

# Groton Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention honors community leaders

Published September 28, 2018 9:43PM

Groton — Antonino Auto Group, STEPS Inc. and Robert E. Fitch Senior High School Boys Basketball won the 2018 Good Neighbor Award, the Groton Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention announced Friday.

GASP, a Ledge Light Health District program, created the award in 2013 to recognize Groton community leaders who promote improved health and substance abuse prevention for adolescents.

"We are so fortunate in Groton to have people, businesses, organizations and youth who use their time, energy or resources to make our community better," said Carolyn Wilson, GASP coordinator.

In a series of radio advertisements, Antonino Auto Group raised awareness of the dangers of driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, which allowed GASP "to reach thousands of people with an important public health and safety message," Wilson said.

STEPS Inc., a nonprofit serving Groton and New London teen girls, builds leadership and life skills that help prevent substance abuse. STEPS Inc. founder and board President Beatrice Jenette said the organization is proud that its work helps adolescent girls "be stronger and more confident, complements and supports the goals of GASP and the overall health of our community."

Fitch Boys Basketball started the Hoop Academy summer camp for ages 8 to 14, with teens volunteering to assist the camp and to serve meals to the community, including the elderly and underserved. The volunteers also helped clear land and prepare homes for the homeless. Coach Charles Silvan said positive outreach programs teach youths empathy and help them "become invested in their communities, learning their civic duties and continue to grow as people into potential leaders in their towns."

■