Field Experiences In Effective Prevention

The U.S. Department of Education's Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants

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The U.S. Department of Education's Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants

Barbara E. Ryan

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools
Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention

2010

This publication was funded by the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-04-CO-0137 with Education Development Center, Inc. The contracting officer's representatives were Tara Hill and Phyllis Scattergood. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government. This publication also contains hyperlinks and URLs for information created and maintained by private organizations. This information is provided for the reader's convenience. The U.S. Department of Education is not responsible for controlling or guaranteeing the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of this outside information. Further, the inclusion of information or a hyperlink or URL does not reflect the importance of the organization, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed or products or services offered.

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Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools
Kevin Jennings
Assistant Deputy Secretary

May 2010

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All URLs were last accessed on April 20, 2010.

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Acknowledgments

This publication summarizes the elements of effective campus-based alcohol and other drug abuse prevention, based on the experiences of 12 grantee institutions funded from 2005 to 2007 by the U.S. Department of Education's Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants initiative.

Several staff members of the Department's Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention led site visits to the grantee institutions: Tom Colthurst, Beth DeRicco, Gloria DiFulvio, Linda Langford, Virginia L. Mackay-Smith, and Barbara E. Ryan.

Each staff member was accompanied on site by an outside expert on campus-based alcohol and other drug abuse prevention. We thank these individuals both for the professionalism they brought to this work and for their several contributions to our thinking about important lessons learned:

Eric Alexander, *Oregon State University*
Heather Dunn Carlton, *California State University-Sacramento*
Spencer Deakin, *Frostburg State University*
Brian Dietz, *Kalamazoo College*
Paul Dexter, *University of Southern Maine*
Jennifer Haubenreiser, *Montana State University-Bozeman*
Sally Linowski, *University of Massachusetts Amherst*
Sarah Mart, *Syracuse University*
Robert Maust, *University of Colorado* (ret.)
Katrin Wesner, *University of North Carolina Wilmington*
Larrell Wilkinson, *University of South Carolina*

We also thank Richard Lucey, Jr., a former program specialist in the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS), U.S. Department of Education and the contracting officer's representative (COR) for the Higher Education Center contract, who for many years guided the model programs selection and awards process, for his leadership and steadfast support for this effort and for his many contributions to our thinking about effective campus-based prevention.

Finally, and most importantly, we are especially grateful to the project directors and key stakeholders at the institutions of higher education (IHEs) we visited for taking the time to brief us not only on what they were doing but also on how and why they were doing it. The work these campuses are undertaking is among the best in the nation, and we feel privileged to be able to tell their stories.

Message From the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

We know that high-risk drinking and other drug use contribute to a number of academic, social, and health-related problems among college students. In recognition of the seriousness of these problems at U.S. colleges and universities, the U.S. Department of Education has invested considerable resources to support the development and dissemination of information on best practices to help campuses and surrounding communities reduce the adverse consequences related to such use.

For more than two decades the Department has supported campus- and community-based prevention programs through a number of programs and activities. For example, in 1987 the Department convened the first annual National Meeting for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention in Higher Education as a forum to disseminate best practices and research to advance prevention. The Department's Grant Competition to Prevent High-Risk Drinking or Violent Behavior Among College Students has supported the development and evaluation of prevention programs at more than 200 colleges and universities.

In response to ongoing concern about unacceptable levels of alcohol and other drug use on campuses, in 1998 Congress authorized the Department to identify and promote effective prevention through a model grants program. In 1999, the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) launched an important component of the Department's efforts to advance best practices, the Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants, restructured in 2008 as Models of Exemplary, Effective, and Promising Alcohol or Other Drug Abuse Prevention on College Campuses.

An important goal of the models program has always been to move the field toward more effective practice. Since the restructuring in 2008, grantees receiving recognition as an exemplary or effective program must disseminate information about their programs. All grantees use program funding to enhance and further evaluate their exemplary, effective, and promising programs. We hope that other institutions of higher education will use the exemplary and effective programs identified through our grant competitions to strengthen their prevention efforts.

A total of 44 institutions received awards under this program from 1999 through 2009. Each campus has publicized its work by presenting at conferences, sponsoring workshops, distributing brochures and other materials, and consulting directly with other campus-based staff developing and directing prevention programs.

The Department's publication *Experiences in Effective Prevention: The U.S. Department of Education's Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants* provides a

comprehensive analysis of the core elements of success of the first 22 model programs recognized under this grant competition from 1999 to 2004.

This publication provides case histories on the development and implementation of prevention efforts at 12 colleges and universities that received model program grants in 2005, 2006, and 2007. Staff from the Department's Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention, along with other experts in the prevention field, conducted site visits to these grantees to elicit information on the lessons learned at each campus as well as their recommendations in order to assist other campuses in developing and implementing effective alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programs.

It is our hope that colleges and universities will draw from the experiences of these 12 campuses as they develop and implement policies, programs, and activities aimed at reducing alcohol and other drug abuse and violence and protecting the health and safety of students at their institutions and in surrounding communities.

Kevin Jennings
Assistant Deputy Secretary

Introduction

Although problems related to student drinking have a long history at colleges and universities, drinking by students was often viewed as a harmless rite of passage. But research and surveys conducted over the past two decades have demonstrated that heavy episodic or binge drinking—defined as five or more drinks in a row for men and four or more drinks in a row for women[1]—raises the risk of alcohol-related problems for the individual drinker, as well as causing secondary effects on those in the immediate environment.[2]

Scope of the Problem

Problems related to student drinking are complex and are part of a pervasive and deep-rooted college culture.[3] Despite prevention efforts at colleges and universities across the nation, students continue to die or be seriously injured as a result of drinking. According to a 2007 report from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA),[4] "among college students and other 18- to 24-year-olds, binge drinking and, in particular, driving while intoxicated (DWI), have increased since 1998. The number of students who reported DWI increased from 2.3 million students to 2.8 million. The number of alcohol-related deaths also has increased. In 2001, there were an estimated 1,700 alcohol-related unintentional injury deaths among students 18–24, an increase of 6 percent among college students (that is, per college population) since 1998. In addition, it is estimated that each year, more than 696,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are assaulted by another student who has been drinking, and more than 97,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape."

Underage drinking is a big part of the problem. Students under age 21 tend to drink on fewer occasions than their older peers, but they drink more per occasion and have more alcohol-related problems than students of legal drinking age. Underage students also report that alcohol is easy to obtain, usually at little or no cost.[5]

Other drug use on campus is far less frequent than drinking but remains a significant concern for administrators. In the year 2008, the annual prevalence of use for any illicit drug among college students was 35.2 percent. Marijuana is by far the drug of choice for college students, with 32.3 percent reporting that they had used marijuana on at least one occasion in 2008; 15.3 percent used other illicit drugs. The most frequently used illicit drugs were narcotics other than heroin (6.5 percent), amphetamines (5.7 percent), cocaine (4.4 percent), tranquilizers (5 percent), hallucinogens (5.1 percent), Ritalin (3.2 percent), and barbiturates (3.7 percent).[6]

Comprehensive Framework for Prevention

Prevention research strongly supports the use of comprehensive, integrated programs with multiple complementary components that target: (1) individuals, including at-risk or alcohol-dependent drinkers, (2) the student population as a whole, and (3) the college and the surround-

ing community.[7] Successful interventions occur at these three distinct levels. In addition, the Task Force of the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism[8] grouped commonly used intervention strategies into four tiers, based on the degree of scientific evidence supporting them, as follows:

Tier 1: Effective and Targeted at College Students. Examples include combining cognitive-behavioral skills with norms clarification, altering students' expectations about the effects of alcohol, and brief motivational interventions. A program called BASICS (Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students) is a popular component of comprehensive prevention programs. BASICS uses two brief motivational interview sessions to give students feedback about their drinking and provide them with an opportunity to craft a plan for reducing their alcohol consumption.[9]

Tier 2: Effective With General Populations and Could Be Applied to College Environments. Examples of these strategies include enforcement of minimum drinking age laws, restrictions on alcohol retail outlet density, responsible beverage service policies, and formation of campus and community coalitions.

Tier 3: Promising. Examples of these strategies include reinstatement of Friday classes and exams and Saturday morning classes; expansion of alcohol-free dormitories; consistently enforced discipline for alcohol policy violations; awareness of personal liability issues; "Safe Ride" programs; regulation of happy hours and sales; and marketing campaigns to correct student misperceptions about alcohol use, referred to as social norms marketing campaigns.

Tier 4: Ineffective. Examples of these strategies include interventions that rely entirely on providing information about problems related to risks from drinking.

Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants Initiative

In 1998 Congress authorized the U.S. Department of Education to identify and promote effective campus-based prevention programs. The Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants initiative designated its first group of model programs in 1999. By 2004, OSDFS had selected 22 IHEs for this honor. Additional IHEs received awards from 2005 to 2009, bringing the total to 44 IHEs receiving recognition and funding. This grant program, which was restructured in 2008, is now the Models of Exemplary, Effective, and Promising Alcohol or Other Drug Abuse Prevention on College Campuses. Detailed information on the current models program structure and priorities is available online (www.ed.gov/osdfs).

For those receiving grants in 2005, 2006, and 2007, OSDFS designated model programs on the basis of a grant competition in which all applications were peer reviewed.[10] Eligible applicants

were IHEs that offered an associate or baccalaureate degree. The selected applicants described a program or policy that had been in place for at least two academic years, played a significant role in developing and-or maintaining a safe and healthy campus environment, and could feasibly be replicated or adapted in other college communities. Applicants also provide evidence of their program's or policy's effectiveness in reducing alcohol- and other drug-related problems on campus using outcome-based performance indicators.

The selected institutions received grants to maintain, improve, and continue to evaluate their model program and to disseminate information to other colleges and universities to encourage replication. The project period was for up to 15 months. A model program could not be a stand-alone effort but rather had to be integrated fully into a multifaceted and comprehensive prevention program. OSDFS emphasized that while educational and individually focused prevention programs were necessary, they were insufficient by themselves to create significant or long-lasting change. Interventions were needed at multiple levels to target individual student drinkers, the student population as a whole, the college, and the surrounding community. OSDFS asked its peer reviewers to evaluate each application rigorously using several selection criteria, notably the following:

1. The quality of the needs assessment and how well it relates to the program's goals and objectives.
2. The effectiveness with which the program is integrated into a comprehensive alcohol and other drug abuse prevention effort.
3. The level of institutional commitment, leadership, and support for alcohol and other drug abuse prevention efforts.
4. The clarity and strength of the institution's alcohol and other drug policies and the extent to which those policies are broadly disseminated and consistently enforced.
5. The extent to which students and employees are involved in the program design and implementation process.
6. The extent to which the institution has joined with community leaders to address alcohol and other drug issues.
7. If applicable, the steps the institution is taking to limit alcoholic beverage sponsorship, advertising, and marketing on campus, as well as to establish or expand upon alcohol-free living arrangements for students.
8. If applicable, the scope of the institution's efforts to change the culture of college drinking on its campus.[11]

Additional criteria were related to the quality of the evaluation methodology and the usefulness of the evaluation in assisting other campuses interested in implementing the program. The IHEs selected in 2005 to 2007 under the Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants initiative reflected the state of the art in campus-based alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programming.

Site Visit Protocol

The purpose of site visits to the model program grantees for the years 2005, 2006, and 2007 was to elicit information on the "lessons learned" at each site in order to assist other campuses develop and implement effective prevention programs on their campuses and in surrounding communities. Several staff members of the Department's Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention led site visits to the grantee institutions. Each staff member was accompanied on site by an outside expert on campus-based alcohol and other drug abuse prevention.

To obtain a broad picture of the campus prevention efforts that led to each campus being designated as a model program, co-site visitors interviewed from 4 to 15 people at each site, including presidents, vice-chancellors, deans of students and other senior administrators, model program staff members and evaluators, health services personnel, campus and community law enforcement officials, athletics directors, and students. For the list of questions that guided the interviews see the Appendix: Interview Questions (page 106).

The information gathered during the site visits was the basis for the crafting of the case histories that follow, including the quotes of those interviewed. The case histories reflect staffing, program operational status, and institutional support as of September 2008. Drafts of the case histories were shared with each IHE profiled and then revised for accuracy based on feedback provided.

New Insights on Successful Prevention

In 2005, 2006, and 2007 the U.S. Department of Education made 12 awards under its Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants. The grantees represented a diverse cross section of colleges and universities from around the country. Ranging from small, private colleges to large, public universities, their experiences in developing and implementing effective prevention programs on campus and in surrounding communities provide a number of lessons for other colleges and universities. The grantees were:

George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.
Gonzaga University, Spokane, Wash.
Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, N.Y.
Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, Calif.
Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.
Montclair State University, Montclair, N.J.
The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
University at Albany, State University of New York, Albany, N.Y.
University of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.
University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, Mo.
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Neb.
Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va.

Understanding about effective prevention gained from the 12 model program grantees during 2005–2007 in many ways mirrors the lessons from the first 22 model programs (1999–2004) recognized under this grant competition. These experiences and lessons are described in the Department's publication *Experiences in Effective Prevention: The U.S. Department of Education's Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants.*[12] This report examines the experiences of the second cohort of model program grantees and the additional insights they provided on the processes that lead to successful campus and community prevention efforts.

It should be noted that these 12 model programs benefited from the dissemination of a number of seminal reports published in the early 2000s; these reports summarized prevention research and included specific recommendations for developing effective prevention programs at colleges and universities (see Resources). Most notably, the NIAAA report *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges* (2002)[13] provided comprehensive research-based information on the development and implementation of programs related to alcohol abuse and high-risk drinking among college students. In addition, the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine report *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility* (2003)[14] includes evidence-based strategies for campuses and communities as well as recommendations for prevention efforts at the federal, state, and local levels.

In *Experiences in Effective Prevention*[15] the author synthesized information gained from site visits to identify the characteristics common to the 1999–2004 model programs that can be adapted for other campuses. Those core elements or broader lessons for prevention practitioners had to do with:

1. Exercising leadership
2. Building coalitions
3. Choosing evidence-based programs
4. Implementing strategic planning
5. Conducting a program evaluation
6. Working toward sustainability
7. Taking the long view

The following insights reflect the experiences of all 12 grantees in developing, implementing, and evaluating campus and community alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programs, projects, and campaigns. As evidenced in the following case histories, which provide detailed accounts of each campus's prevention efforts, there is wide diversity represented by these 12 institutions. This suggests that their experiences can provide guidance for others as they work to reduce alcohol- and other drug-related problems among college students and in surrounding communities.

Linking Prevention to the Institution's Mission, Values, and Priorities

For the most part, prevention efforts seek to "change the culture of drinking" among students, but one key element of success is to make sure that prevention is connected with the overarching mission and values of the institution. While institutions may differ in some areas, the core values of promoting education, good citizenship, the pursuit of excellence, as well as a priority of student safety all dictate support for prevention programs. Prevention also needs to be closely aligned with the current priorities of the institution. Making it a part of the fabric of the institution ensures that there is an ongoing commitment to protecting the health and safety of students through alcohol and other drug prevention.

For example, Gonzaga University infused its program with the Gonzaga University Creed (see page 26), which was developed by students. Gonzaga University's Vice President for Student Life Sue Weitz said, "It would have seemed odd here to have addressed alcohol and other drug issues outside the context of the kind of community we are building."

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) ensures that its prevention efforts are consistent with the goals and values of VCU's institutionwide strategic plan. At the University of Arizona prevention efforts are closely associated with institutional goals related to student retention and civic and neighborhood relations. The Admissions Office at George Mason University dispatches prevention materials to parents of admitted but not yet enrolled students as a testimony to the safe,

healthy, and caring environment that awaits their daughters and sons. The University of Missouri values engagement and empowerment and tells parents that the campus will empower students not to drink (see page 79).

At Hobart and William Smith Colleges, the essence of the mission statement is that the power of learning will set you free. By embedding alcohol prevention efforts into the research of faculty and students, it embodies the values of the college (see page 29). Eva S. Goldfarb, chair of Montclair State University's Department of Health and Nutrition Sciences, said, "Healthy students are better students, so there is a direct connection between alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programs and the academic life of the university."

Strategic Planning as an Ongoing, Dynamic Process

While strategic planning forms the basis for successful prevention programs, it must be both dynamic and nimble to reflect shifting priorities and concerns. For example, while the Ohio State University (OSU) developed a comprehensive prevention plan in the late 1990s through a strategic planning process, OSU revisits it periodically and "tweaks" it to reflect current experiences and data. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln annually reviews evaluation data on progress toward objectives and makes changes and modifications to specific objectives and strategies. At the University of Missouri-Columbia, Wellness Resource Center staff meetings are used to review accomplishments in light of the strategic plan and to make adjustments to the plan as suggested by process and outcome evaluation findings.

