

Union County Prosecutor's Office hosts second annual Forum for School Administrators

With law-enforcement representatives and local experts and professionals presenting information on a range of topics, the Union County Prosecutor's Office hosted its second annual Forum for School Administrators before an assembled group of approximately 150 people Thursday morning at Kean University in Union Township.

Each of the county's public school districts and many of the county's private middle and high schools were invited to send representatives to the forum, which featured opening remarks from acting Union County Prosecutor Grace H. Park and interim Union County Schools Superintendent Monica Tone. Presentations were delivered on topics including juvenile sexual assault reporting protocols, juvenile gang trends, cyberbullying, teen suicide, computer crime prevention, and juvenile heroin and prescription opioid abuse.

The supervisors of three different Prosecutor's Office departments were among a dozen presenters, including Special Victims Unit Supervisor Caroline Lawlor, Juvenile Unit Supervisor Susan Gleason, and Julie Peterman, supervisor of the Office's Guns, Gangs, Drugs, and Violent Crimes Task Force. Union County Child Advocacy Center Supervising Family Service Specialist Kim Johdos, Rutgers University Traumatic Loss Coalitions for Youth Program Director Maureen Brogan, and Michael Litterer of Prevention Links, a local nonprofit dedicated to the prevention of substance abuse, also presented information on their areas of expertise.

“The purpose of this annual forum is to share information and to foster the development of positive relationships between law enforcement and educators in Union County,” Prosecutor Park said. “We couldn’t be more pleased that this goal has been so strongly embraced by both groups.”

“Today’s forum for school administrators, law enforcement officials, and other staff is not only a chance to keep current on matters related to school safety and security procedures – it also provides the opportunity to strengthen the partnerships and collaboration between local school district and law enforcement officials in creating a safe and secure environment for students, teachers, staff, and the entire school community,” Tone agreed. “These partnerships will help to create a school climate where our students feel safe and learning can occur without interruption.”