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PACA members discuss upcoming projects

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Partners Acting as Change Agents held its regular meeting Wednesday at High Plains Technology Center.

During the meeting, members discussed open positions within the organization, including chairman. Member Barb Hoskins volunteered to fill two of the positions and was approved for the roles of secretary/treasurer for PACA and advisor for Students Taking On Prevention.

Members also discussed establishing a partnership with Systems of Care, a similar organization which, like PACA, promotes safe and healthy lifestyles. The group agreed that such a partnership would be positive especially since both groups had similar goals.

“We all want the same thing,” said Lana Shaffer, who was acting as chairman, speaking of the organizations’ goals to prevent substance abuse and other high risk behaviors.

Shaffer explained that with the partnership the two organizations would meet together as well as work together. Members discussed changing meeting times in order to facilitate the partnership and perhaps gain participation from the Ministerial Alliance.

Shaffer then reviewed upcoming events including a special planning meeting for the organization to be held Feb. 9. Members then set up subcommittees to help plan and prepare for other events such as the GirlPower and BASIC conferences for fifth and sixth graders, “Walk this Weigh” which promotes walking fitness, and a new event for PACA called “March against Meth.”

This is the second year for the statewide program, and, according to the D.A.R.E. website, last year the program was a tribute to Oklahoma D.A.R.E. Officer and Highway Patrol Trooper Nikky Green who was killed in the line of duty.

Shaffer explained that this year the program will remember Choc Ericsson, an Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs agent who was killed in the line of duty in November 2005. Shaffer said she really wants PACA to partner with Woodward schools and get them involved in the march, especially since Ericsson was from Woodward.

Members then discussed an upcoming focus group that examines health within the workplace. Shaffer explained that the focus group was part of Gov. Henry’s Strong and Healthy Oklahoma Initiative and that Woodward is one of only five cities that will be hosting a focus group.

Shaffer said the focus group is for local business leaders to come together to discuss ways to help their employees become healthier. The meeting is scheduled for Jan. 11 at 5:30 p.m. at High Plains Technology Center.

PACA will hold its next regular meeting Feb. 7 at noon in Room 117 in High Plains Technology Center.