People usually want to move quickly to action, but it is important to spend time assessing what needs to be done. That ongoing assessment is at the core of strategic planning. Melissa Vito, vice president for student affairs at the University of Arizona, views its strategic plan as a living document. "Because we do so many types of programs, without that strategic plan it is hard to know if we are going in the right direction."

Of course, a strategic plan should not be viewed as an end in itself, and it is important to avoid the pitfalls of "aim, aim, aim" or "analysis paralysis." Nevertheless, strategic planning helps prevent mission creep and can help efforts remain consistent with the shifting priorities of the university. Having the strategic plan keeps prevention efforts on track.

Engaging the Campus Community in Data Collection and Evaluation

The model program grantees universally pointed to the importance of data collection and evaluation to support prevention efforts. From the use of various formal surveys to assess campus behavior and student wellness to more informal focus groups, intercept surveys, and online tools, the data collected inform decisions about what strategies to use and where to target efforts. Having a data-driven focus helps reduce potential conflicts over goals and objectives as the problems to be addressed can be substantiated by the data, and successes in reducing problems can be documented.

Campuses use various strategies to collect and analyze data both effectively and efficiently. University of Missouri's Wellness Resource Center has relationships with the Student Affairs Assessment Office and the Office of Institutional Research that help with data collection and analysis. Key members of the Michigan State University and Hobart and William Smith Colleges prevention teams are themselves researchers, so data collection and evaluation played a major part in the original design of their programs and are an integral part of their ongoing development. Montclair State University involves both faculty members and professional evaluation experts as consultants to provide assistance with evaluation efforts in the prevention program.

It is important to understand that there are multiple audiences for evaluation and data reports. For example, the University at Albany uses data to work proactively with the media. When a high-profile incident occurs off campus, the university can pull data from its neighborhood hotline to do a "reality check" and correct misperceptions about student behavior by community residents (see page 63).

Evaluation and data collection engage more people in the program. For example, campus researchers can help by conducting surveys and students can be recruited to do informal observations as part of an environmental scan. For example, in collecting anecdotal data, such as asking faculty members, administrative staff, and students such simple questions as "How is it going?" can help develop effective relationships on campus and thereby strengthen the community and its prevention efforts. Using multiple sources can help strengthen the data and make them more believable. Of particular value is student participation with faculty in research. If a prevention coordinator does the data collection, the results often don't carry enough weight to be credible to students and faculty. For example, at VCU, the wellness team has worked with nursing students to train them on how to conduct surveys and interpret the findings (see page 97).

Promoting Student Involvement

Model program grantees credit student involvement with much of their success. From more traditional peer education roles to assistance with data collection, program development, and message and material design, students provided perspectives that led to greater relevance of prevention messages and activities. VCU employed students who provided invaluable feedback on design issues and marketing materials for the campaign's target audience. Montclair State University considers one of the key aspects—and successes—of its model program to be providing research opportunities for students. Michigan State University used focus groups with students to help identify terminology for its prevention materials that would be consistent with the language students use.

Model program grantees consider student involvement to be essential for prevention. It is very difficult to develop effective prevention messages and programming without student input. Students know how to identify causes of problems and how to develop effective responses. In

addition, student involvement means shared ownership of the program and thus helps to transfer responsibility for behavior from the university administration to students themselves.

Paying Attention to Strategic Timing

Virtually all the model programs benefited one way or another from timing—whether it was an incident that captured campus and/or community attention and led to a focus on prevention issues; a change in campus leadership, such as a new president; or, like VCU's expansion of the number of residential students, a change in the very nature of the institution. In 2007, at the University of Arizona, new leadership in the Alumni Office that was more in sync with a desire to moderate campus drinking norms changed Homecoming by moving control of alcohol service from students to catering employees. Timing also can be affected by community readiness for change. By the time the University of Nebraska-Lincoln implemented its environmental prevention efforts, the groundwork had been laid for community acceptance through data collection and collaboration. Loyola Marymount University was undergoing programmatic and personnel shifts, so the new players on the scene took a pulse check of what was working and not just in terms of psychological services, prevention, intervention, and judicial affairs. Working in tandem with a new judicial affairs officer the project director brought about an understanding of the latest prevention research that spurred analysis and discussion of the current judicial affairs and other policy and enforcement practices (see page 37).

Critical incidents marshal the attention of those who would not normally pay attention to alcohol and other drug issues on campus. They can play a critical role in the progress on many campuses. For example, a 1998 alcohol-fueled disturbance that started on the Michigan State University campus and spilled over into East Lansing prompted the campus president to convene an Action Team whose recommendations jump-started prevention efforts (see page 43).

Timing is also important because it links to the strategic planning process. It is difficult to respond to emerging prevention issues without planning. That is why it is important to have a strategic plan that is flexible and in sync with current needs.

Honing Communication Skills

Communication is at the very heart of prevention efforts, whether it be through a formal communications campaign, such as the social norms marketing projects implemented at many of the model programs, or communication with the campus and surrounding community about the nature and extent of and solutions to alcohol and other drug abuse.

The model programs all learned that the language used to communicate messages about prevention needs to be carefully considered and crafted. Some campuses, such as Michigan State University and VCU, paid special attention to research on communication theory as well as message testing with the intended audience. Others, such as the University of Arizona and the University

of Nebraska-Lincoln, used communication strategies to help shape the discussion around alcohol and other drug problems. The University at Albany has developed a broad communications strategy that is part of the reporting cycle of the university, encompassing the president on down, including the prevention program director. “We know who the go-to people are, so we can keep the information flowing. And we are not shy about promoting our successes,” said Dolores Cimini, director of the university’s Middle Earth program.

Recommendations From the Model Programs

Stay Relevant

Prevention is all too often relegated to a sideline activity at colleges and universities, receiving token attention. The challenge for those concerned with reducing alcohol and other drug problems among students and in surrounding communities is demonstrating its relevance to the university's primary mission. While institutions may differ in some areas, the core values of promoting education, good citizenship, the pursuit of excellence, as well as a priority of student safety all dictate support for prevention programs. It is important for those working in prevention to stay connected with the other significant issues that are affecting colleges and universities, such as campus safety and security.

Engage in Strategic Planning

Developing an effective and sustained prevention effort requires a deliberate and structured process that includes the strategic planning process described in *Experiences in Effective Prevention.* But it is also very important to choose battles and focus on the areas where the project can be most effective. Concentrate on what can be done and be realistic about what can be accomplished at any given time.

Share Leadership

While leadership from presidents and senior administrators is key to the successful development and implementation of prevention efforts on campus and in surrounding communities, it is shared leadership that leads to a long-term commitment to prevention. Working across university sectors and linking with those who do similar work elsewhere lead to shared leadership. With a shared leadership approach more people both on campus and in the surrounding community have a stake in program success and sustainability. It is important to remember that people want to share successes. Because these issues are important to key stakeholders, having a communication plan to disseminate information about prevention efforts can lead to shared leadership as well.

Develop Communication and Media Savvy

Project directors and program administrators should be prepared to describe prevention efforts to multiple audiences. Communication strategies need to focus on internal communication on campus and external communication to the surrounding community, as well as dissemination of information to the field at large to advance effective prevention. Developing a "multilingual" approach to communication provides the ability to speak to either the "big picture" of prevention efforts or to focus on specifics, depending on the audience. It is important to shape the message when talking to others and to consider media broadly. Communication savvy means considering media, message, and messenger.

In addition, problems related to alcohol and other drug abuse routinely generate media interest. It is important to develop an understanding of how campus and local media work as well as build relationships with editors and reporters. Knowing how to work with the media can help ensure that accurate information is reported both on problems and solutions. Media are also effective channels for generating campus and community support for prevention efforts.

Adopt and Adapt Evidence-Based Approaches

More than two decades of prevention programming and evaluation means that those charged with implementing prevention programs can now choose from a range of strategies and approaches that have solid research evidence demonstrating their effectiveness. However, it is important for colleges and universities to select carefully those approaches most consistent with the campus culture and then adapt them to address the particular characteristics of the institution and surrounding community. Ongoing evaluation is important to determine whether the approach being used is having the intended effect, as is sharing evaluation results with colleagues through publications and presentations to advance the use of evidence-based approaches.

Case Histories

George Mason University

Gonzaga University

Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Loyola Marymount University

Michigan State University

Montclair State University

The Ohio State University

University at Albany, State University of New York

University of Arizona

University of Missouri-Columbia

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Virginia Commonwealth University

George Mason University

Fairfax, Va.

Healthy Expectations: Preventing High-Risk Drinking By Transforming Campus Cultures

Beginning Date: June 1, 2006
Ending Date: May 31, 2008
Project Director: David Anderson

Founded in 1972, publicly funded George Mason University is located in the heart of northern Virginia's technology corridor near Washington, D.C., and is the second largest university in the commonwealth of Virginia. In 2008 it enrolled a total of 29,889 students, of whom 17,812 were undergraduates, on three campuses located in Fairfax, Arlington, and Manassas.

Background

In 2000 Mason implemented its Healthy Expectations program to help first-year students make a healthy transition to college. The program was designed to complement traditional campus-based efforts, such as distributing alcohol and other drug education materials, through social norms marketing materials aimed at correcting students' misperceptions about the normative alcohol and other drug behavior on campus, and "life health" planning. It is based on seven life health principles that have to do with optimism, values, self-care, relationships, community, nature, and service. These principles emerged through intensive discussions at two conferences (1995 and 2000) at Notre Dame University to develop a way to create healthy campus communities and reduce the negative effect of alcohol and other drug abuse.

According to David Anderson, the project's director and co-editor of *Charting Your Course: A Life-long Guide to Health and Compassion,*[16] Healthy Expectations is designed to create a positive, proactive culture on campus that supports students in making responsible, informed choices about a range of issues common to the transition to college. This approach exposes students to life planning and transition strategies, assisting students to aspire to create foundations for development of a personal legacy about how they want to be remembered by helping students with their focus and their priorities.

Healthy Expectations was funded initially with a U.S. Department of Education grant in 2000 and was expanded in 2003 with a second grant from the Department.

Program Description

Mason received its model program grant award in 2006 in order to extend its Healthy Expectations initiative through an innovative strategy called COMPASS (creating, optimizing, mapping, planning, achieving, steering, and succeeding). The project goal was to "institutionalize campus culture–based approaches to address high-risk drinking through proactive planning processes on life health planning and transition issues." This component of Healthy Expectations engaged first-year students—3,500 in the 2007–08 academic year—in a reflective planning process, addressing the seven life health principles in relation to 31 topics relevant to students' college success, such as stress management, healthy eating, and alcohol use.

Mason's successful grant application proposed to enhance and disseminate COMPASS: A Roadmap to Healthy Living (CD-ROM and Web-based resource for Healthy Expectations). The COMPASS Web site is http://compass.gmu.edu.

The Healthy Expectations program exemplifies communication, collaboration, and sustainability, three of the essential elements associated with effective prevention. "This kind of work—preventing alcohol and other drug problems among college students—isn't Lone Ranger work," said Susan Stahley, director of the Office of Alcohol, Drug, and Health Education.

Communication

Healthy Expectations, based on social norms marketing concepts, includes print and electronic guides for a variety of campus roles, ranging from orientation leaders, residence advisers, and faculty. It emphasizes accuracy with alcohol messages, affirmation that "NOT everyone is doing it," and promotion of a positive outlook and personal growth opportunities during the first-year college experience. The program offers innovative electronic initiatives like Patriot Pulse hardware for polling audiences, a comprehensive Web site (http://www.healthyexpectations.gmu.edu), "Healthy Transitions" videos, in addition to facilitated discussions within the university's orientation course and residence halls, and residence adviser training.

The program communicates with students via a biweekly electronic newsletter and maintains an inventory of essays, worksheets, student feedback, and other resource materials around the seven life health principles, which, according to program literature, if addressed, should reduce demand for alcohol and other drugs. Healthy Expectations materials encourage students to adopt a Legacy of Life perspective on how they want to be remembered and to develop a personal plan addressing the seven principles of optimism, values, self-care, relationships, community, nature, and service.

Collaboration

Anderson, the Healthy Expectations project director, is a faculty member in Mason's College of Education and Human Development. He works extensively with student affairs staff members and others from several departments on the project. Anderson demonstrates "collaborative leadership" with numerous faculty, staff, and students. Project staff are involved in program material development and implementation. Project collaboration is essential in two ways. First, at the heart of Healthy Expectations are COMPASS resources, including the materials cited above, which are bundled with a copy of the university's course catalog, and a downloadable screensaver. Second, to author and update essays elaborating on the 31 healthy living topics, Healthy Expectations recruited subject matter experts from academic and administrative units at Mason. Moreover, the program is increasingly recruiting students to lend their postings to the COMPASS resource. All of these materials are located on the project's Web site.

Program implementation has enjoyed the cooperation of other university offices, such as Admissions, Housing and Residence Life, and various elements of University Life (Alcohol, Drug, and Health Education, Counseling and Psychological Services, Orientation, and Family Programs and Services) in promoting the COMPASS CD and Web site to students and parents. Anderson, at Mason since 1987, has forged cooperative relationships with these other offices, and collectively they demonstrate genuine concern for student well-being. Collaboration fostered by the Healthy Expectations project has facilitated increased staff communication and decision-making within the student affairs division. For example, the Activities and Incident Management meeting includes representatives of the university's Athletics Department, Housing and Residence Life, Police Department, and other University Life staff to assess weekend behavioral incidents and develop a more consistent approach to priority setting and response planning.

Sustainability

Program support at high administrative levels is important and generally comes from programs that support the institution's mission and priorities. As a relatively new campus, Mason describes itself as "innovative and entrepreneurial in spirit and utilizes its multi-campus organization and location near our nation's capital to attract outstanding faculty, staff, and students."[17] As at other competitive institutions, student recruitment is a major emphasis. Sustainability at Mason begins with Alan Merten, Mason president, and Sandra Hubler, vice president for University Life, who both support the Healthy Expectations COMPASS program. All staff interviewed believed the project will continue due to administrative support and the positive evaluation data.

For example, online surveys sent to students via e-mail in spring 2004, 2007, and 2008 yielded responses from 217 freshmen (the focus of the Healthy Expectations program) in 2004, 145 in 2007, and 351 in 2008. Among the positive changes were reductions in alcohol use in any amount in the past two weeks from 50.7 percent in 2004 to 55.1 percent in two weeks in 2008.

Andrew Flagel, Mason's dean of admissions and assistant vice president for student enrollment, stated that "the program will continue in one form or another." For him, data demonstrating tangible results are very important.

Mason's first-to-second-year retention rate has been advancing for 20 years and is now nearly 90 percent, he pointed out. Likewise, Flagel is concerned with recruitment and enrollment. The Mason Office of Admissions has begun to send information about Healthy Expectations and COMPASS to parents of admitted students, along with a cover letter, in the belief that parents have become the most important factor in the prospective student's decision to accept admission and actually enroll. COMPASS, said Flagel, is a way of marketing Mason to parents. COMPASS represents an evidence-based approach[18] "that demonstrates the university's engagement with alcohol and other drug issues in a positive, caring, and committed manner, not just through legal liability and enforcement of rules," said Flagel. Hence, Healthy Expectations is contributing to Mason's attractiveness to new students.

Others on campus likewise described how the COMPASS tools complement their respective units' responsibilities. Jeff Pollard, director of counseling and psychological services, mentioned that COMPASS content can be a useful reference during counseling sessions with students. Hortense Rascoe, assistant director for residential conduct, noted that residence advisers and residence directors use COMPASS materials. In addition, she said that students involved in misconduct can use COMPASS worksheets in the development of the reflective reports that are sometimes assigned during the sanction process.

Project sustainability and implementation extend beyond Mason. Many of the Healthy Expectations electronic and print materials can easily be adapted for use by other institutions. To that end, Anderson has created materials without Mason-specific references available on the COMPASS Web site. He also has solicited national professional organizations, such as the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, to adopt and distribute the resources. At least one other university (Black Hills State University, Spearfish, S.D.) has implemented the COMPASS materials in its comprehensive prevention program.

Strategic Planning

The Healthy Expectations COMPASS model grant program involved an insightful, comprehensive, and logical strategic planning process. The project was based on appropriate student development theory; evidence-based prevention strategies, such as social norms marketing;[19] and an awareness of student responsiveness to healthy living messages to construct a creative project that is integrated into the Mason comprehensive prevention program. Anderson co-developed the "percolate up" theory, which states that if students' needs and desires (their "root causes") for substance use are not addressed, the needs will continue and will be addressed through substance abuse. It emphasizes critical elements of alcohol abuse prevention by recognizing human development issues as well as organizational factors, resources, and planning.[20] The Healthy Expectations project applied this theory of life health planning with its emphasis on addressing root causes of student alcohol abuse, and it adapted social norms marketing principles to emphasize positive life health skills for first-year students.

