

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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AG Balderas, DA D'Antonio, Sheriff Vigil & Mayor Miyagishima Bring Project OPEN: *Opioid Prevention & Education Network* Training to Doña Ana County

Project OPEN's goal is to confront the crisis to make New Mexico families safer

*Blake's Lotaburger is sponsoring the training,
providing free burritos and refreshments*

Las Cruces, NM – This morning, **Attorney General Hector Balderas, District Attorney Mark D'Antonio, Sheriff Enrique "Kiki" Vigil and Mayor Ken Miyagishima** announced that the Attorney General's *Project OPEN: Opioid Prevention & Education Network* will host an Opioid Abuse Training in Las Cruces on Friday, October 27, 2017. The training is free and will expose government officials, counselors, attorneys, policy advisors, investigators, healthcare professionals, consumer advocates, law enforcement and others to the impact and results of opioid abuse on New Mexico communities. It is intended to enhance the participants' knowledge and understanding of opioid addiction and the countless issues involved, and to afford participants the opportunity to explore program materials and solutions to addressing the opioid epidemic.

In addition, **Attorney General Balderas** has partnered with Unified Prevention Coalition for Dona Ana County to provide a free Naloxone training. Project OPEN participants will be given the opportunity to receive the training and certification necessary to administer this life-saving drug.

“We can no longer allow opioid abuse and addiction to destroy New Mexico families and the future of our youth,” said **Attorney General Hector Balderas**. “I created Project OPEN in order to combat the opioid crisis in our state, and will continue training New Mexicans who are on the frontlines of this fight at our free Opioid Abuse Trainings. We must protect southern New Mexico from this public safety emergency and I encourage advocates, law enforcement officials, healthcare professionals and policy makers from all parts of southern New Mexico to attend this training so we can work together to make our families safer and healthier.”

“I applaud the leadership of Attorney General Hector Balderas, and his efforts to proactively address this crisis, which is ravaging our families and placing an enormous strain on our law enforcement resources in Doña Ana County and across the state,” said **Third Judicial District Attorney Mark D’Antonio**. “Project OPEN provides an opportunity for stakeholders in our community to come together and face this issue head-on.”

“The nation as a whole is struggling with opioid addiction, and Doña Ana County is a gateway to that problem,” said **Doña Ana County Sheriff Enrique “Kiki” Vigil**. “We have dedicated resources to train our deputies in drug recognition, and I am confident that trainings like Project OPEN will only help to better equip our community partners to fight this evolving battle against opioid addiction.”

“Opioid medications are not limited to any group of citizens. Anyone suffering from physical pain could become addicted to these drugs, which could lead to more serious abuses of other opioids. If we act now, we can get a jump on the problem and help reduce this public health crisis,” said **Las Cruces Mayor Ken Miyagishima**.

Attorney General Hector Balderas added, “I want to thank our community partners at Blake’s Lotaburger for continuing to sponsor Project OPEN and providing hundreds of free meals to our participants as the battle the opioid epidemic in New Mexico.”

To register for the free training being held on October 27, please contact Tamarra Howard with the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General at (505) 717-3506 or thoward@nmag.gov.

Participants can also register online at this link -

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc6DB8qX_yXVF5QRihFq75NuUxH0rDT9UfTiCeM77cCFxj3xg/viewform?usp=sf_link

WHO: Attorney General Hector Balderas, Third Judicial District Attorney Mark D’Antonio, Doña Ana County Sheriff Enrique “Kiki” Vigil, Las Cruces Mayor Ken Miyagishima, Las Cruces Police Chief Jaime Montoya, law enforcement, healthcare professionals, government officials, consumer advocates, therapists, and the public

WHAT: Attorney General Balderas’ *Project OPEN: Opioid Prevention & Education Network* free Opioid Abuse Training

WHERE: Las Cruces City Hall Council Chambers, 700 N. Main Street, Las Cruces, NM 88001

WHEN: Friday, October 27, 2017 from 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

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