

Bellace for June Engagement

LAWRENCEVILLE — A nationally-known clinical psychologist and stand-up comedian will pay a visit to Lawrence County on June 6, to speak about a variety of topics.

Matt Bellace, Ph.D., will appear from 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. in the Lawrenceville High School auditorium, at an event sponsored by the Lawrence County Drug Coalition. Admission will be free. Bellace's appearance is made possible thanks to a grant from the Illinois Critical Access Hospitals Network, of which Lawrence County Memorial Hospital is a member.

"It's always a great thing when you can get someone who's nationally known to come and speak to the parents of a community," said Gene Allen, a Lawrence County Drug Coalition leader. "Matt has a positive message. He doesn't use scare tactics. He uses comedy and scientific data to get his point across."

Bellace has been a youth motivational speaker and stand-up comedian since 1995. He currently lives with his wife and two children in the Princeton, New Jersey, area. His wife, Dara, is also a clinical psychologist and specializes in the treatment of eating disorders.

Topics for the evening will include resilience, substance abuse, vaping, social media issues among kids, stress reduction and adolescent brain development.

"We're hoping for a good mix of parents and kids," Allen said. "It's not often we have the capability to bring a speaker of Matt's quality in."

Bellace recently spoke in Newtown Connecticut, to a group of freshmen. Those students were in third grade and attending Sandy Hook Elementary school there, when 20 children were fatally shot by a young gunman on Dec. 14, 2012.

"He's very powerful," said Allen, who notes that a lot of footage of Bellace is available at www.youtube.com. "He just delivers a good, positive, message to young people and their parents."

Allen expressed his gratitude to ICAHN for providing the \$3,000 grant that will be used to fund Bellace's appearance.

For more information, contact Allen at 618-943-7273 or 618-943-7232.