Evaluation

Early process data, such as focus groups and key informant interviews, revealed low familiarity on campus with project media, such as the COMPASS CDs, which led to the adoption of new communication channels, including e-newsletters and periodic health promotion booths that also infuse alcohol and other drug information even if the booth's theme focuses on other health topics. Data also indicated low use by students of COMPASS worksheets outside of judicial or residential conduct proceedings. This motivated the project director to recommend that the provost draw on COMPASS content for the popular "Introduction to the University," a 100-level course for first semester of freshman year that is a one-credit elective.

Conclusions

The project addresses seven life health principles with innovative electronic and traditional discussion initiatives that resonate with the students. It is proactive and provides students with specific directions on what "to do" rather than what is prohibited. Also, the project complements the campus's current initiatives and is integrated into Mason's ongoing efforts and programs. The evaluation plan is also well developed and thorough. It contains both outcome and process measures linked to the goal and objectives. The available data on student alcohol and other drug use are going in a positive direction.

Gonzaga University

Spokane, Wash.

Project REAL—Culture, Campus, and Community: A Faith-Based and Community-Based Social Norms Approach Integrating Three Levels of Intervention

Beginning Date: Oct. 1, 2005
Ending Date: Dec. 31, 2006
Project Director: Karen Contardo

Founded in 1887, Gonzaga University (GU) is a private, four-year comprehensive university located in Spokane, Wash. Gonzaga's educational philosophy is based on the 450-year Ignatian model that aims to educate the whole person—mind, body, and spirit—through an integration of science and art, faith and reason, action and contemplation. At Gonzaga, *cura personalis*, care for the individual, is the guiding theme. In 2008 it enrolled a total of 7,229 students, including 4,515 undergraduates.

Background

GU's comprehensive prevention program developed fairly quickly following the formation of a campus task force in 2002 and receipt of a new grant from the U.S. Department of Education in 2003. Prior to that the campus's alcohol and other drug prevention efforts had been disparate and uncoordinated, consisting of several unconnected projects during the 1990s. However, with an interested and committed staff and a strong student body GU drew on existing information and program models to build a comprehensive program very well suited to its campus environment.

Mary Ritter Heitkemper, former project director, commented on the campus atmosphere that made their collaborative approach so successful: "It was a tough time on campus, and people were very interested in changing the culture—everyone wanted to chip in." "We didn't have an 'integrated' program," said Sue Weitz, vice president for student life, "We had a 'diffused' program." Then in 2003, Heitkemper applied for and won a Grant to Prevent High-Risk Drinking or Violent Behavior Among College Students from the U.S. Department of Education, and GU began to integrate its prevention initiatives.

With the grant providing resources, such as funds for staff to attend the annual social norms conference and the U.S. Department of Education's 17th Annual National Meeting on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention in Higher Education in 2003, GU's prevention work started to take on a different shape. Heitkemper commented that the campus staff reacted very positively to the new work. "It was exciting that [the prevention program] was a proven practice. We used the resources and research to build a strong base. We had national experts come in, and they sold it to the staff," she said.

Garnering campuswide support was an important part of building the program. According to Weitz, the campus was totally different in 2002 compared with 2008. Maureen Sheridan, director of the GU Counseling and Career Assessment Center, also commented on the timeliness of the new prevention work, stating, "Our students had pride in their heavy drinking traditions."

Weitz, who also is a former member of the Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council, said that over the 27 years she has been at GU, she has seen "a waxing and waning of alcohol issues, from having kegs for orientation to a 'no tolerance' reaction."

In 2002, GU established a committee and task force to address alcohol issues, with members from the counseling center, health services, and the faculty at large. The committee recommended that GU take a wellness approach, with a strong focus on prevention. Weitz welcomed the recommendations and in turn supported Heitkemper in writing the application for the 2003 U.S. Department of Education Grant Competition to Prevent High-Risk Drinking or Violent Behavior Among College Students (http://www.higheredcenter.org/grants/high-risk/awardees/). Once the work began to use the national data and GU-specific statistics, they had the information needed to focus on the positive decisions students could make that would be healthier, reduce risks, and meet the cultural values of being a GU student.

Program Description

GU's Project REAL is a social norms marketing campaign that uses communication strategies to provide students with accurate information regarding student norms. It is one part of an integrated, comprehensive program of OPPEN House (Opportunities in Programming and Prevention EducatioN), which operates as a small program under the overall direction of the vice president

for student life. Weitz was instrumental in identifying OPPEN House as a focal point. It is located in a small house on campus that provides a welcoming environment. "The house was available and we wanted to devote this resource to supporting our growing prevention work," said Weitz.

Under the direction of Karen Contardo, director of Student Wellness and Prevention Education, OPPEN House contains a network of projects operating at three levels of intervention to create a campus environment that supports healthy and responsible student decisions regarding alcohol and other drug use: the whole student body, students deemed to be at risk, and students who have been sanctioned.

At the level of the whole student body there is a peer outreach program called G PLUS, which stands for Gonzaga Peers Listening to and Understanding Students (depicted as G+ on T-shirts, signs, and other program materials). There is also Programs After Dark (PAD), a student-run program of alcohol-free alternative social activities that take place in a house called "da Pad." Another component is the campuswide Project REAL social norms marketing campaign, which GU adapted to reflect its strong community culture. There is also a campus and community coalition that addresses off-campus issues and collaborates on policy development, as well as some related college policy initiatives, including Good Samaritan and bystander policies, both of which reflect the campus values of helping others and taking personal responsibility for one's actions. These policies encourage individual students to intervene when fellow students are in danger from an alcohol or other drug overdose or the threat of violence.

For students deemed to be at risk, such as freshmen, GU adapted the Project REAL social norms marketing campaign as a "small group alcohol abuse prevention curriculum" in freshman orientation and in the Pathways classes. Pathways classes are an extended introduction to college life in general, and to GU more specifically, that are conducted during the first half of a student's first semester.

Finally, for students who have been sanctioned under the residence hall disciplinary system for violating the alcohol policies OPPEN House provides Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS) in a modified small group format.

Leadership for all elements of this comprehensive strategy is provided by Contardo as project director, though all the programs involve significant participation from both undergraduate and graduate students, residence hall staff, other members of campus staff, and community members.

Adaptation of the Social Norms Marketing Campaign

Under the guidance of Heitkemper and Contardo, GU adapted the social norms marketing campaign to the needs and culture of the campus by integrating alcohol and other drug abuse prevention messages with social norms messages about the GU campus culture. The idea was to develop messages to correct misperceptions regarding student behaviors that also reinforce the student culture and community values. Messages were based on six "student voices" that

were identified through focus groups: community, volunteering, helping friends, spirituality, drinking, and responsibility. Reflecting those voices, the theme of the campaign became "REAL—OPPEN—Just the Facts: Provides Students With Accurate Information About Community, Responsibility to Friends, Drinking, Volunteering, and Spirituality."

This was an innovative and somewhat controversial adaptation of the social norms marketing approach, but Contardo and senior campus leaders attributed the campaign's success to this innovation. Weitz said, "It was important to us to link the prevention program directly to our mission and values; we couldn't have done it otherwise . . . it would have seemed odd to address these issues outside the context of the kind of community we are building."

Sheridan described the approach as "very critical" and strongly related to the GU mission. "We started using language that fit our culture," she explained, and in the process developed a program that was efficient and appropriate to GU students.

Sheridan added, "We didn't have the staff to 'enforce' the alcohol laws, so we shifted the emphasis to stress helping the students to understand state laws so they could follow them on their own. That was the efficient part. The cultural part was approaching it as a question of how to use the gifts of God in a healthy way. This meant we could be very respectful of the student as a person, but still do the teaching piece. It is how we support them in becoming intelligent and reflective about issues as opposed to simply imposing our judgment on how they should behave."

Contardo and Heitkemper discussed their approach with Jeanne Far, a psychiatrist in Spokane, Wash., who was acting as a consultant to the project. Far initially had reservations about adding the community values messages to the misperceptions correction messages. However, after examining the focus group data and consulting with campus staff and student leaders, she lent her support to the approach. According to Heitkemper, Far was fascinated with the GU campus culture and how different it was from other campuses she had worked with on social norms marketing campaigns.

The staff developing the campaign employed other community values in implementing the program. Including and respecting all members of the community is one such value. For example, Heitkemper related how they invited the head of the custodial staff to be part of the committee. He had been concerned about the effect of student drinking behavior as he and his staff cleaned up the trash and other evidence of excessive drinking on a regular basis. He suggested that his staff could put up campaign flyers in the restrooms as part of their cleaning and maintenance work. This broad involvement is typical of how GU built the prevention campaign.

During 2002 and 2003 other prevention initiatives to address dangerous drinking were taking root. The combination of the task force, Weitz's office, and Heitkemper's work provided a framework within which the initiatives could be built and coordinated. The 2003 grant to develop

a campuswide social norms marketing campaign drew on student involvement, principally the peer education G+ group, and with the support of the national experts serving as consultants, this work formed the basis for related initiatives. At that time, GU students formed a chapter of BACCHUS-Gamma (Greeks Advocating the Mature Management of Alcohol), the international association of college- and university-based peer education programs. Their participation in the social norms marketing campaign provided valuable cross-fertilization: they learned from data from a number of sources, including the American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment survey, and their perspectives strengthened the campaign messages.

At the same time PAD, which organized alcohol-free alternative social activities, took off. In a collaborative effort, the housing director, Dennis Colestock, and Contardo agreed that this program of large-scale events and late-night programming would be planned and implemented by four students and supervised by the OPPEN House professional staff, as is the G+ program. These students, known as resident programming assistants, are selected each year through a competitive process to live in "da PAD" house. According to the brochure, "PAD provides late-night entertainment for Gonzaga students. Many of these events are collaborative projects with other [student] clubs." The activities are creative and varied, drawing large crowds from the whole student body—about 200 is considered a small turnout for these events. In addition, PAD and G+ hosted alcohol awareness events at the highest drinking occasions—Friday and Saturday nights, between 10:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m.—to provide a balance of information and environment-changing alternative activities. PAD events are popular and successful, and students vie for the opportunity to live in the PAD house and plan and run the events, which have become an integral part of the campus community.

At the other end of the continuum from activities for the general student body is BASICS in a modified group format for sanctioned students. This evidence-based approach is another example of the strong collaboration and cooperation between the OPPEN House staff and the residence life staff. With training and assistance from Jason Kilmer, acting assistant professor in psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the University of Washington, Contardo implemented BASICS to embody the same values of respect for the students' ability to make healthy choices independently that GU also built into the social norms marketing campaign and PAD programs.

Among the new practices put forth by Contardo and adopted at GU in 2006 is the Good Samaritan practice, which encourages students to "offer help and assistance to others in need." Once again grounded in the community values, the policy says in so many words that calling for medical help when a fellow student is impaired by alcohol is "the right thing to do." This practice has worked so well for the campus that in the 2006–07 academic year, it was expanded to apply to all kinds of distress or need, not just alcohol impairment.

Sustainability

In terms of working toward sustainability, parts of the OPPEN House Project REAL program have made significant progress. Because the BASICS component of the program is a part of the system to address violations, there are resources beyond the grant to support that aspect of the program. Similarly, by designating a residence house as the PAD house, the project made a commitment to involve students in developing and implementing late-night programming. G+ is a popular student organization and has been well integrated into the fabric of student life. With all of these program components, of course, an administrative decision could reverse the progress made (for example, the PAD house could be reassigned to another use), but this is often the case for programs on campus. The important issue is that these elements currently exist and, coupled with the data demonstrating the prevention success of the OPPEN House strategy, provide a foundation for continuing to build toward sustainability.

Conclusions

This program reflects and supports each of the seven core elements described in *Experiences in Effective Prevention: The U.S. Department of Education's Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants*, with particular emphasis on leadership, choosing evidence-based programs, and implementing an evaluation plan. In addition, the program has been very successful in adapting well-known (and well-regarded) prevention programs to meet the needs and characteristics of a particular campus. One of GU's strengths as an IHE is its robust and distinct campus character. Far from taking any one of the components of this comprehensive program "off the shelf," the Gonzaga team has molded each part of its comprehensive program to be uniquely reflective of the mission, culture, and values of GU. The data attest to the success of this approach, and students affirm the effectiveness of the programs. One measure of the power and pervasiveness of the community culture used to infuse the program is the Gonzaga University Creed developed during the 2005–06 academic year by students and adopted in fall 2006. All Gonzaga students subscribe to it at their own initiative.

Gonzaga University Creed
As members of the Gonzaga Community:
We embrace Jesuit traditions of service, spirituality, social justice, and leadership.
We demonstrate honesty and integrity through respect for ourselves, others, and our community.
We celebrate all people and cultures in pursuit of the greater good.
I choose to be a member of the Gonzaga community.
I am a ZAG: I am a Bulldog;
Together, WE ARE GONZAGA.

Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Geneva, N.Y.

Most Valuable Players—A Model Program Reinforcing Positive Norms, Correcting Misperceptions, and Reducing High-Risk Drinking Among Student Athletes

Beginning Date: Oct. 1, 2005
Ending Date: July 31, 2007
Project Directors: H. Wesley Perkins and David W. Craig

Founded in 1822 (Hobart for men)—and again in 1906 (William Smith for women)—Hobart and William Smith (HWS) is a private coeducational liberal arts institution with an enrollment of 1,970 in 2008. It is located in Geneva, N.Y., on the shores of Seneca Lake in the Finger Lakes district.

Background

When H. Wesley Perkins, professor of sociology at HWS, arrived on campus in 1978, he became concerned about student drinking. Perkins pointed out that HWS has virtually all the characteristics that put students at risk for alcohol-related problems and heavy drinking. Almost all the students are undergraduates, single, and of traditional age, with 95 percent living on campus. In addition, HWS has an active Greek life and a high proportion of student athletes. Other risk factors include being located in the Northeast, with its higher drinking rates in general, and being a socially and religiously liberal campus, with relatively affluent students. All this, coupled with the then legal drinking age of 18, led to HWS's reputation as a party school, with the nickname "Camp HoHo." Nevertheless, according to Perkins, even then the majority of students were not engaging in high-risk drinking.

During his first year at HWS, Perkins and Alan Berkowitz, then the counseling center director, began looking at data more intentionally and added questions to student surveys to determine what respondents believed about other students' drinking patterns. They discovered "huge gaps" between students' actual behaviors and attitudes and their perceptions of the norms. Perkins and Berkowitz began publishing articles about the potential implications of these misperceptions.[21]

Initially their research was of primarily intellectual interest, but it soon became a focal point for prevention efforts at HWS. The research gained the attention of the U.S. Department of Education, which provided a grant in 1989 for skills training to correct student misperceptions of norms, followed by a 1990 grant for a theoretical paper on the related components of peer norm perceptions and prevention.[22]

When Richard Hersh became the president of HWS in 1991, he wanted to change the campus culture related to drinking. Over the next several years he put an end to some traditional campus events that involved heavy drinking and provided support for prevention activities, including funding for the Alcohol Education Project to design and implement a prevention program aimed at correcting harmful student misperceptions about campus alcohol use.

During this same period the HWS curriculum had an interdisciplinary focus, with courses being team taught by faculty from different departments. To foster exchanges and interdepartmental cooperation, the provost initiated a Friday lunchtime faculty-development series, which included a presentation on research conducted by faculty. Perkins and Berkowitz presented their research at one of these events and attracted the attention of David Craig, a biochemist in the Chemistry Department, who was using alcohol metabolism as a course topic. The presentation led Craig to consider enhancing alcohol's presence in the curriculum. Subsequently, Perkins and Craig realized that alcohol was a perfect topic to engage students in interdisciplinary discourse and study from both biomedical and sociocultural perspectives.

Beginning in 1995, with the help of a U.S. Department of Education grant, Perkins and Craig decided to do a focused initiative on the notion of the power of misperceptions, since HWS had a long tradition of gathering data and had already done some of the initial research on this topic. One of the first interventions was to design and implement an interdisciplinary course on alcohol use and abuse integrating both biomedical and sociocultural perspectives and research. Students in this course would conduct research about alcohol use on campus, participate in campus learning activities, and develop media designed to correct harmful misperceptions about alcohol use norms on campus.

The project also designed and promoted extensive printed and electronic media interventions to reduce these misperceptions among students, which, in turn, dramatically reduced problem drinking. These interventions are detailed in *A Multifaceted Social Norms Approach to Reduce*

High-Risk Drinking: Lessons from Hobart and William Smith Colleges, a case study publication available at the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Center.[23] Perkins and Craig have continued co-directing the HWS Alcohol Education Project since then. The project received a model program award in 1999 for this successful campuswide effort and then again in 2005 for focused efforts bringing documented reductions in high-risk drinking among intercollegiate athletes.

