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County moves Rich away from ADAPT Lamorinda

By Sora O'Doherty



Jaime Rich, Environmental Prevention Program Manager at the Center for Human Development, announced at the January Mayor's Liaison Meeting in Orinda that her work with ADAPT (Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Team) Lamorinda has ended. The work has been funded, but the funding stream has changed, with Contra Costa County moving her work to Pittsburg and Bay Point. Rich expressed her appreciation for past support. The goal of the county, she said, is to transition work to another entity, not as yet identified.

"Someone needs to be working on it," Rich said, and added that she would be happy to mentor anyone who wants to take over this issue. As there is no longer funding for ADAPT Lamorinda, it can only continue its work if volunteers come forward to take over.

Jaime Rich Lamo archives

In addition to her work on ADAPT Lamorinda, Rich founded Peer-to-Peer club at Miramonte High School, which she said she will continue to do on her own time. "I am passionate about it," Rich said. She spoke about the group at Miramonte, which has trained a new handful of students on abuse and misuse of marijuana and other drugs. Peer-to-Peer club representatives will soon return to classes to continue their efforts to educate students about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Rich will also continue to work as a volunteer with the Peer-to-Peer club at Las Lomas High School.

Rich thanked everyone at the liaison meeting, adding that she will miss the meetings, which she will no longer attend. Mayor Amy Worth thanked Rich for her exemplary job. "Pittsburg is very lucky to have you," Worth said, but said she is so happy that Rich is remaining involved with the peer-to-peer groups. Noting how important it is that the county is investing in substance abuse, Worth called for volunteers to take over the work Rich has been doing in Lamorinda.

Rich later spoke with the Lamorinda Weekly, and confirmed that there are no county prevention programs in Lamorinda and therefore she will no longer be involved with Lamorinda professionally. Rich lived in Orinda for over 20 years, but now lives in Walnut Creek. She confirmed that, owing to the threat of COVID, her work in Pittsburg and Bay Point will be virtual for the foreseeable future.

Talking about substance abuse during the pandemic, Rich said, "There is mixed opinion as to whether substance use has gone up during COVID amongst young people. There isn't really any good data. Most thoughts are that it may have gone down because parents are always around and young people can't go out and party. The other aspect is the use of substances to cope. Adult use has definitely gone up of both alcohol and marijuana and opioid overdose are skyrocketing."

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