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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Westchester County Police Forces Partner with Not-for-Profit, Hope Not Handcuffs, to Provide Resources to Those Seeking Addiction Assistance

Pleasantville, NY, August 2, 2021 - Approximately two million New Yorkers have a substance abuse problem¹ with recent data indicating that the number of those suffering has increased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. At a press conference today, 15 municipal police forces in Westchester County gathered with not-for-profit Hope Not Handcuffs to announce a partnership that offers resources and support to those battling addiction.

Police departments in Westchester County, who have long sought additional resources to assist citizens dealing with addiction, have committed to an established program that seeks to find viable treatment options for individuals and their families who are seeking help. (A full list of participating departments can be found below.) Representing his colleagues, Village of Pleasantville Police Chief Erik Grutzner spoke about the value of this partnership.

“As law enforcement, we often become aware of situations that involve addiction and have repeatedly seen that many individuals and their families are unsure where to turn when seeking support,” said Chief Grutzner. “Hope Not Handcuffs has shown they have the experience, resources and compassion to partner with law enforcement to offer assistance.”

How the Program Works

Anyone seeking help in the fight of drug or alcohol addiction may come to any of the participating police forces and ask for the Hope Not Handcuffs program. They will be treated with compassion and respect. A call will be made to an “Angel” volunteer from the Hope Not Handcuffs team who will come and actively seek out a treatment plan. Individuals suffering from addiction will instantly gain an advocate and a network of resources designed to lead them to success, regardless of insurance status.

“We are so grateful to be in partnership with these police departments and commend them for their community-centered approach to addressing the challenge of addiction,” explained Program Director Annette Kahrs. “Hope Not Handcuffs offers a proactive option to people struggling with drug addiction to encourage them to seek recovery and regain control of their lives.”

¹ According to www.health.NY.gov/prevention.

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Kahrs continued: "In addition to having the police forces recognize the importance of treatment programs, we value our angel volunteers who support families through their most vulnerable times."

Following is the list of participating police departments in Westchester to date, with more being added regularly. Hope Not Handcuffs is also working with police departments in Putnam, Rockland and Sullivan counties.

- Ardsley Police Department
- Bedford Police Department
- Greenburgh Police Department
- Hastings-on-Hudson Police Department
- Irvington Police Department
- Mount Pleasant Police Department
- New Castle Police Department
- North Castle Police Department
- Ossining Police Department
- Pleasantville Police Department
- Scarsdale Police Department
- Sleepy Hollow Police Department
- Tarrytown Police Department
- Westchester County Police Department
- Yorktown Police Department

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Additional Information:

Hope Not Handcuffs is actively seeking 'angels' for its program. For more information or to sign up to be an Angel please visit: www.tricountycommunitypartnership.org For any questions, please email us at rocklandangels@gmail.com or call us at (833) 428-4673.

A recording of the press conference will be available following the press conference at www.pleasantville-ny.gov.