Program Description

HWS's Most Valuable Players (MVP) project received an Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses grant in 2005 for its successful efforts in reducing high-risk drinking among intercollegiate athletes. MVP builds on the research conducted by Perkins and Berkowitz,[24] as well as experiences from the 1996 and 1999 U.S. Department of Education grant awards to Perkins and Craig that funded a project to test the social norms approach campuswide. HWS implemented a comprehensive set of initiatives to reduce harmful misperceptions about norms for drinking behavior among students. Called the HWS Alcohol Education Project, the goal was to communicate to the campus that a majority of students consume alcohol moderately or not at all, while only a minority engage in high-risk drinking.

The project introduced a campus mystery about the meaning of the equation "2/3 = 1/4." The mystery generated a great deal of conversation and speculation. Following a saturation media campaign using posters and the campus newspaper slowly publishing clues about the equation's meaning, the answer was revealed: Two-thirds of HWS students drink only one-fourth of the alcohol consumed, based on student survey data of drinking practices. Follow-up posters and ads featured a graphic of this skewed distribution and other related data from surveys.

The Alcohol Education Project also created "Campus Factoids™" to present information on a range of topics, including current social issues, academic successes of students, and demographics of incoming students. Factoids offered a mix of serious, disturbing, and humorous facts as well as information about student alcohol and other drug use norms in its weekly list of facts. The Campus Factoids program started in one campus computer lab, with only one in seven of the facts being about alcohol. The goal was to use the Campus Factoids to create "a broad picture of campus life." Craig said that he did not want Campus Factoids to be perceived as only about alcohol, but rather he wanted them to "create an intellectually vibrant community in which student attitudes and opinions are used to stimulate debates on campus."

As part of a first-year seminar course that Craig teaches, students conducted late-night double-blind breathalyzer surveys on campus and disseminated the information in multiple ways, including through research poster displays, radio spots, programs in the residence halls, and stories for the campus newspaper. Students in the class could talk with other students about the research to help them understand what it really meant. The first-year seminar class performed surveys on

alcohol use and perception of use by others with remote audience response devices, better known as "clickers." The "clicker approach" served simultaneously as a mechanism to collect anonymous survey data and as an intervention strategy, since the information obtained in each class can be used immediately to have conversations about misperceptions right in the room.

For the student athlete project that started in 2001, Craig had what he called "a perfect situation" for using technology for surveying, with the goal of surveying the entire student athlete population. Athletes would sign up for 30-minute time blocks in a computing lab. All received the same password to ensure anonymity. With each time block, the password changed, preventing multiple responses from any individual student. Every session included athletes from a mix of teams, and in the end 85 percent of student athletes participated in the survey. Sixteen other institutions have since used this approach to survey their entire student bodies.

As part of the MVP program, student athletes received "E-Bits" e-mails from Perkins and Craig, as did coaches and trainers, which communicated results from the surveys. In addition, Craig, like a number of faculty members, is a Hobart Athletic Faculty Fellow, spending time with the lacrosse team at their practices and attending their games.

While some students demonstrated some resistance to the information disseminated via the Campus Factoid program, the fact that they did so by posting responses in an online discussion called "Reactoids" allowed Perkins and Craig the chance to write back and explain where the information came from.

At the beginning of the surveying initiative with student athletes, the athletics program was nervous, not wanting to have any "bad press." Perkins and Craig initiated a meeting with the coaches and showed them mock-ups of what positive social norms messages would look like using data about student athletes from earlier student surveys. They were able to gather and disseminate hard data about what student athletes do with their time, demonstrating a high level of engagement outside of the athletic realm, such as the large percentage of HWS athletes that go on to graduate school. Part of this initial process involved "breaking down the fear." Craig and Perkins had support from both the Hobart and William Smith athletics directors. There is a continuum among the coaches, with those who are highly supportive of the program, seeing the benefit to current athletes and even using the information in recruiting efforts, and still a few who perceive it to be a waste of their athletes' time.

David Diana, associate dean of wellness and director of Alcohol and Other Drug Programs, said that an important aspect of the MVP program is that it helps highlight the wonderful things the student athletes are doing beyond their athletic performance. In addition, MVP involves student athletes speaking with other athletes, using small gender-based groups under Diana's direction. Having more than one or two drinks after athletic competition can hinder the recovery process.

Some athletic teams have had a "48 hour" rule about no drinking alcohol before a game. Some teams have voluntarily gone "dry" during the season and have reported improvements in athletic performance and recovery. But Diana noted that athletes tend to be at greater risk when they are out of season, thus the need for programming throughout the year.

Multifaceted Efforts

Diana said that for alcohol and other drug initiatives to be sustainable, support must come "from the top down." In 1999, when Diana arrived on campus, an alumnus of HWS had provided funding for the Alcohol and Other Drug Programs, which continued until 2001. But now the president allocates the necessary funds for the program, including funding a director, assistant director, and administrative support.

Diana's office offers alcohol education seminars that incorporate social norms data and information on marijuana, as well as Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS), an evidence-based intervention designed to help students make better decisions about alcohol use. Parents are notified if their student is placed on "social probation," or if he or she is taken to the hospital for an alcohol-related overdose. According to Diana, HWS has a good relationship with Geneva Police, and there is a police presence downtown on weekends. While HWS does not have a campus and community coalition with Geneva, the campus has been part of the Finger Lakes Collegiate Task Force for a number of years. This task force includes representatives from both Monroe and Ontario counties, nine IHEs, local treatment providers, and county law enforcement. The task force secured a training grant from the state of New York. In 2008, Perkins facilitated a training on social norms and George Parks, of the Addictive Behavior Research Center at the University of Washington, conducted a session on advanced BASICS skills. Another intent of the task force is to engage owners of local taverns and other establishments that serve alcohol by highlighting the benefits of training managers and staff on ways to sell and serve alcohol responsibly.

Diana noted that, when both he and Perkins were away from HWS in 2006, student surveys found a "blip" or spike in alcohol consumption among that year's incoming class, which subsequently translated to a "blip" in the next year's sophomore class.

Rocco L. Capraro, associate dean at Hobart, has been at HWS since the early 1980s. He described the empirical evidence that demonstrates the effect of the multifaceted alcohol and other drug prevention efforts, seeing the benefits "across the institution." According to Capraro, one benefit of the social norms marketing campaign is that it has "provided a benchmark language to have a campuswide discussion." For example, Diana can use the social norms information during BASICS interventions with students. Capraro, who directs the sexual assault prevention program at HWS, has introduced social norms data on sexuality and sexual assault issues. He said that the misperception that "everyone is having sex but me" is a risk factor and needs to be addressed.

The strategy of infusing alcohol topics into the curriculum has resulted in administrators and faculty attending workshops, together discussing the student experience. This has helped to build "a common language and a common focus." Capraro said that the effort involves "a permanent sales campaign . . . you are always marketing the marketing program!" Furthermore, he added, the breathalyzer research has helped to break down stereotypes of "raucous student life" and also has helped to break down the stereotype of research as an activity of "the ivory tower."

Presidential Leadership

Mark Gearan, former director of the Peace Corps, has been president of HWS for the past eight years. He said that the MVP project "is particularly important, due to the high level of athletic involvement among our students. We have an athletic culture and ethic." As a result of this culture, Gearan said that MVP has been "a pretty organic project for us," with "tremendous buy-in from the athletic directors and the academic deans. All take the role of the student athlete seriously, with an appreciation of the entire student experience."

According to Gearan, the social norms marketing campaign highlighted "the range of what HWS students are about." He engaged in discussion with Perkins and Craig on ways to "deepen it further and broaden the discussion to incorporate service learning and civic engagement." He added that the campaign has generated discussion on campus.

Conclusions

The HWS Alcohol Education Project's social norms marketing campaign literally illustrates the "textbook" version of this prevention strategy. The data that Perkins and Craig have amassed over the years have helped to bridge the divide between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. The fact that both Perkins and Craig have been long-term faculty members at HWS has added to the credibility of their research and its use in campus prevention initiatives. In applying the social norms approach to athletes through the MVP project, they have further demonstrated the strategy's effectiveness.

The Campus Factoids, including those developed for the MVP program, now seems to be an integral part of the HWS culture, being continually updated and "refreshed" with new vehicles for disseminating the data. This continued use helps prevent the student population from becoming "blind" to the campaign and its messages. Student involvement in the research, through courses taught by Perkins and Craig and responses to frequent surveys, increases buy-in among the student population.

President Gearan has brought a philosophy to HWS that fosters engagement, community, and civic involvement. He believes that these conditions increase the likelihood that HWS students will succeed both in and beyond their college experience. He has demonstrated a high level of respect for and investment in campus alcohol and other drug prevention and intervention initiatives.

While social norms marketing is "embedded" in the HWS community, the fact that the campaign did not target a recent year's incoming students indicates that there still needs to be a broader ownership of this initiative. Clearly, it is an essential component of the work, as illustrated by the "blip" that was seen in drinking behavior in the absence of that campaign. The slightly higher drinking level among that cohort was seen as significant enough to warrant continuation of social norms efforts with incoming students.

The MVP program has established a strong peer education component of the athletics department, as well as a data stream that allows the establishment of positive norms among the student athletes. The athletes seemed to respond to positive peer information about norms, both from the educational sessions as well as teammates enforcing the expectations around alcohol and other drug use.

Perkins and Craig have successfully disseminated their research on a national level, to the benefit of campuses and communities alike. While the specific approaches and strategies at HWS may not be replicable on all campuses, the reliance upon valid data and the fidelity to a true social norms marketing approach set the standards by which other campuses can assess their efforts.

Loyola Marymount University

Los Angeles, Calif.

Heads UP: A Model Alcohol Prevention Program

Beginning Date: Oct.1, 2005
Ending Date: Dec. 31, 2006
Project Director: Joseph LaBrie

Founded in 1911, Loyola Marymount University (LMU), located in West Los Angeles, is a Catholic university rooted in the Jesuit and Marymount traditions of "encouragement of learning, education of the whole person, and service of faith and the promotion of justice," as enunciated in the LMU mission statement. Its enrollment in 2008 included 5,746 undergraduate, 1,899 graduate, and 1,327 law school students.

Background

LMU stepped up its alcohol prevention efforts in the aftermath of its spring 2003 Charter Ball, an annual evening of dancing and food. Concerns regarding student drinking led to the event being designated "alcohol-free." Nevertheless, before the evening ended, 21 ambulances had been called to campus to respond to alcohol-related incidents. Shortly after the event Lane Bove, vice president for student affairs, issued a universitywide challenge to change the campus culture related to high-risk drinking.

Joseph LaBrie, an associate professor of psychology and a member of LMU's Jesuit Community who had lived in freshman residence halls, spearheaded the development of the Heads UP project, which was conceived as a campuswide, nested series of interventions focusing on high-risk drinkers and the broader campus culture. Although the university had a growing awareness of the need to address high-risk drinking—with data from student surveys using the Core Alcohol and

Drug Survey[25] showing 50 percent of LMU students engaging in at least one episode of binge drinking in the month prior to the survey—it had not engaged in a coordinated effort to address problem drinking. With support from a U.S. Department of Education Grant to Prevent High-Risk Drinking or Violent Behavior Among College Students, Heads UP was implemented in July 2003.

Program Description

The programmatic approach for Heads UP emerged from concerns over the recidivism rate for students who were referred to judicial affairs for alcohol and other drug violations. In addition, the judicial sanctions in place were not based on evidence of effectiveness that had emerged over the past decade. LaBrie and Francesca Piumetti, the chief judicial affairs officer, engaged in discussions and one-on-one meetings with key student affairs staff that led to the development of a program based on motivational interviewing[26] to replace the existing judicial intervention. This new approach required training for both judicial affairs and residential life staff, which was provided by the Heads UP program team.

In addition, Heads UP partnered with a wellness work group in the Division of Student Affairs that met monthly to plan events and react to specific student life concerns. These groups jointly sponsored specific campaigns designed to educate students and promote a message to help students reduce their risk of harm related to alcohol and other drug use. These campaigns included a presidential letter to incoming students' parents regarding alcohol use, late-night activities, and social norms marketing, as well as initiatives aimed at educating and including faculty and staff in a campuswide dialogue on the role of alcohol in student life.

The Heads UP program uses a nested approach to prevention, focusing a particular intervention on a targeted at-risk population within the framework of a comprehensive campus-based prevention program and relying heavily on a close collaboration between academic affairs and student affairs. It was that collaboration that led to the success of the program. In particular, with LaBrie's role as a faculty member and his commitment to research, the program has been run with assessment and research always in mind.

The centerpiece for Heads UP is the motivational interviewing–based group intervention targeted at high-risk freshmen and students sanctioned by the university for violating campus alcohol policies. This intervention focused on motivating students to reduce risky drinking (or reinforcing their decisions not to drink). It is based on several empirically validated elements of motivational interviewing, which uses a nonconfrontational and nonjudgmental facilitation style. These elements are social norms strategies, expectancy challenges (examining what people think the outcome of drinking will be), decisional balance (weighing the costs and benefits of changing), relapse prevention, and behavioral goals.[27] This group intervention is aided by an initial individual assessment, which raises student awareness about previous behaviors, and follow-up monitoring of behavior. Further, Heads UP has broadened its intervention efforts over the years and now also

intervenes with Greek students and student athletes, two other groups at risk for harms related to drinking.

Elements of Success

While the model program focused on motivational enhancement interventions targeting first-year students (administered during the first semester) and sanctioned students, a number of other initiatives—a Web site, late-night and other student social and recreational options, a parent and student letter, and faculty-staff lunches—created synergies for this population and affected the broader campus environment. Many of these additional activities were heavily dependent on other grant funds and continued to varying degrees.

At LMU prevention efforts have been closely tied to the mission and core values of the institution to develop whole students—mind, body, and spirit—which has led to a shared language and a shared sense of connection and purpose. In addition, because of the program's close affiliation with academic affairs, these efforts draw heavily from prevention research.[28] In addition, the project has disseminated information on its experiences in numerous journal articles.[29]

The Heads UP program has taken advantage of many formal mechanisms on campus—such as judicial structures, residence life staff training, and late-night programming—to embed itself in the larger environment and infrastructure at LMU. This model program was developed at an opportune moment in time, with deep and strong support at multiple levels and it has relied heavily on a charismatic, well-liked leader in LaBrie, the model program project director. In 2008 it focused on creating a sustainability plan and thinking strategically about maintaining a comprehensive prevention focus for the campus.

LaBrie sat on several academic and other committees and was the project director on numerous research projects. His strong ties to the campus community have served him well as the driver of the Heads UP program. When Heads UP was being developed, Loyola was undergoing programmatic and personnel shifts. The new players on the scene took a pulse check of what was working and not just in terms of psychological services, prevention, intervention, and judicial affairs. Working in tandem with a new judicial affairs officer, LaBrie brought an understanding of the latest prevention research and spurred analysis and discussion of Loyola judicial affairs and other policy and enforcement practices. He also suggested ways to build on the work of an existing but underutilized wellness work group, which was largely activity-focused.

Linking this discussion to the core values and the Jesuit mission of the institution created the momentum needed to move forward. LMU's campus culture focuses on the importance of positive relationships. It was very important to the success of Heads UP that the program be developed by building community capacity through strong interpersonal relationships among students, faculty, and staff. However, this could not have been accomplished without strong support and

leadership—not only from the president but also from the vice president for student affairs, who could bring resources to bear to accomplish the tasks needed to support Heads UP.

Heads UP has been a successful and influential part of the university community since 2003. In addition to intervening directly with students at risk for heavy drinking (freshman males and females and adjudicated students), the program has affected the entire campus in a positive way. It has united the university under one consistent message of "harm reduction/responsible drinking" and has galvanized campus groups. It has created a structured network of alcohol prevention efforts among the community as a whole. The program director and staff now serve as the university's main resource for addressing alcohol issues on campus. The program also has provided trainings, consultation, and guidance to various campus departments.

Program Evaluation and Dissemination

During its first two years Heads UP recruited 239 freshman male volunteers to receive the single-session motivational enhancement intervention. The number of drinks consumed per month for all participants decreased by approximately 32 percent, and the number of adverse consequences from use decreased by approximately 40 percent. Additionally, 47 percent of the freshman males who did not participate in the intervention received alcohol-related sanctions from the university, compared with 23 percent of the students who received the intervention. In brief, the intervention reduced participant drinking behavior and helped prevent students from receiving university alcohol sanctions. Results from the first year of the project were published as a full article in *Addictive Behaviors.*[30] This success laid the foundation for future targeted interventions.

Program evaluation is quite well detailed in the model program grant application, final reports, and research publications[31] resulting from the project. Among the freshmen going through the intervention, rates of drinking decreased, as did recidivism in the judicial program.

Information on the project has been disseminated primarily in two ways—through the program Web site (http://www.lmu.edu/studentlife/Heads_Up_.htm) and the publication of more than 30 research articles written by the project director and other key team members detailing results of the project. An additional dissemination tool in the planning stages is a program manual.

