerry Puccillo, Jessie Roland, Joanne Czyz, Jolee Salem, Julia Hopson, Katie Benson, Kim Stewart, Kyle Stocker, Linda Zaborowski, Mary Gurbacki, Mary Weir, Mary Claire Hart, Megan Lasker, Melissa Blattner, Michelle Botkins, Michelle Johns, Milissa Acquard, Mutiso Green, Nick Toth, Pam Gurbacki, Patrick Burns, Samari Angel, Sara Alfred, Sara Smith, Tammy Haungs, Valerie Zlateff, Natasha Perkins and others.

And, of course, WNY United thanks the 2010 Family Fun Day sponsors!

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SHOWCASING COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

The Leaders In Training (LIT) Program is a two-year process for seventh and eighth graders that provides students with leadership potential from partner schools the opportunity to develop and utilize leadership skills. Through special events, in-class and after-school life skill training opportunities, and the completion of supervised community service projects, participants are given the skills they need to become positive forces for change in their schools and communities as they enter their high school years.

At the end of March, actively involved seventh grade LIT students were invited to showcase their projects and accomplishments to their fellow leaders and the WNY United staff at Lucarelli's Banquet Center. The partner schools listed below were in attendance. The keynote speaker was Solomon Dixon, an extremely talented former Achievement Mentor. He dances, sings and writes poetry, often expressing his poetry by rapping it. His inspirational remarks reminded the students that while life is difficult they have to continue to have drive and determination and with that, anything can be accomplished. Participating LIT teams completed their projects, an etiquette activity and then took

turns making their presentations.

The LIT teams tackled a variety of projects this year ranging from fundraising activities to actual on-site service projects. Of special note are the students at the Bilingual Center #33, who choose to be pen pals with elderly patients in the Skilled Nursing Facility at ECMC. Mackenzie Bachmann a LIT student and volunteer at the hospital made the suggestion during their brainstorming session because she sees that many of the patients do not have friends or families that are able to visit. She coordinated a letter writing project between her team and her grandmother, an employee at the facility. During spring break the students finally got to meet their pen pals by visiting them at the facility. They spent the afternoon playing cards and Bingo, having lunch and just talking with their pen pals. In early June, the LIT Students, mentors and patients met at the Buffalo Zoo and spent the day enjoying each other's company as well as lunch. These students and patients have formed friendships that will continue to grow as the students plan to carry on the project next year in eighth grade.



7th Grade LIT Students from Bilingual Center #33 showcasing their storyboard

Dr. Antonia Pantoja School #18

- Penny drive and candy bar fundraiser for Kids Escaping Drugs
- Wrote letters for "Make A Child Smile" sick children's campaign

Native American Magnet School #19

- Change drive to raise funds so they could Adopt-A Family for the holidays
- Wrote letters for "Make A Child Smile" sick children's campaign

Hillery Park Elementary School #27

- Delivered morning announcements containing Character Traits for each day and during lunch went to the classrooms of younger students to teach the character trait
- Made Red Ribbon Week hats for Haiti Relief Efforts
- Pennies for Patients fundraiser
- Provided a student voice at school based management team meetings

Harriet Ross Tubman #31

- Bake Sale and Carnation Sale to raise funds for the relief efforts in Haiti
- Pennies for Patients fundraiser
- Organized a spring cleaning project in the park and playground next to the school

Martin Luther King Multicultural Institute School #39

- Created and staffed a haunted house for the primary grades
- Penny Drive to purchase personal hygiene supplies for Compass House

Olmsted School #56

- Wrote letters to Santa to raise money for Mak A Wish Foundation
- Made blankets and catnip toys and donated to SPCA
- Collected old cards and donated them to St. Jude's Children's Ranch in Nevada, who recycle the cards and sell them to raise funds

Dr. Lydia T. Wright School #89

- Supported the SPCA by collecting newspapers, blankets, towels and stuffed animals to donate as well as making treats
- Multiple fundraising efforts to purchase furniture and clothing for the Baby & Children's Outreach Program at the Harvest House.
- Collected and delivered food for the Extreme Home Makeover FOOD DRIVE Challenge

BUILD Academy #91

- Change drive raising over \$300 for the Food Bank of WNY
- Ran LIT School Store
- Wrote letters to Santa to raise money for Make A Wish Foundation

School Southside Elementary #93

- Supported the SPCA by making dog treats and running a carnation and candy gram sale to raise additional funds
- Organized an Adopt-A Family project by selling suckers and used the money to purchase gifts for the needy family

These teams had a great time presenting their projects while enjoying the food, kind words, and well-deserved applause. This event was another step in the ongoing "Leaders In Training" Program process. These students have already completed an intensive summer training, a retreat experience, and many hours of in-class and after school programming. Hopefully, the satisfaction and recognition they received for completing their community service projects will encourage them to undergo one more year of training and public service under the guidance of WNY United staff.



