

Ed & Maxine Mazur have been strong supporters of community efforts and events. Collectively they have sponsored the Randall Boy's & Girl's Club Ludlow Community Center Annual Auction for more than 10 years.

Over the past several years, they searched for a program to underwrite thru the organization; one idea was a teen leadership, or a future leader's type of venue. Conversely, the program to be sponsored was chosen for them on Friday October 9, 2010 at the start of the NFDA Convention in Boston.

Word was received that Nick an 11 year old family member in Alabama, had been in a fight at school that day, came home and took his life. Nick had been bullied at school. As we spoke with others of this shocking tragedy, we heard from countless others about how their own children had been bullied in school, or knew of children who had been bullied.

Together we had a dialogue with family, friends, and community leaders about bullying. Family, friends knew it was happening, some community leaders, school officials, and police department members vehemently denied that it was an issue. There was a great deal of frustration and disappointment, but we decided to pursue the sponsorship of a comprehensive anti-bullying program in our community. A core group of concerned citizens met, a plan of action was devised, and planning stages moved forward.

The news of a bullying related high profile suicide in a neighboring community, truly opened the eyes of our town officials, and our program, once thought to be off base and unnecessary was asked to be fast tracked.

Town officials asked us to meet with the Boy's and Girl's Club Staff and work in concert with the school department to assist in planning and promoting a comprehensive and on going Community Bullying Forum. We were appointed as community representatives along with members of the school department, fire and police departments. It was further established that the boy's and girl's club and community center would be the facilitator of the program.

After numerous meetings and development sessions, a date was selected and a speaker for the forum was chosen. As word spread of this event, there was a murmur in the community that this is extremely "isolated" and that bullying isn't happening all that often, it was just being sensationalized by the media.

We and other business leaders further discussed the need, and worked tirelessly to promote the forum. Talk around town, e-mail blasts, and flyers in schools and at the community center. Word was out. We contacted MKJ Marketing for the creation of an add or series of adds, to be placed in our town's weekly newspaper.

It seemed like there was little interest in this add campaign with MKJ, but I am 1,100 miles away, and a telephone call from Marilyn certainly conveyed a different

message. Her complete staff was excited with and proud to be part of the creation of add copy for an issue that is rapidly becoming an epidemic, and to be part of a solution to a problem. With great astonishment add copy was e-mailed back and forth nights, holidays and weekends to ensure our timelines would be met. Please view add copy of ones of the adds listed above, under snap shot of our firm.

As we spoke with other business leaders at a social event on Saturday evening, I showed them add copy on my Blackberry, to my astonishment, they wanted to be part of the add series. On Wednesday, as the Register hit the street, our half page add in full color was prominently displayed, with several business logos, ensuring that a community of business leaders know of and want to work together to eliminate bullying.

May 3, 2010, 7 PM. The place, Ludlow High School auditorium, and its filled. Precisely the consequence we had hoped for. The keynote speaker presented his 55 minute program followed by a 30 minute question and answer session. A smaller group discussion forum was then held by school grade levels.

The forum was well received; the information obtained during the discussion forum was priceless. Have we solved bullying? No, we have not in fact we are far from it. Have we brought awareness to students, parents, public safety officials, educators and clergy? Yes we have.

Maxine and I will work tirelessly to bring to Ludlow the best speakers and facilitators. Together we want to live up to our tag line of "Care for the Community Since 1932"