Conclusions

The critical issue that LMU faced is sustainability. The model program began in order to fill a clear gap in services and has met an obvious need. Critical aspects of it will be sustained through the efforts of judicial affairs, and policies have been put in place to create the necessary infrastructure to support this. However, the training of judicial, residence life, residential hall, and other key staff has not been addressed. Neither has implementation of the intervention itself once the staff conducting the brief group motivational enhancement interventions are no longer supported by grant funding.

The campus is noted for one of its Jesuit core values—*cura personalis,* care of the whole person—and the vice president for student affairs and other key staff understand the importance of addressing dangerous and illegal alcohol use. While the plan for doing so in a comprehensive way with the transition from Heads UP as principal player to institutional support is still in development, there is interest in using an existing wellness committee to take a longer and more comprehensive view of campus prevention issues. This existing structure combined with the energy and enthusiasm of the project director and the many key elements already in place could be linked to existing efforts in a strategic way.

LaBrie has the trust, credibility, and track record to focus the committee on the use of evidence-based and comprehensive practices while at the same time delegating aspects of the model program to other departments, such as psychological services. The model program and campus might have benefited if the program had been embedded in a strategic plan for prevention rather than linked loosely with several other grant-funded programs. Though great synergies were created, these were almost accidental and have put the Heads UP program team in the position of leading prevention for the campus, even though the team members see themselves as researchers and gave ownership of this program to the Division of Student Affairs.

Nevertheless, having qualified researchers within academic affairs collaborate with the student affairs division promoted success. It allowed for the development and implementation of state-of-the-art interventions.

Branding of the program was important. Early on, the Heads UP program was used as a brand to cosponsor many events happening on campus. Soon the brand became well known to students and faculty alike. It was universally recognized as a campuswide harm-reduction program. As grant funding for several programmatic aspects diminished, the brand continued to be well known to some students, but largely because they had participated in one of the project's studies.

Finally, an important element of the success of Heads UP was its tie-in with the core values of the institution to develop whole students (mind, body, spirit), which led to a shared language and a shared sense of connection and purpose.

Michigan State University

East Lansing, Mich.

Disseminating Proven Models for Challenging the Environment of High-Risk Drinking

Beginning Date: July 1, 2007
Ending Date: Sept. 30, 2008
Project Directors: Dennis Martell and Sandi Smith

Michigan State University (MSU), located in East Lansing, was founded in 1855 and was the prototype for the 69 land-grant institutions established under the *Morrill Act of 1862.* In 2008 it enrolled 36,072 undergraduate and 9,973 graduate and professional students.

Background

During the late 1990s several unfortunate events occurred at MSU that were related to high-risk drinking. On May 1, 1998, a disturbance that began as an on-campus protest against MSU's newly adopted policy banning alcohol from Munn Field, a popular spot for tailgate parties, moved into East Lansing and contributed to increased tension between the city and the university. Dennis P. Martell, coordinator of health education at the MSU Olin Health Center and co-principal investigator for MSU's Social Norms Research Project, said that these incidents, many of which are related to celebratory drinking, did not involve just MSU students. "The events where much of this high-risk drinking takes place, such as Halloween and the NCAA basketball tournament, are big draws for students from other colleges and universities as well as other young adults," he said.

In response to growing concerns about problems related to what was seen as "celebratory drinking," then MSU President Peter McPherson formed an Action Team of more than 30 individu-

als—including MSU students and administrators, East Lansing city officials and residents, and others from the greater Lansing area—both to examine issues regarding high-risk drinking by students and to recommend a course of action to improve the atmosphere on the campus and in the community. The Action Team issued a final report in November 1998 that included 33 recommendations for improving the campus and town environment. The recommendations were grouped into five categories: education; communication; health, safety, and consequences; social environment; and law and policy.

"One important element of the Action Team's recommendations was an emphasis on high-risk drinking and related problems as a health issue. That resulted in alcohol issues being moved out from under student affairs and into the health center, including changing the physical location of the office," said Martell.

The education and communication recommendations revolved around message campaigns aimed at reducing harms by focusing on positive student behaviors, such as the strategies they use to reduce harm, and by providing accurate information regarding the attitudes and drinking habits of other students. To address the Action Team recommendations, the Olin Health Center, the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research, and the Department of Communication embarked on a collaborative effort to develop a social norms campaign, which staff viewed as being the most effective method for changing the culture of drinking at MSU.

The social norms campaign developed during 2000 at MSU would be one of the first in the country to hone in on so-called celebratory drinking, such as at postgame celebrations or 21st birthday pub crawls. It also was part of a larger campus and community effort to reduce high-risk drinking and related problems across time. Other activities based on Action Team recommendations included developing a Community Relations Coalition and a Responsible Hospitality Council, increasing city involvement in student orientation activities, changing the off-campus code of conduct for students, and increasing late-night entertainment on campus.

MSU also established a Celebratory Events Committee that meets two to three times a semester to develop ways to reduce risks at events where there have been problems in the past related to drinking, such as during football games. For example, the committee has placed ads in neighboring campuses' newspapers advising students of the laws and policies regarding alcohol and public behavior in East Lansing.

Program Description

MSU's program strongly emphasized data collection, communication theory, and evaluation, reflecting the interests and expertise of the project staff. For example, Martell was also coordinator for research and policy for the Health Education Department. Sandi W. Smith, co-principal investigator for the Social Norms Project, was director of the Health and Risk Communication Center and pro-

fessor in the Department of Communication. Other members of the project's team included Charles Atkin, chairperson of the Department of Communication, and Larry A. Hembroff, director and senior survey methodologist at the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research's Office for Survey Research. All four had a long history at MSU, which helped to lend credibility to the project for students, faculty, and administrators. For example, Martell and Hembroff began working together in 1998 on an evaluation of MSU's collaboration with the B.R.A.D. (Be Responsible About Drinking) Foundation to send a card to students just before their 21st birthday, reminding them to celebrate responsibly.

Program evaluation has been one of the particularly strong components of the MSU efforts because it was incorporated in the original development of the project and has continued to be an integral part of implementation. Atkin, Smith, and Hembroff provided the Social Norms Project with a powerful team of professional evaluators and Martell added the insights of a seasoned practitioner.

In keeping with the original project development and the recommendations of the Action Team, the project team began collecting data, crafting and pretesting messages, and implementing an interventional social norms campaign.

Importance of Formative Research

The formative research stage of the Social Norms Project at MSU focused on several different types of student drinking behaviors. It relied on carefully crafted methods to examine factors such as drinking in general; differences between types of drinkers; differences between drinking behavior, such as typical drinking versus celebratory drinking; the protective behaviors that students employ when they are drinking; and what students believe is normal behavior when it comes to alcohol consumption. The goal throughout the development of the different campaign messages was to use accurate information to challenge the environment of high-risk drinking by changing students' misperceptions regarding the drinking behavior of their peers, to encourage safe and protective behaviors, and to discourage risky behaviors.

"Formative research helped us understand the needs and interests of our students. We were then able to design programs and messages to meet needs," said Hembroff. "During the formative research for this project we paid careful attention to the design of a number of well-orchestrated inquiries to uncover differences and to look closely at certain audiences."

Overall Communications Approach

According to Atkin, the fundamental approach at MSU was to base messages on persuasive strategies rather than a fear approach.

"We wanted to find out what behaviors students would be willing to embrace rather than resist. What we learned is that students were more interested in messages that focused on preplanning

rather than giving up an evening at a party or a bar," said Atkin. "For example, we discovered that for students having a designated driver was the most palatable behavior."

Smith noted that in the formative research phase, which included such components as telephone surveys and focus groups, the project team was able to learn what students' priorities are, what they worry about, and which media channels are most likely to reach them.

"We also conducted both pretesting of possible campaign messages to see if they would resonate with students, as well as existing campaign messages to see if students were already disconnecting from them. The idea was to keep messages fresh and believable," said Smith.

Atkin said that there are four key aspects of an effective communications campaign. First, the message needs to be attractive and appealing. "We wanted the visuals to be attractive and appealing to students, with a style of presentation that was lighthearted rather than scolding. In fact, even bar managers are putting up our posters in their bars."

"Second, the messages needed to be comprehensible, meaning to what extent the message is understood by the audience. We tried to make sure our messages were consistent and explicit, rather than implicit. Third, credibility is very important, especially for students. We tried to make the message as believable as possible by citing the data, including the sample size. We even found that the size of the font on posters citing the data played a role in believability," said Atkin.

The fourth element was relevance of the messages. "We need to make sure that the messages are on target for our students when it comes to norms and behaviors," said Atkin.

Evaluative Research and Results

MSU's campaign team attained substantial success by designing messages that featured descriptive, injunctive, and protective norms based on the behavior and attitudes of students, both when they typically drink and when they drink during celebratory events. From 2000 to 2007, the MSU model promoted positive norms, reduced misperceptions, increased protective behaviors, and reduced self-reported rates of alcohol consumption. For example, the quantity of alcohol consumed the last time MSU students partied or socialized declined from 5.42 drinks in 2000 to 4.97 drinks in 2006, as measured on the National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey conducted in 2006.[32]

In addition, MSU saw reductions in the amount of harm students experienced related to drinking by themselves or others. From 2000 to 2006 NCHA student surveys reported an 8.5 percent reduction in self-injury, a 34.8 percent reduction in unprotected sex due to alcohol use, a 17.0 percent reduction in fights, and a 78.3 percent reduction in forced sex due to alcohol use.

The project team also found evidence that the social norms campaigns reached targeted audiences and that students increased protective behaviors, such as eating before drinking and using a designated driver, among other positive changes. But they also acknowledged that there have been "bumps and bruises" along the way, most notably in that their language did not match up with MSU students' language. On the project Web site (http://www.socialnorms.msu.edu) under "Bumps and Bruises" the team noted that students had different definitions regarding "partying" versus "socializing." For example, they learned that students do not view partying and socializing as one and the same. Partying means that alcohol was consumed; socializing does not, which resulted in a large measurement error regarding the number of drinks consumed at the last social event. For the research team, this example demonstrated how important the crafting of messages and surveys can be.

"It is incredibly useful and informative to involve focus groups from the very beginning and to continue their use throughout. Also, the evaluative research you conduct in addition to providing you with measurable change can also stir new research questions," the team members said.

For example, the plan also has been refined from a somewhat traditional social norms campaign to preliminary testing of a very sophisticated campaign that relies on the analysis of friendship networks found in Facebook information as well as survey techniques and findings that are to be closely linked to special messages developed to reach particular audiences.

The MSU Social Norms Program Model Web site is the principal way that the team disseminated the materials and research of the project. It includes a history of the project, copies of campaign materials that were developed along with evaluation information, and resources for other campuses.

Sustainability

There are several reasons to believe this program has very good chances for sustainability. First, it has a published record of producing verifiable[33] results, which have been achieved because of its reliance on other current research findings from the NIAAA and other sources. Second, it has attracted funding for its work from the U.S. Department of Education. Third, the leadership of the project has achieved regular access to the president and vice presidents of the university. Finally, but most importantly, some of the work that supports the project is integrated into at least one academic discipline and two well-established departments. This last point is underscored by the participation in the project of at least one doctoral student, one master's degree student, and one undergraduate student, each of whom is dedicating at least a part of his or her studies and research to facilitating the work of the project. This is the ultimate expression of the academic institutionalization of any project.

Conclusions

MSU's experiences reflect core elements of successful programs as described in the Department's 2007 publication *Experiences in Effective Prevention: The U.S. Department of Education's Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants.*

The MSU project team started out with a clear plan as to what it wanted to achieve. However, the plan evolved over time from a general concern about the misuse of alcohol by students to also paying attention to the misuse of alcohol by some students during certain celebratory events.

The MSU team was diverse and, as any good research project would, contained important constituencies. For example, project team members included practitioners in health education and alcohol and other drug abuse prevention work as well as faculty and researchers in communication and survey design. This helped the project have a firm grounding in existing and cutting-edge research and led to careful analysis of the needs and opportunities related to the project undertaken within the campus's overall alcohol and other drug prevention plans as outlined by the Action Team.

The work of the group that has developed and supported this project should and will, it is hoped, play a long-term role in areas of alcohol and other drug research and program development. This will certainly be true if the current core of the working group stays together. In addition, as the research findings of this project become more refined and are attempted to be used in even more diverse settings there will be more chances for others to learn from these efforts and apply them in their own particular environments. Finally, this project's plan to analyze Facebook friendship networks as a link to its social norm campaigns has exciting possibilities and can potentially contribute to the work of practitioners, scholars, and researchers in many fields of endeavor.

Montclair State University

Montclair, N.J.

Montclair Social Norms Project

Beginning Date: Aug. 1, 2006
Ending Date: May 31, 2008
Project Director: Brenda Marshall

Established as the State Normal School at Montclair in 1908, Montclair State University (MSU) is New Jersey's second-largest and fastest-growing university. Located in Montclair, 14 miles away from New York City, in 2008 it enrolled 16,736 students, of whom 13,017 were undergraduates.

Background

MSU's social norms marketing campaign had been in place for three years before MSU applied for a model program grant in 2006. The social norms marketing program was located in the Department of Health Promotion (formerly the Department of Wellness Education) and was supported originally by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Addiction Services. Operated by staff at the Drop-In Center, the campaign has used data from an annual Campus Survey of Alcohol and Other Drug Norms as the basis for its messages. Initially the campaign targeted the whole student body, but in academic years 2004–05 and 2005–06 it focused on freshmen living on campus, resident advisers, and high-risk target groups, including fraternities, sororities, and identified high-risk drinkers.

The MSU social norms marketing campaign emphasized two main messages based on actual behaviors reported in student surveys. They were: "Most MSU students have 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 drinks

when they go out" and "Most MSU students party once a week or less." Messages were disseminated through a broad range of media, including both print and electronic posters, e-mail, and Web announcements; newspaper ads and newsletter placements; table tents in dining halls; and promotional items, such as water bottles, cups, highlighters, and coffee sleeves. The messages were also infused into orientation presentations and student events, such as alcohol-free alternative activities, which were sponsored by the project.

Program Description

The MSU model program was based on an established social norms marketing campaign and "enhanced" through one lesser and two major initiatives. First, evaluation of the social norms marketing campaign was expanded to include a comparison-group administration of the campaign messages using two main freshman residence halls to test different levels of message exposure (one hall was exposed to a basic level of messaging alone; the other hall was exposed to a more intensive messaging process to see if it produced greater results). Second, the model program grant fostered faculty-student collaboration to produce student-initiated research projects and hosted a one-day conference to disseminate MSU's work and that of other institutions of higher education in the surrounding area. Finally, the project organized different campus constituencies in a task force focusing on alcohol abuse prevention. While the program did not produce definitive data on the effects of the changes in social norms marketing message "dosage," the efforts to provide prevention-based opportunities for student research initiatives and dissemination were very successful, bringing both the mechanics and the results of the prevention program into the academic life of the university.

Senior Administrator Support and Collaboration

One of the strengths of prevention at MSU has been support from senior campus leaders such as Karen L. Pennington, vice president for student development and campus life and former member of the Review Group of the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention. She is very knowledgeable about campus-based alcohol and other drug issues and has been a proponent of social norms marketing dating back to her time as dean for student life at the State University of New York at New Paltz, when the social norms marketing research of H. Wesley Perkins at Hobart and William Smith Colleges attracted her attention. Pennington saw "a tremendous change on campus" after a campaign was implemented at New Paltz.

"I was a believer as soon as I saw the results," said Pennington. She encouraged the staff at MSU to look into the applicability of a social norms campaign when she arrived on that campus in 1998. She believed that MSU was a good environment for a strategy like social norms marketing. "This environment just seems very open to a program like social norms—students are very interested in their community and their peers, so a message about what 'most of MSU' thinks or does tends to find an audience."

"In addition, we do not have the silos that some campuses have. It is very common for people to collaborate on projects across department or division lines. While in any large university there may be a few who want any program to be 'their' idea, we are pretty good at getting the right people on board," said Pennington.

One of the ways to encourage those collaborations is to tie them to the strategic direction of MSU. "Our mission focuses on developing the whole student—social, academic, and wellness," said Pennington. "It isn't difficult to find an interesting aspect of our mission to hook the person we need to get on board."

Other faculty members supported this approach. Eva S. Goldfarb, chair of the Department of Health and Nutrition Sciences, said, "Healthy students are better students, so there is a direct connection between the alcohol and other drug prevention programs and the academic life of the university." She also noted that the program's strong basis in prevention theory and social learning theory resonated with her own training and background. "It's very convincing to see that these programs are grounded in the same research and theory that we are teaching our students to use."

Leslie E. Jenkins, assistant dean in the College of Education and Human Services, agrees, noting that the social norms marketing campaign and the encouragement of student-initiated research links directly to the goals of the college with respect to teaching and learning.

