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## YOUTH KICKOFF EVENT FILLED WITH HOPE

### SERAC Launches 4<sup>th</sup> Year of ALLI Program

Southeastern, CT, October 2, 2014– In a time and generation where we often hear about many tragedies and a sense of hopelessness, this past Tuesday almost 90 youth in CT were feeling inspired and empowered for brighter days to come. Southeastern Regional Action Council (SERAC) a regional nonprofit community based resource launched their 4<sup>th</sup> year of the ALLI Program on Tuesday September 30<sup>th</sup> at Montville High School. ALLI stands for Adolescent Learning and Leadership. The ALLI Program is a youth leadership and prevention program supported by federal funding from the STOP Grant (Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act Grant).

*“ALLI gives me something incredibly valuable: a place to see what other kids my age think on issues I care about and the tools to handle them.” - Shaun, 16, Montville.*

Students from 8 area high schools are taking part in this year’s ALLI Program including Griswold High School, Norwich Free Academy, Sachem School, Ledyard High School, Montville High School, Wheeler High School, Waterford High School and Stonington High School. In total, 60 students are current members of the ALLI program this year. The kickoff event was not only a collaboration across towns, but across regions and states. SERAC sponsored speaker Ty Sells from Youth to Youth International. Also in attendance and presenting to the ALLI students were 13 members from the Glastonbury Youth Action Council. The overall message for the day was about youth empowerment and action.

*“You are never going to change behavior by just talking about it.” - Ty Sells, Director of Training, Youth to Youth International.*

Students were engaged in a very lively discussion by Ty Sells to think beyond this very moment and ask themselves what they want for their futures. Through stories and examples he illustrated the power of being different and accepting those differences.

*"I learned from Ty that cool is always changing." - Madison, 17, Ledyard.*

The message was clear. The future is bright and youth in CT are feeling hopeful and inspired about their lives.

*"ALLI is an amazing way to share beliefs and motives with others in the area. They are great people and so much fun. The whole thing is inspiring." - Ellie, 18, Ledyard.*

*"I always look forward to the motivational speakers at every meeting. They make me realize how fortunate I am to be here." - Sarah, 17, NFA.*

The ALLI program will meet 7 times throughout the school year. As for the next steps and actions of these motivated and empowered youth of today, standby. Many of them might just be our future leaders for real change.

*"Prevention isn't about simply knowledge, it's about changing behavior."  
- Emma, 17, Waterford.*

For more information about SERAC and ALLI, visit [www.sectrac.org](http://www.sectrac.org) .

For more information about Youth to Youth and Ty Sells, visit [www.youthtoyouth.net](http://www.youthtoyouth.net)

SERAC Mission: To unite the communities of Southeastern CT in order to reduce the impact of substance abuse and other addictive behaviors.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Angela Rae Duhaime, M.A. Community Coordinator Southeastern Regional Action Council at 860.848.2800 or email at [serac.cc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:serac.cc@sbcglobal.net)