CELEBRATING ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT WITH OUR PARTNERS

The Achievement Mentor Program (AMP) is designed to address three student objectives: perform to and exceed academic standards, consistently display positive behavior and improve school attendance and participation. Achievement Mentors are hired and placed in partner schools to support the academic and social progress of students who are experiencing problems related to these issues. AMP students are assisted during their lessons by those who work with them individually or in small group settings during the school day. The Achievement Mentors build relationships with the students over time as they study and work on class assignments together. Once a trusting relationship is established, the mentors are able to help the students with other challenges they may be facing. Students often seek out their mentor for guidance with difficult personal and social issues. AMP is a key prevention strategy in these schools because early academic failure places students at an increased risk for substance abuse.



Students from Community School #53 are ready to dine.

In May, AMP rewarded students who had made major improvements in attendance, behavior and/or academics with its annual “Dining with the Stars” lunch. In total, approximately 450 “star” students were recognized for their hard work and dedication with a catered lunch and Chinese auction. The partner schools that participated were Dr. Antonia Pantoja Community School #18, Native American Magnet School #19, Hillery Park Elementary #27, Frank A. Sedita Academy #30, Bilingual Center #33, Lovejoy Discovery School #43, Community School #53, Lorraine Elementary #72, Hamlin Park School #74, Dr. Lydia T. Wright School of Excellence #89, B.U.I.L.D. Academy #91, and Southside Elementary #93.

The program has been made possible thanks to the support of the United Way, the John R. Oishei Foundation, and the WNY United Foundation. For more information on AMP, contact Tammy Regnet at 821-7722, ext. 321 or tregnet@wnyunited.org.

WE'RE GOING GREEN!



Only 1 printed edition left!

The WNY United Digest will only be available electronically.

Please email kchudoba@wnyunited.org, or call 821-7722 ext. 314 with a valid email address to continue receiving your WNY United Digest.

THANKS TO THE FRIENDS OF PREVENTION



Despite the sleet and rain, the Buffalo Bisons, the WNY United Friends of Prevention, our essay winners and families came out to support the fifth annual “WNY United Red Ribbon Game” at Coca-Cola Field on Saturday April 17th. The Friends of Prevention and the essay winners were recognized on the field before the ceremonial first pitch was thrown out by DEA Agent Brian Chella. The Giant Red Ribbon was proudly displayed on the field by LIT Students and WNY United Staff.

We would like to thank the BUFFALO BISONS for their continued support and all they do for us. Congratulations to the 2010 Friends of Prevention and the essay

Log onto www.wnyunited.org to see the redesigned WNY United website!



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VISIT WNY UNITED WITH WYRK-FM AT THE ERIE COUNTY FAIR

For the 18th consecutive year, WNY United will partner with WYRK-FM at the Erie County Fair. For a \$1.00 donation, visitors to the WYRK-FM gazebo will be able to try one of their games of chance like the “Wheel of Prizes” or “Country Clinko.” **EVERYONE WINS A PRIZE!**



WYRK-FM has raised nearly \$150,000 for WNY United at the Erie County Fair through a partnership that started back in 1993. This year, the Fair will run from **Wednesday, August 11th through Sunday, August 22nd.**

In order to continue our success; WNY United needs your help. Prizes like vouchers for free items or services or promotional items from local businesses are always needed. In addition, we need people to run the wheel. Volunteers will work in five-hour shifts and will receive **free admission and parking**. What a great way to meet people and help WNY United spread its drug-free message! Anyone interested in donating prizes or time to the fair promotion should contact **Kate Chudoba 821-7722 ext. 314** or e-mail at kchudoba@wnyunited.org.

Come see us at the Fair!

MYSTERY BALL IS COMING!

On Saturday August 7, 2010 the Buffalo Bisons will be hosting the third annual “Mystery Ball Night” at its 7:05pm game against the Columbus Clippers. All fans that enter Coca-Cola Field will have the opportunity to make a \$25.00 donation to WNY United Against Drug & Alcohol Abuse and in return will receive a mystery autographed baseball. The baseball will be inside a box and the autograph on the baseball will be unknown until the box is unwrapped. With the help of several professional athletes and celebrities, the Bisons were able to raise \$12,500 at last year's event.



***Come out to support the Bisons
and WNY United!***

*WNY United Digest is published quarterly. We encourage community members to submit dates of interest and articles for sharing in this newsletter.
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