"What we do well is to educate future teachers and human services specialists with the capacity to go out into the community and serve as change agents," she said. "This is the kind of program that supports our efforts and can be integrated into other departments within the college."

According to Jenkins, relevant academic departments could participate given the strong relationship between the theoretical foundations of the model program and the academic focus of their departments. "The work of the model program is really related to our disciplines and our culture. You're also very willing to reach out to contacts across the campus when you believe in a program."

Brenda Marshall, project director of the model program and a visiting specialist in the Psychology Department, said that the doors to faculty and staff in other departments were always open to the students who were involved in the model program.

As mentioned earlier, one of the key aspects—and successes—of MSU's model program was to enhance research opportunities for students, providing them with faculty partners and mentors as they developed and implemented research projects. Several students were involved in the student research aspect of the model grant. Imani Rutledge, an undergraduate, and Craig Van Doren, a graduate student, both Marshall's students in 2006, were invited to participate in the social norms marketing project on the basis of that contact. Van Doren pursued some of the research questions

that related to his own interests. Under Marshall's direction, he did "everything from the background literature review to crunching the numbers from the social norms work," he said. "Since the questions were related to my research interests, the opportunity to work closely with Professor Marshall was a real advantage. She encouraged me to bring my own perspective to the work."

Rutledge joined the project a little later. Marshall invited her to develop research questions. As a transfer to MSU from Oakwood University (formerly Oakwood College), Alabama, a historically black college and university (HBCU), Rutledge developed a question to examine factors related to differences in alcohol and other drug problems between HBCUs and MSU. Both students drew on data from the social norms marketing project as well as from other surveys and both worked closely with Marshall.

The research experience provided through the model program included a capstone event with the one-day conference that the project team convened at MSU on April 17, 2007, called "Social Norms on College/University Campuses." It attracted 75 registered participants representing 19 colleges and universities and three states. Among other sessions, the agenda included poster sessions for the students to showcase their work. In addition, one of the concurrent presentations featured the students, who each made a brief presentation of his or her research project. In addition, five students from the project presented their work at the Society for Prevention Research annual meeting in May 2007 in Washington, D.C., and later at the November 2007 American Public Health Association's annual meeting, also held in Washington, D.C.

Goldfarb thinks that the experience the students gained from working with Marshall on the project research questions was "a kind of field work exposure for these undergraduates that would be comparable to grad level work in other institutions." Participating in the research provided students with "an opportunity to live and experience 'health and wellness' on a professional level," said Jenkins.

Sustainability

According to Jenkins, the student research was an element of program sustainability, since it was integrated into a course under the Department of Health and Nutrition Sciences. "It was exciting that faculty members conducted research with undergraduates, which is an opportunity commonly afforded graduate students. It fits well with the department. This project can create a pipeline to our graduate programs for strong undergraduates, who don't usually understand the rigors of academic research. Now, when they apply for graduate work, we know that they have been involved with research and have experiences that prepare them for advanced studies."

For Marshall, student involvement with research not only contributed to the sustainability of the program and the support for the department's goals, it was very valuable experience for the students' academic goals and decisions.

"Students now are comfortable meeting with professors to not just ask questions and listen to their answers—they now discuss research questions and bring their own ideas, information, and contributions to the table. The self-evaluation and self-reflection that are built into the student research experience help them make more informed choices about whether they want to do this for a career," said Marshall.

Sustaining a prevention program beyond the bounds of a grant award was very much on the mind of MSU administrators. Vice President Pennington said, "This project is important enough so even if we don't have grants, we will have to find a way to get the prevention program funded and staffed."

Recognizing the challenge of working with scarce resources and stretched staff, Pennington gave full credit to the staff on the front lines. "One campus resource that isn't scarce is MSU's excellent human resources. We have people with creative minds who can do a lot when resources are scarce." She also credited the vibrant environment of student and faculty involvement, saying the strong community ethic of the MSU student affairs professionals "makes it easier to bring other members of the MSU community into our programs."

Because of the deep and long-term commitment of MSU senior administrators, Marshall was able to accomplish two goals relating to the long view of prevention at MSU. First, she gained support for the model grant program enhancements and then leveraged that support into greater buy-in and access to resources from the health promotion staff and related faculty. Second, she structured the model grant initiatives to contribute to the university's goals by supporting and furthering the social norms marketing campaign—a program that was valued by the vice president for student development and campus life and that reflected and incorporated the academic and educational missions of the related departments. While prevention programs at colleges and universities come and go, depending on the needs of the campus and the availability of and access to resources, at MSU the model program grant contributed to the "long view" by serving the needs of some important and influential players, thus enhancing their commitment and receptivity to future prevention initiatives.

Conclusions

MSU's program benefited from involving students in the research conducted in support of the social norms marketing campaign. The research projects provided some data for the field and were presented and disseminated in a way to contribute to the knowledge base. The greater value may have been to the students themselves and to the university overall. A department chair, college administrator, and vice president expressed their appreciation for the "real" research opportunities that the project provided for students, an important aspect of the educational philosophy at MSU. As a means toward sustainability, not to mention good preparation of future colleagues, this may be the biggest "lesson learned" from this model grant program.

The Ohio State University

Columbus, Ohio

Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds: The Recreational Sports Prevention Program—Alcohol Prevention Programming For Specific Populations on Campus

Beginning Date: Oct. 1, 2005
Ending Date: Dec. 31, 2006
Project Director: Constance S. Boehm

The Ohio State University's (OSU) roots go back to 1870, when the Ohio General Assembly established the Ohio Agricultural and Mechanical College as a land-grant university. In 2008 its main campus in Columbus enrolled 52,568 students, of whom 39,209 were undergraduates.

Background

OSU has an alcohol and other drug abuse prevention plan that was developed through a strategic planning process in the late 1990s and resulted in a comprehensive plan to address alcohol and other drug abuse problems among students.

The strategic plan is used as an active document to guide program planning and implementation. Implementation is ongoing. Since 1998 OSU Department of Recreational Sports staff members have participated in the National Intramural and Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) Natural High Program[34] that is designed to reduce alcohol abuse among college students by offering healthy and other alternatives to alcohol and other drug use. In addition, the Student Wellness Center is a member of the Ohio College Initiative to Reduce High Risk Drinking, a forum of 42 IHEs that share findings, strategies, and programs.

OSU's Student Wellness Center has targeted high-risk drinking prevention programming to first-year students since 2001. Results from the 2000, 2002, and 2004 Core Alcohol and Drug Survey showed intramural and Sport Club participants to be using alcohol at significantly higher rates than nonparticipants.[35] It also conducted a wellness assessment of first-year students in fall 2006. The information from these surveys informed the center's decisions about the strategies, targets, and focus of alcohol education efforts.

Based on successes in decreasing risky behaviors among first-year students between 2000 and 2004 and recommendations from the 2002 NIAAA report *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges,* Student Wellness Center Director Connie Boehm decided to bring CHOICES: A Brief Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program[36] and Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS), other educational presentations, social norms marketing, and late-night programming to the Sport Club and intramural sports teams. OSU's Department of Recreational Sports represents approximately 25,000 Sport Club and intramural sports participants. This strong intramural sports program dates back to 1913.

Boehm's long-standing working relationship with Mike Dunn, director of recreational sports learning, led her to approach him with the idea of bringing the program for first-year students to Sport Club members and intramural teams. The opening in 2005 of a new facility in the heart of the OSU campus, housing both the Department of Recreational Sports and the Student Wellness Center, the existing relationship between the leadership of Recreational Sports and the Student Wellness Center, and the data on student drinking behavior contributed to acceptance of this program for use with students involved in recreational sports.

In addition, the vice president for student affairs, OSU President Karen Holbrook (Oct. 1, 2002–June 30, 2007), and President E. Gordon Gee (Oct. 1, 2007–present) have been supportive of alcohol education and prevention efforts for the student population.

"It is easy to get support when the issue is one that affects the whole campus," said Boehm. "Past issues with alcohol and associated violence, including campus disruptions, made this a key issue for administrators."

Program Description

Wellness is an area identified by top OSU leadership as central to the student learning experience. OSU has a Wellness Collaborative, which is a group of faculty, staff, and students from across campus dedicated to nine domains of students' wellness: physical, emotional, social, intellectual, financial, spiritual, environmental, aesthetic, and career. Thus, the recreational sports initiative fit within the larger philosophy on campus.

In addition to support from top administrators, the Wellness Collaborative was the campus vehicle used to garner support for the Recreational Sports Prevention Program. Individuals were identified by Boehm and Dunn as collaborators based on their role within the Department of Recreational Sports. Drawing from its experiences developing prevention programming with first-year students, OSU launched an alcohol abuse reduction program called Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds (HBHM) in fall 2006. This project was designed specifically for intramural and Sport Club participants and was developed and administered by staff from the Student Wellness Center, the Department of Recreational Sports, and the National Research Institute for College Recreational Sports and Wellness. It was funded as a U.S. Department of Education model program grant.

At OSU, Sport Club participants have a strong affiliation with the university—they receive university funds, can rent university vehicles, sport the university name on uniforms, and represent OSU in intercollegiate sports competitions. But they also have responsibilities, including adherence to a code of conduct. With the support of the Sport Club director, the HBHM project was able to implement alcohol and other drug education as part of the Sport Club requirements.

For OSU intramural participants, who pay fees to use university facilities, HBHM activities were optional, so the project developed incentives to encourage teams to participate in activities. The most popular incentive was a refund of the intramural sports fund fee to teams that completed the HBHM workshops. The HBHM project consists of five elements:

1. Recreational Sports Success Series

The Recreational Sports Success Series was a collection of fun, interactive workshops on alcohol and other drugs put on by the Student Wellness Center. These one-hour, risk-reduction sessions covered topics such as estimating blood alcohol concentrations (BAC); identifying low-risk, at-risk, and high-risk drinking; correcting misperceptions about alcohol and the amounts of alcohol students are drinking (including social norms information); and understanding campus and community policies relative to alcohol. The courses are offered both as workshops and online first at MyStudentBody.com, then at e-CHUG.[37]

2. Social Norms Marketing

The social norms marketing campaign disseminated messages specific to intramural and Sport Club participants in venues where recreational sports participants are likely to see them. These messages were communicated through posters, Web sites, presentations, and television ads in the Recreation and Physical Activity Center (RPAC). One of the seven messages developed specifically for the campaign was "Not Everyone Drinks! 27% of recreational sports participants don't drink alcohol." Other messages conveyed positive aspects of recreational sports, such as stress relief and social wellness.

3. Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS)

This confidential, one-on-one alcohol assessment is conducted by staff of the Student Wellness Center. Students can voluntarily participate but also are referred by the Department of Recreational Sports, OSU Student Judicial Affairs, University Housing, and the municipal court systems.

4. Buckeye Late-Night Entertainment

The Student Wellness Center sponsored an alcohol-free late-night entertainment event every Friday night during the academic year. Events took place at the RPAC and included concerts, intramural tournaments, and video game tournaments, to name a few. During the course of the project, more than 9,000 recreational sports participants attended a late-night event.

5. Assessment

In 15 months of implementation, the program staff were able to reach an estimated 28,000 students, including more than 12,000 who attended an event, a workshop, or a counseling session. The HBHM campaign also was able to affect the alcohol and other drug use among the population. The program decreased binge drinking (5+ drinks once in the last two weeks) by 4.7 percent and frequent binge drinking (5+ drinks 3+ times in the last two weeks) by 6 percent. In addition, a 2007 recreational sports alcohol survey[38] found the following:

- Decrease in the number of days that Sport Club participants drank in the last 30 days by 14.42 percent—from 5.27 percent to 4.51 percent;
- Decrease in the number of days that female Sport Club participants drank by 28.45 percent—from 4.64 percent to 3.32 percent;
- Decrease in the mean number of drinks consumed per week by intramural and Sport Club participants by 10.74 percent—from 7.17 percent to 6.40 percent; and
- Increase of 9.3 percent in the number of intramural and Sport Club participants who reported decreasing their drinking in the last 12 months.

Sustainability

Sustainability was a key aspect of the program from day one and had been planned for all along. Recreational Sports Learning Director Mike Dunn expressed confidence in the program, and increasingly his staff and students have come on board because of their positive experiences with the program. The U.S. Department of Education grant originally provided funds to reimburse intramural teams for recreation fees as well as cover the HBHM program coordinator's salary. The position was for 30 hours of a graduate assistant whose research interests aligned with the program. A statewide grant was received to cover the program coordinator's salary. HBHM also has

support from outside groups such as the Upshaw family, which provided funding to support the CHOICES program. Future plans include expansion into the Greek organizations.

"Our president mandated tearing down the silos and putting a research agenda into place, which was helpful. The Wellness Collaborative works with the Office of Institutional Research, which made our results understandable and the program highly visible," said Boehm. "Once people can see what you are doing they want to maintain the program."

Boehm said that it is important both to find allies and then nurture those relationships. For example, she suggests offering to make it easy for allies to support the program by managing administrative tasks, such as scheduling, follow-up, and attendance, because these aspects take time. It also is important to use data to convince stakeholders that the program is needed and that it is working.

"Keep campus leaders updated on what you're doing. I use student comments in project reports so that the personal impact of the program is revealed in their own words. For student affairs professionals, testimonials are as important as hard data for buy-in," said Boehm.

Conclusions

It is important to keep moving forward even though it may be hard at times to stay positive. "While the high-risk drinking rate may not have gone down, other things are happening, such as policy changes and additional programming," said Boehm. "Students tell us that they drink less on the nights that they attend late-night programs."

"It is also important to address the problem of high-risk drinking from multiple angles in order to have an influence. This is about culture change. It is a multilevel response to an important public health issue," Boehm added.

In addition, it is also important to be proactive and recognize opportunities. "Don't let your guard down. Just when things may be going well, things may shift," said Boehm.

Stakeholder involvement is key to maintaining the long view, as is using data to drive decision-making. Demonstrate with data the changes that have taken place. Communicate through infra-structures that exist on campus. Look for new audiences with which to share the message. "Gain national support. For OSU, that meant work with NIRSA," said Boehm.

University at Albany, State University of New York

Albany, N.Y.

The Committee on University and Community Relations: A Model Campus-Community Partnership at a State University Center

Beginning Date: June 1, 2006
Ending Date: June 30, 2008
Project Director: Tom Gebhardt

The University at Albany (UAlbany) is a public research institution with an enrollment of more than 17,000 students located in the state capital of New York. Its origins go back to 1844, when it was established as a normal school both to train new and upgrade existing common school teachers. There are several other colleges in the Albany area, whose students also live in the Albany neighborhoods where UAlbany students live, along with well-established neighborhood and local business organizations.

Background

The model program at UAlbany was based on the work of the preexisting Committee on University and Community Relations (CUCR). The genesis of CUCR dates to 1989, when there was a large increase in the number and severity of complaints lodged with UAlbany and city offices concerning the behavior of college students residing in the Albany neighborhoods, primarily related to off-campus parties or rowdy behavior both in area bars and traversing through neighborhoods to and from the bars. A sharp uptick in complaints led to the formation of a partnership between the mayor of Albany and the president of UAlbany. Together they appointed the Task Force on University and Community Relations to examine the town-gown issues, throwing their joint clout and commitment behind the effort.

The task force issued a report in spring 1990 that recommended several measures to take, "both proactive and reactive measures as part of a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to improve the situation in the neighborhoods where our off-campus students traditionally live." The mayor and the president accepted and approved the report and directed the task force to pursue the recommendations, continuing their work under the name of the Committee on University and Community Relations.

CUCR has been in operation continually since then, growing in membership and adapting to meet the changing needs of the community over time. CUCR has enjoyed the ongoing and strong support of its two original partners: the city of Albany and UAlbany.

Over the 16 years from the formation of CUCR until UAlbany received its model program grant, CUCR's work focused on safety issues for off-campus students and the neighborhoods in which they live and on the development of alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programs for the off-campus environment. Reflecting this broad charge, CUCR membership included staff and students from UAlbany as well as other local colleges, including the College of Saint Rose, Albany College of Pharmacy, Albany Medical College, the Sage Colleges/Junior College of Albany, Hudson Valley Community College, and Siena College. Community members included representatives from the Albany police and fire departments, community groups—including neighborhood associations, such as the Pine Hills and Beverwyck Neighborhood Associations—landowners, community and religious leaders, the Empire State Restaurant and Tavern Association, and the New York State Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

The model program plan was to enhance the work of CUCR by identifying, institutionalizing, and disseminating the "effective ingredients of a successful campus-community coalition" and by creating a social norms marketing campaign directed to UAlbany students, both on and off campus, and the community neighborhoods where UAlbany and other area college students live, work, and patronize local businesses. About 40 percent of the 17,000 student population—12,000 undergraduate and 5,000 graduate—live off campus.

