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MADD TN AWARDS TABC STATEWIDE RECOGNITION FOR PREVENTION OF UNDERAGE DRINKING

The Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission received the 2021 “Power of Community” award from Tennessee Mothers Against Drunk Driving for excellence in preventing underage alcohol consumption.

NASHVILLE, TN – For the second time in three years the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) earned a statewide award for outstanding work to prevent underage alcohol consumption. The TABC received the “Power of Community Award” from Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD TN) at the organization’s annual Night of Remembrance held on December 9, 2021 in Nashville, TN. The annual event honored and remembered victims of substance-impaired driving and underage drinking and recognized law enforcement heroes for their commitment to protecting Tennesseans from these crimes. In addition, special recognition was given to community partners and volunteers for outstanding efforts to support the mission of MADD.

MADD TN Executive Director Phaedra Marriott-Olsen presented the award to TABC Chief Law Enforcement Officer Bond Tubbs and Deputy Chief Law Enforcement Officer Brent Clayton. Those who attended the ceremony included:

- local and state law enforcement officers,
- District Attorneys from across Tennessee, and
- victims and families of those impacted by a drunk driving fatality or injury.

The TABC received the award nomination for extraordinary efforts in 2020 to reduce underage alcohol purchased and consumed through to-go and delivery methods during the COVID-19 pandemic. After discovering alcohol compliance rates were considerably lower than expected for these purchase methods, law enforcement at the TABC increased compliance checks and licensing staff conducted additional educational outreach to state alcohol licensees. Additionally, TABC staff informed media outlets, elected officials, and communicated with MADD TN to increase public awareness of the concerning numbers.

TABC’s efforts received widespread media attention and resulted in additional safeguards for legislation that extended to-go alcohol sales through July 1, 2023. The provisions required all to-go alcohol staff to complete a certified alcohol awareness training program, required posting of signs at all to-go establishments warning against drunk driving, required age verification to be conducted through inspection of a valid ID, placed volume limits on each transaction, and mandated packaging to be compliant with state and federal open-container laws which allow officers to identify when a container has been opened.

The TABC is honored to receive recognition for its work to reduce underage purchases and consumption. TABC Executive Director, Russell F. Thomas, stated “Alcohol consumption and misuse have risen during the pandemic. We must carefully examine proposed law changes to evaluate negative, unintended public health consequences. Good alcohol laws can both protect public health and safety and foster business growth.”

For more information about MADD TN's Annual Night of Remembrance, please visit <https://www.madd.org/tennessee/event/tennessee-2021-statewide-night-of-remembrance-and-awards-ceremony/>

For more information about the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission, please visit www.tn.gov/abc.



Photo courtesy of TABC staff.

From L to R: TABC Deputy Chief law Enforcement Officer Brent Clayton, MADD TN Director Phaedra Marriott-Olsen, and TABC Chief law Enforcement Officer Bond Tubbs

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