
The LCADA Way dedicates room to Alyssa Apostolakis

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Joe Matuscak, Brian Malone (Alyssa Apostolakis' father), Tom Stuber, Lee Heidman (Alyssa's mother) and Marc Ricker pose for a photo after a plaque was present with Alyssa's photo on it.

ALYSSA ALFANO /
GAZETTE

MEDINA — It is a somewhat simple room. It's filled with a table and chairs along with a white board. It's designed for group meetings, a place where people can speak their minds about their addictions and with support move forward on the road to recovery.

It is something Alyssa Apostolakis wanted.

So this room at The LCADA Way Medina Wellness Center is called Alyssa's Room, an ever-present reminder that sobriety is worth fighting for every day.

On Monday, The LCADA Way presented the founders of Fighting for Alyssa, a foundation dedicated to supporting those fighting substance abuse, with a plaque and a room dedication at their Medina facility located at 740 E. Washington St.

Fighting for Alyssa started in 2015 after 21-year-old Alyssa Apostolakis, a Medina native, died of a heroin overdose. Two months later, her parents, Lea Heidman and Brian Malone, started the foundation to raise funds to distribute to local agencies that are dedicated to the awareness, prevention and treatment of substance abuse in local communities.

"She was a college student. She loved art and music and the outdoors and so, when she passed away, we wanted to do something to carry on, first of all her mission, which was she always wanted to be sober and that's the 'fight' in Fighting for Alyssa," said Heidman.

A plaque that tells Alyssa's story will hang in the room where many local group meetings take place.

"You know, LCADA was one of the first people that I had a relationship with when I started the foundation. I'm very, very honored and proud to be in association with LCADA," said Heidman. "I'm very guarded about her brand and I would only associate with the very best."

The LCADA Way, a full-service addiction treatment and recovery agency, started in Lorain County in 1981. In November 2015, it expanded its services into Medina County with the opening of its second wellness center.

Alyssa's parents said they were introduced to leaders of the organization several years ago and have been associated ever since.

"She was one of the key reasons that we came to Medina in the first place," said Tom Stuber, president and CEO of The LCADA Way.

Heidman and Malone were on The LCADA Way board for several years.

"We just thought it would be a nice thing to do," Stuber said during the dedication. "The family is dedicated to their mission to help people with addiction and we think that needs to be recognized."

For more information about Fighting for Alyssa, visit www.fightingforalyssa.org and for more information on The LCADA Way visit <https://thelcadaway.org/>.

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