The project was multifaceted and grounded in an ongoing comprehensive prevention program at UAlbany that had won a previous model program grant and other grants from federal and state agencies to support its work.

Program Description

At the time UAlbany received its model program grant, CUCR had about 110 members, including students. Tom Gebhardt, director of personal safety and off-campus affairs in the University Police Department and project director of the model program grant, said that everybody was welcome on the committee.

"Not everyone comes to every meeting but it's really important to keep them all on the list. All the members hear about the meetings and what is on the agenda, so they know what is going on. They know they can come anytime. If there is a special issue or hot item on the agenda, we have standing room only. Everyone gets a chance to speak their minds and hear from others," he said.

Gebhardt viewed the large membership of CUCR as a networking list. "These are all people who felt at some time that they had a stake or an interest in the issue, so they are the natural place to go to when we need information or have information to give out."

In fact, Gebhardt said the coalition worked out to be a "ready group of people, like a SWAT team—committed, informed, and able to work together" that he, the other CUCR leaders, or the city or university partners could call upon when incidents occurred.

For the most part, membership was fairly stable and balanced, with a core group of a couple of dozen people who participated regularly. "The students are the most challenging to get involved—their leadership roles change year to year, they graduate . . . they are in a different place than community members," said Gebhardt.

One strength of the CUCR was its emphasis on the community, which derived from the city's joint sponsorship of the committee.

"It could have been that the community would have seen this as a university committee and they just wanted us there for show," said Laurie Lieman, a community member of the CUCR. "But that's not how it worked out. We are full members and our issues were always at the top of the agenda. We would have insisted on that anyway, but we didn't have to because Tom always made it really clear that we were there to talk about what was happening in the neighborhoods, so we should start by hearing from the neighbors and businesses."

Another CUCR community member, Henry M. Madej, past president of the Pine Hills Neighborhood Association, agreed and commented that Gebhardt had a particularly good understanding of the strengths of community members. "He has worked with all the groups in the neighborhoods for so long that we don't have to bring him up to speed. When we talk about problems in this area or on that street, he knows where we're talking about so we can just get down to the details knowing that he gets the whole picture. Then we can work together as partners on the problem."

Gebhardt agreed that his years of experience at UAlbany prepared him for this role. "I started as a resident adviser and now I am in the Police Department. I have done just about every job in between," he said.

An important decision Gebhardt made was to locate CUCR meetings in the Albany Police Department, as opposed to a university-based location. He said, "It didn't seem right to ask the community to come to the ivory tower. We are talking about issues that take place in the community, and it's important for the community to see us coming to them."

Albany Police Department Officer Janet Parker, a mainstay of the CUCR, said, "Usually, citizens come to us when there is a problem. For this committee, though, it is different. They come to us as partners and we work together to come up with a solution. It supports the role that police want to have in the community—a part of it and not just a separate group that comes into play when something goes wrong."

Keys to Success

"Trust is the big thing," Gebhardt said. "When we first started the committee, the community thought the university would go away when the publicity died down and the cameras went away. Those complaints were related to lots of misperceptions on the part of the community, which led to more misperceptions. But we can correct those, and when we do, we build the credibility you need to have in order to earn the trust."

In order to earn that trust, Gebhardt said that you have to listen first and then respond with action. For example, CUCR established a 24-hour off-campus hotline and voice-mail system that residents could call with any complaints or concerns about problems in the neighborhood. Gebhardt followed up on each call right away. This responsiveness to the off-campus community has earned praise both for its efficacy *per se* and its value in terms of strengthening town-gown relations.

"The hotline has been one of our best tools for demonstrating that we were there to hear about problems and fix them," said Gebhardt.

Another strength of the CUCR was its practice of acknowledging the contributions and work of all involved. Robert Benedetto, a community member of the CUCR, said that to build strong coalitions, "you must publicly recognize and acknowledge the sincere efforts of each participant, especially the licensed establishments who tend to be the target group" of alcohol prevention and enforcement work.

Several people also addressed the importance of leadership in the success of CUCR. Benedetto recommended that a community coalition such as this have a "full-time dedicated chairperson with strong leadership and communication skills." Fred Aliberti, a longtime CUCR member who joined at its inception when he was with the Albany Police Department and continued participating after he became director of public safety at Hudson Valley Community College, agreed. "The continuity of Tom's membership and leadership has been

very important, especially that he has stuck with the committee despite the changes in his own jobs at UAlbany."

For the university's part, supporting Gebhardt's role as the face of UAlbany was important. "Tom functions as our glue for the longevity and continued strength of this committee," Vice President for Student Success Christine Bouchard said. "Continuing to support and ensure his participation on the committee is how we, when you get right down to it, demonstrate our commitment on behalf of UA." Gebhardt acknowledges the benefits to the committee of his long-term association and his "historical perspective" on its work. He thinks the breadth of his roles was key to making the CUCR work. "The connections, and knowing the inside story, are important," he said. "It is all about alliances, and making sure the information flows both ways."

Working well with the media was another feature that Gebhardt and others said has contributed to the success of CUCR. "Being in the state capital, the *Times-Union* paper covers alcohol and other drug issues. When it needs a local example for a story, they come to the CUCR for assistance," said Gebhardt.

Provost Susan Phillips agreed and said that the media also look to UAlbany as an example for issues for the state university system as a whole. "We have a uniquely politicized existence here," she said, "so it has been a necessary part of our overall work to cultivate the 'local' paper—which is really a statewide paper. Care of the media is an integral part of our program."

Karl Luntta, of UAlbany's Media and Marketing Department, also agreed, noting that UAlbany's position as a large university in the SUNY system and located in the capital, "puts us at the cynosure" but said that "such scrutiny has not been a deficit—in fact, it has benefited us overall. By being in the news quite a bit, the effect is that the reporters know us and we have access to them," which has enabled UAlbany to help shape stories to get out the full picture.

Finally, addressing the issue of how CUCR proceeded with its work, Gebhardt emphasized the need to take a strategic approach to planning programs and action. As a bottom line, Gebhardt endorses choosing your battles.

"Concentrate on what you can do, not what you can't do and focus on what you can affect rather than issues that are beyond your committee's control. Be realistic regarding how much you can undertake at one time," Gebhardt said. "We push smaller boulders up the hill first, thereby addressing and solving the smaller but higher-profile issues right away. Being responsive to even the smallest complaint builds both trust and credibility, which can then be leveraged into support for the bigger, longer-term issues."

Social Norms Marketing Campaign

For UAlbany, the atmosphere in 1989 when the task force was created was one of extreme distrust between the community and the university and hard feelings about how the university saw its role and responsibilities toward the neighborhoods. Some of these feelings stemmed from media coverage of negative incidents, such as a September 2002 alcohol-fueled off-campus melee that resulted in student arrests[39] and routine "top 10 party school" ratings by the *Princeton Review*[40] (including number one in 2004), which also exacerbated negative impressions. While the university felt its commitment to addressing the drinking problem was underrated, it recognized that the prevailing atmosphere would influence all its work; thus, building trust had to be a CUCR priority.

CUCR and the UAlbany Counseling Center decided to collaborate in conducting an off-campus social norms marketing campaign. The Counseling Center is the home of the Middle Earth program, a peer education program that assists the Counseling Center in conducting on-campus social norms marketing campaigns using Peer Theater to help shape students' perceptions of alcohol and other drugs. The Middle Earth program was recognized as a model program in 2000. The campaign goals were twofold: Goal 1: Correct UAlbany students' and community residents' misperceptions of UAlbany students' drinking; Goal 2: Increase community residents' satisfaction with Albany's proactive measures to address student drinking.

With the advice of Dolores Cimini, assistant director for prevention and program evaluation at the Counseling Center and director of the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program, and drawing on the research literature concerning social norms marketing campaigns,[41] University Counseling Center staff examined the data from the National College Health Assessment (2006), the UAlbany Student Survey (2007), and the UAlbany Local Resident Survey (2007). Using procedures proven effective in research and in practice, they analyzed the data searching for misperceptions, developed messages, and tested them in focus groups.

The group of messages aimed at the neighborhoods featured prominent "Most UAlbany students . . . " messages, with more supporting statistics and "did you know?" messages in smaller type. These were designed to correct misperceptions about UAlbany students by providing members of the community with accurate information about UAlbany students from student health surveys. In addition, each poster and postcard highlighted the off-campus hotline number. Project team member Brian M. Freidenberg, an addictive behaviors specialist and staff psychologist at the UAlbany Counseling Center, said that "taken together, these addressed all the main goals of the social norms marketing campaign in a very accessible and readable format. The focus groups had determined that a 'Most UAlbany students' message was stronger for the community, since there was a sense that 'all UAlbany students' were the source of the problems in the neighborhoods. Then we added the hotline number and highlighted it, to show the university's commitment to responding to those cases not included in the 'most' majority."

CUCR and the Counseling Center have impressive data from the student and community surveys showing the effectiveness of their 2007 campaign (from pre-intervention levels in 2006 to post-intervention in 2007). While community residents' misperceptions about the daily alcohol use of UAlbany students decreased from 59.7 percent to 52.3 percent, that margin appears to be an improvement but is not statistically significant. However, the off-campus social norms marketing campaign focused more on behaviors than on use levels, such as "Most UA students drink responsibly, if they choose to drink; most UA students do not drive after drinking alcohol; most UA students are here to study." Therefore, even this small decrease in misperceptions of the alcohol use level was a good sign. As for the goal of addressing the community's satisfaction with UAlbany's steps to address the drinking problem, the data there were even more encouraging: the percentage of those "satisfied" rose from 25.9 percent to 47.4 percent—a positive and much desired outcome from UAlbany's perspective. Gebhardt said, "It was very important to us, in terms of CUCR, to build a sense in the neighborhoods that the university is a real partner with them in taking responsibility for the quality of life in the neighborhoods and addressing the problems that come up. So that outcome of almost doubling the level of satisfaction in the neighborhoods was very important."

Conclusions

Committed and shared leadership in the committee is key to the success of campus-community prevention initiatives. Structuring a university-community committee to be enduring requires it to be ultimately flexible and responsive. The expectation is that the commitment of key constituencies will remain constant though issues and particular members may change.

Choosing evidence-based strategies is not enough. They must be implemented according to the design while still adapting to the particular audience. UAlbany based the social norms marketing campaign on sound data, implementing the program according to the design, taking care with the data, developing and testing messages, ensuring consistent message delivery, and evaluating afterward.

Leadership support for solid and responsible prevention programs is important. Leadership belief in the pursuit of excellence and priority of student health and safety dictates support for solid and responsible prevention programs.

University of Arizona

Tucson, Ariz.

Changing the Environment and Culture of Fraternity and Sorority High-Risk Drinking at the University of Arizona

Beginning Date: Oct. 1, 2005
Ending Date: Dec. 31, 2007
Project Director: Melissa Vito

Founded in 1885—nearly three decades before Arizona became a state—the University of Arizona (UA) is a public land-grant institution that in 2008 enrolled more than 36,000 students. Its main campus is in Tucson. UA is a member of the Network Addressing Collegiate Alcohol and Other Drug Issues.

Background

UA's history of proactive prevention is characterized by campus cooperation, a high regard for data and evaluation, and links with community and statewide allies. It first put environmental prevention strategies and social norms marketing campaigns into place in the 1990s. However, Koreen Johannessen, now retired from campus health services but continuing to volunteer with the Pima County-Tucson Commission on Addiction Prevention and Treatment, was appointed as the director of the university's Health Promotion and Prevention Services in 1987, with responsibilities for campus alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programming. Over the next 21 years, the campus attracted federal resources to support its prevention efforts from the U.S. departments of Education and Health and Human Services and also from various Arizona state agencies.

Program Description

In 2005 the university received a model program grant award, one in a succession of external funding awards, to enhance its comprehensive alcohol and other drug abuse prevention efforts. This award, Changing the Environment and Culture of Fraternity and Sorority High-Risk Drinking at the University of Arizona, provided $109,000 in resources for the period October 2005 through December 2007. The grant was for the expanded use of social norms media and Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students (BASICS) within Greek chapters, with an emphasis on first-year members.

The university also continued its multifaceted prevention strategies to reduce risks associated with alcohol availability, especially among 18- to 21-year-old students; to increase alcohol-free social and recreational events; to promote health and safety within adjacent neighborhoods, home to both students and nonstudents; and to support campus, community, and statewide enforcement of underage drinking laws. The university's Health Promotion and Prevention Services (HPPS) sponsors the Friend to Friend and UA social norms Web sites to support its comprehensive prevention efforts. As part of an overall environmental strategy to decrease alcohol availability and accessibility, especially to underage drinkers, to increase alcohol-free social and recreational opportunities, and to establish safer campus and community events, HPPS works in collaboration with campus, local, state, and national partners to reduce and prevent college substance abuse and related violence.

UA's efforts have been sustained since 1995 by a number of factors contributing to ongoing assessment, program development, evaluation, and the communication of goals and results. Prevention has benefited from campus leadership at various levels, including that of Vice President for Student Affairs Melissa Vito, who also was the project director for the Department of Education model program grant. Additional leadership comes from the entire Student Affairs Division, including campus health, campus recreation, dean of students, the parents and family program, residence life, and student unions, as well as athletics, the alumni association, and campus police department.

Johannessen said that one way to gain widespread campus and community support for prevention efforts is to write a report on a particular challenge, such as sexual assault or alcohol and other drug problems, and then circulate the report widely along with questions about the scope of the problem and potential solutions. "People like being asked for their opinions and are then more likely to agree to further involvement in solution-seeking," she said.

"Administrative support is critical; you need to market to senior administrators," said Peggy Glider, coordinator for evaluation and research at the Campus Health Service. Such marketing efforts were directed at the two most recent senior student affairs officers, Saundra Taylor and her successor Melissa Vito, vice president for student affairs since 2006.

"We courted Dr. Taylor," Glider said. "Our message was, 'This is who we are, what we do, and where we want to take it,' backed up by assessment data."

When engaging campus leadership, it helps to have "believers" (in effective prevention practices) occupying places of campus leadership, and UA has benefited in this regard. The former president, Peter Likins, had been at Lehigh University, which in 1996 became one of 10 campuses participating in a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation/American Medical Association prevention initiative, so he was already versed in alcohol problem prevention. Vito had had an extensive student affairs career at UA, once serving as student activities director, and thus had considerable firsthand experience with student alcohol and other drug concerns. Glider stressed the importance of the periodic campus climate reports that go to the president's cabinet. Vito, Glider, and other student affairs division personnel were able to use that report to communicate alcohol- and other drug-related findings to the president's executive team and enlist support for prevention.

Broad-Based Collaboration

The decade-old Campus Alcohol and Other Drug Advisory Committee, which is chaired by David Salafsky as director of HPPS (and former UA graduate student in public health), is constituted informally—that is, not by presidential mandate or any written campus policy. Nevertheless, representatives of campus life, residential life, alumni affairs, campus police, health services, and other areas of student affairs meet four times a year, and more frequently on an *ad hoc* basis. Salafsky attributed its appeal to the sharing of data about mutual problems and successes, the symbiotic relationships developed over the years, a collegial environment that promoted discussion, and the monitoring of best prevention practices from elsewhere.

Salafsky also represented the campus on the Underage Drinking Task Force of the Pima County Commission (and served as its chairperson). UA was engaging in other external collaborations, including a state commission on the prevention of underage drinking through the Arizona Governor's Office of Highway Safety, the Arizona Institutions of Higher Education (AZIHE) Network, the Arizona Department of Liquor License and Control, and with local health and safety counterparts. Depending on the agenda, staff of Tucson city council representatives attended meetings of the Campus Alcohol and Other Drug Advisory Committee.

Communication Strategies

Communication channels served both educational and persuasive purposes. UA's Campus Health Service used multiple media, including posters, flyers, calendars (with social norms messages targeting sorority women), and print newsletters (also targeted, for example, to residence halls and to parents). Glider said that student survey findings about alcohol use and its consequences were used both to develop social marketing tools for reaching fraternities and sororities and in summary reports to Vito and others on campus. However, she emphasized, such data are not marketed to the general campus in accordance with assurances to the Greek community that Campus

Health Service would avoid reinforcing stereotypes about Greek life. Campus Health Service also produced periodic reports—qualitative and statistical—and shared that information with the campus through the Campus Alcohol and Other Drug Advisory Committee.

Vito explained the importance of receiving these data about prevention results on a regular basis. "I can use this information to educate constituents in the community and campus faculty and other administrators about the accurate situation so we can all avoid perpetuating inaccurate stereotypes (about student behaviors)." An innovative use of the information in terms of student communication was to include it in the annual publication of the *UA Off-Campus Housing Guide* (http://www.union.arizona.edu/csil/och/housingguide), which gives students advice on how to be a good neighbor, plan a party, participate in neighborhood associations, and avoid hosting loud and unruly gatherings.

UA had already adopted social norms media (http://www.socialnorms.campushealth.net) and BASICS on the basis of research evidence and had seen good results from both approaches. This programmatic success led to UA's model program grant, which provided resources to extend these efforts to a larger proportion of Greeks. The Campus Health Service also offered a diversion program called Student Health Alcohol and Drug Education (http://www.health.arizona.edu/webfiles/hpps_aod_shade.htm) for Student Code of Conduct violators and e-CHUG (eCHECKUP TO GO),[42] an online alcohol screening tool for all first-year students.

Also drawing from research evidence,[43] UA undertook some measures aimed at changing the environment regarding alcohol and other drug abuse, including:

- Cooperation with the Pima County-Tucson Commission on Addiction Prevention and Treatment to manage special events through alcohol licensing, server training, and event signage policies;
- Encouragement of Tucson Police Department enforcement of an unruly gathering/public nuisance ordinance directed at owners or occupants of off-campus residential properties; and
- Joint enforcement of impaired driving laws, underage drinking, and other liquor violations.

Program Evaluation

At UA, program evaluation starts with assessment and encompasses both outcome and process data, including quarterly qualitative reports on the model grant program conducted by Beverly Mills-Novoa, consulting qualitative evaluator. These reports are based on stakeholder interviews, committee meeting minutes, Web content, and media clips. Programs like social norms media and BASICS are having desirable outcomes. For the most part, alcohol use and negative consequences declined within the Greek community, the principal target for the model program grant, as measured by pre- and post-assessment (BASICS) and periodic student surveys that use items consistent with the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey and National College Health Assessment.[44]

Conclusions

Timing is important. UA has used timing to its advantage when it comes to implementing or changing policies to reduce alcohol- and other drug-related problems. For example, in 2006 when the Tucson Police Department initiated a policy of citing nuisance properties (those with unruly student parties), called "red tagging," Vito described it as "a pilot" to address the situation of community members wanting the university to do something about student misconduct in nearby residential neighborhoods. As a temporary pilot policy it played well with campus legal counsel and helped convince the Tucson police to share red-tag citations with the university. The campus was able to justify its involvement because of its commitment to protecting student health and safety. The reaction of some students was, however, negative. The UA Associated Students, as reported in the *Arizona Daily Wildcat* (Jan. 25, 2007) "unanimously passed a resolution opposing the . . . new red-tag policy . . . " objecting due to the apparent "double jeopardy" that cited students would be subject to receive at the hands of both city and campus. In the intervening two years, however, only about half of "red tags" have gone to UA students. Vito explained that, after over a year of the policy, it is now part of the culture and no longer a pilot.

Another opportunity to enhance prevention outcomes by reducing high-risk drinking during Homecoming events presented itself in 2007 when a staffing change occurred at the UA Alumni Office. Previously, fraternities purchased and distributed alcohol free to anyone of legal age, which resulted in cases of beer stacked under fraternity tents all over the mall. But in 2007, under new leadership that was more in tune with campus norms, the Alumni Office removed alcohol distribution from the hands of students. For Homecoming 2007, catering employees took over alcohol sales and service. In addition, the campus obtained a city special use permit that placed conditions on alcohol sales and service, and the event resembled other community events that incidentally include the sale of alcohol. As a dividend, Salafsky remarked that UA's 2007 Homecoming experience led the local jurisdiction to create its "What Makes a Special Event" guide recommending best practices for planning and managing events permitted to sell and serve alcohol. Anecdotally, this campus policy change resulted in less alcohol being available, fewer intoxicated students observed, fewer Greek conduct incident reports, and greater family involvement. Vito predicted, "In three years, no one will remember what it used to be like." In the future, the Student Union, which is a part of Student Affairs and manages alcohol sales at selected campus events, will be responsible for Homecoming alcohol sales and service as well.

It is important to adjust while moving forward. UA's Campus Health Service develops a strategic plan biennially and makes midcourse adjustments as necessary. For example, Lynn Reyes, alcohol and other drug specialist, said there are plans to streamline the delivery of BASICS to convert part of the interview to an online format and cut BASICS to a single face-to-face session, in response to student concerns about the perceived high cost-recovery fee ($150) for the service.

Through partnerships, UA has taken steps to augment existing resources for prevention. For example, in 2004 the Pima County-Tucson Commission on Addiction Prevention and Treatment issued *A Call to Action: Reduce Underage Drinking in Pima County,* which included a recommendation to increase excise taxes on alcoholic beverages. According to Johannessen, who served on the commission, community concern with the relatively low price of alcoholic beverages has remained an important issue. In addition, Vito said that the Arizona Board of Regents (governing body for UA and other state-supported universities that relates on budgetary matters with Arizona's governor and Legislature) has expressed an interest in a new initiative from the American Council on Education's Solutions for Our Future (http://www.solutionsforourfuture.org/), an awareness campaign to promote investment in higher education.

It is also important for the project to meet institutional goals. Gary Ballinger, program director for UA fraternity and sorority programs, attributes the growth in UA's Greek life to positive perceptions among prospective students and parents regarding the Greek community's state of health. The campus health and safety commitment to sorority and fraternity members has given UA a recruitment advantage.

Finally, UA leadership is confident about the future because prevention efforts are paying off, which reinforces the value of sustaining those efforts. Johannessen said, "The community now sees the university in a leadership role regarding student alcohol consumption and consequences, which has turned prior impressions around."

Vito emphasized the importance of prevention success for an institution's reputation. "Alcohol issues clearly offset student (academic) performance and reverberate through the whole institution, increasing risks for all, drinkers and nondrinkers, and are terribly damaging to the university's reputation."

In addition, recent transitions at the presidential and vice presidential levels have not diminished top administrator support for prevention at UA, owing in large measure to community and campus reinforcement of expectations regarding health and safety measures and the better understanding of student norms garnered through recent prevention efforts. Moreover, the Campus Health Service and its health promotion and prevention services unit continue to plan for staff development, aided by a recent convergence of student government and administration support for the introduction of a student fee that will yield $2.5 million in additional resources.

University of Missouri-Columbia

Columbia, Mo.

MUmythbusters

Beginning Date: July 1, 2006
Ending Date: June 30, 2007
Project Director: Kim Dude

The University of Missouri-Columbia (MU) is the flagship institution of the four-campus University of Missouri System (http://www.umsystem.edu/). It was founded in 1839 as the first public university west of the Mississippi River and the first state university in Thomas Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase territory. MU is a major land-grant institution and Missouri's largest public research university. In 2008 its enrollment was 21,653 undergraduate and 6,824 graduate and professional students.

Background

MU has a long history of alcohol and other drug prevention efforts, dating back to 1982. In 1990 MU received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education grant program. Since then, MU's Wellness Resource Center (WRC) has built a comprehensive, sustained alcohol and other drug abuse prevention program incorporating multiple coordinated components under the leadership of its director, Kim Dude.

Recognizing that students make decisions about alcohol and other drug use within a broader environment, MU's prevention efforts include campus-based programs and policies; efforts addressing the surrounding community led by a campus and community coalition, for which MU won a 1999 model program grant; and leading a statewide campus prevention initiative.

In 2006 MU received a second model program grant to recognize and enhance its campus-based social norms and social marketing efforts. MU first implemented a social norms marketing campaign in 1998 to correct MU students' misperceptions about the actual alcohol use behaviors among their peers, using descriptive norms. Over time, based on theoretical developments in the field and feedback from MU students, the WRC began to incorporate normative messages about protective factors that students use in regard to their drinking. Survey data from 2003 through 2006 indicated that students were making safer choices about alcohol and using the protective factors promoted in the campaign's social norms messages. Such behaviors included alternating nonalcoholic drinks with alcoholic drinks, which increased by 44 percent; deciding on a set number of drinks before going out, which increased by 38 percent; and using a designated driver, which increased by 25 percent.

Program Description

MU used model program grant funds to accomplish three goals. First, the social norms campaign "Most of Us Make Healthy, Safe, and Smart Choices" was enhanced by adding messages to correct students' misperception of norms related to approval of drinking; it was then expanded to include messages about commonly used protective behaviors, such as eating before drinking and using a designated driver. Second, a targeted social norms campaign was created to address the higher-risk drinkers in the fraternity and sorority system. Third, the social marketing component, the MUmythbusters campaign, was added to counter myths about the environment in which students drink, thereby altering students' drinking expectancies.

Each of these program enhancements had a clear rationale based on MU's ongoing assessment efforts. By adding questions about protective and injunctive norms to the annual student wellness survey conducted by the WRC, project staff identified additional healthy behaviors and attitudes among MU students to promote in the campaign. According to feedback solicited by the WRC from fraternity and sorority members, this population did not believe that the campus-wide norms campaign applied to them, suggesting the need for a targeted effort. Finally, the idea for MUmythbusters came about when WRC staff noted the "urban myths" among MU students that influenced their decisions about alcohol and other drug use. For example, one such "myth" identified through focus groups with students was the incorrect belief among students that open container laws do not apply at football game tailgate parties. These beliefs were not normative misperceptions but, rather, factual errors. The MUmythbusters campaign allowed the WRC to enhance other program efforts by refuting these erroneous beliefs systematically through a social marketing campaign.

MU's prevention program was grounded in multiple approaches designed to work synergistically. Conceptually, all wellness efforts were organized according to four elements: decision-making; harm reduction, such as safe rides and Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College

Students (BASICS) for policy violators; environmental change efforts, such as addressing alcohol availability and price; and accurate information about healthy norms. These elements were infused through all the campus prevention activities. For example, peer education workshops incorporated information about decision-making, harm-reduction techniques, and healthy norms. Similarly, while MU's Access to Alcohol Action Team, a campus and community coalition, focused primarily on environmental change efforts, social norms messages were discussed among coalition members. Its members included campus and community leaders, such as law enforcement professionals, campus administrators, concerned citizens, business owners, and health professionals. They were the most common source of correct information for the myths addressed in MUmythbusters, which provided accurate information about student behavior.

Social norms has been more than a "program" at MU, it has been an integral part of all of its prevention efforts. Emphasizing healthy student behaviors was the consistent theme, whether communicating with senior administrators, faculty, the community, or the media. The WRC staff were careful not to undermine the effect of one part of their program—the social norms campaign—by focusing on the negative behaviors of the minority of students who were the focus of other program components.

Leadership Is Key

MU exemplified the principle called out in the U.S. Department of Education's publication *Experiences in Effective Prevention: The U.S. Department of Education's Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants* that "strong leadership is vital to effective prevention." Kim Dude embodies the attributes described as vital for effective alcohol and other drug abuse prevention leadership: vision, connectedness, organizational skills, strategic planning skills, communication skills, political skills, optimism, energy, courage, and steadfastness.

Based on her experience working with Dude, MU's Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs Cathy Scroggs said that a strong leader needs to have a vision, understand what is really happening on campus and in the community—including the political realities—and persevere. She advises colleges and universities to consider hiring more seasoned professionals who will stick with the work over the long haul, observing that Dude has earned trust because of her longevity at MU combined with the success of the program. According to Dude, both energy and steadfastness are required to move forward an alcohol and other drug abuse prevention agenda. She said, "You cannot sit back quietly and be polite and hope things will happen—you have to make things happen."

According to Scroggs, senior leadership support is integral to the success of prevention efforts and there are several ways administrators at the vice-chancellor level can provide that support. She said that "when you sit at the table with other administrators, you have to be the conscience." For example, after Scroggs questioned the appropriateness of having "open" bars at administration-hosted events, guests were limited to two drink tickets. In addition, she has made

it a point to participate in prevention events to be visible and show support. She has held the line with students who wind up in her office for disciplinary infractions because, as she said, "social norms campaigns need an environment in which limits and boundaries are being set."

Scroggs also has played a role in fostering collaboration among departments. If she learned that an office was reluctant to collaborate on a particular effort, she would call a meeting to bring people together to discuss the issue and to signal her expectation that they would work together. In fact, all of MU's prevention efforts, including its social norms and social marketing efforts, have been characterized by a high degree of collaboration among campus and community partners. Senior administration set the tone for their efforts by creating an expectation that departments will collaborate. Even so, building cooperative relationships has required effort. At MU, data have been the basis for a number of collaborations. Dude said that data made it easier to reach out to other offices with a problem-oriented focus. She started from the assumption that everyone wants to help students succeed. The WRC also shared its data with other departments to provide them with background data for their grant proposals, thereby building good will and promoting a collaborative atmosphere.

To inform program development Dude kept current with the research literature to ensure that programs reflected current knowledge. She attended the U.S. Department of Education's National Meeting on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention in Higher Education as a main source for learning about the latest research and testing out her own ideas with colleagues. Although research evidence on the effectiveness of social norms marketing programs was very preliminary when MU began its first campaign, Dude's goal was to have the most complete program possible. She viewed social norms marketing as a good complement to the existing environmental change and individually focused efforts.

Strategic Planning

"Every grant proposal is a strategic plan," said Dude. MU's first major prevention initiative in 1990 was funded by a grant that required a timeline as well as plans for staffing, data collection, and project monitoring. Dude and her staff created a plan for each project, many of which were grant funded, and developed a program logic model to clarify thinking about how the proposed activities would lead to expected outcomes. She also wrote an annual strategic plan for the WRC that articulated how all wellness programs fit together with the four elements of the center's framework.

"If you don't know where you are going, how will you know when you get there?" asked Dude. That way of thinking informed all the work of the center, and staff meetings were used to review progress against project plans. Having plans in place, however, did not prevent programs from evolving. Center staff monitored efforts carefully and made adjustments suggested by process and outcome evaluation results.

Data Collection and Program Evaluation

Grants have supported the WRC's evaluation efforts by funding data collection activities and at times by providing political leverage. For example, when another campus office wanted the center to stop conducting the wellness survey, Dude was able to point to grant requirements as a reason to continue the surveys. Grant funding also has focused the evaluation efforts by requiring projects to include evaluation from the proposal stage to the end of the project. The center has often used evaluation results from one final grant report in the next grant proposal. While initially evaluation was done because grants required it, WRC staff have found multiple ways in which to use data: to assess problems, guide program design, monitor implementation, evaluate successes, and forge partnerships.

Prevention evaluation at MU has been an ongoing process that includes conducting student surveys and program and event evaluations; tracking alcohol-related articles and ads in the student newspaper and posters on campus bulletin boards; and compiling incident report data annually from residential life, campus judicial, and campus and Columbia police. These quantitative data were supplemented by focus group discussions and consultation with key informants. All social norms messages were pilot-tested before posting.

The WRC has administered a student survey annually since 1990. Initially it used the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey[45] to assess alcohol use and related consequences, but in recent years staff created a wellness survey that added questions measuring protective behaviors; injunctive norms; and other health issues, such as gambling, tobacco use, nutrition, exercise, suicide, and knowledge of center services. This customized survey has provided flexibility to add questions about topics of current interest, such as tailgating practices and a nuisance party law.

While MU surveys have shown decreases in student alcohol use and related harms, it has been difficult to disentangle the results of one component within a comprehensive campaign. Nevertheless, Dude expressed confidence in the campaign-related results because of shifts in the specific behaviors targeted by the campaign that would have been unlikely results of other efforts, including decreases in the gap between perceived and actual drinking behaviors and increases in the use of targeted protective factors. Reported increases in campaign visibility corresponded with these changes.

Sustainability

MU has taken some novel approaches to sustain its prevention efforts. It took the lead in Partners in Prevention, a statewide coalition composed of the 12 public higher education institutions in Missouri. Funding for this initiative supports prevention efforts at all member institutions, including MU. In addition, the wellness focus of the center helped garner support from various campus departments. In turn, the center supplied programming and support to these departments on an array of student health and safety issues, including alcohol and other drugs, tobacco use, and

gambling. This focus on wellness also allowed the center to take a more integrated approach and ensure consistent approaches to campus prevention messages.

MU's model program status also has provided credibility and clout to help the WRC advocate for more resources from the institution. Following an increase in the student life fee, the director of Student Life made a portion of that fee available to the WRC to help sustain the model program efforts. Dude also identified an MU parents' fund as a possible source of support.

Scroggs advised alcohol and other drug prevention professionals to be satisfied with incremental change. "Everyone wants to change the culture overnight, but that's not going to happen," she said. "But we have made progress. It just takes perseverance."

Scroggs pointed out that sometimes behaviors are not as entrenched as people believe they are. Because the entire student body changes every four years, if something happens for two years, students think it is a tradition. But if it has not occurred for two years, they think that it has never happened.

Conclusions

Many programs seek out student input, but MU's approach is better described as mentoring a generation of future leaders. Students serve as integral members of the wellness team as well as of several peer education and advocacy groups. Peer educators must make a significant commitment to the organization.

MU's four interrelated approaches (decision-making, harm reduction, environmental and policy approaches, and social norms) serve as a shared philosophy across all wellness efforts. Every program is designed with this framework in mind.

The WRC has developed a "culture of assessment" that includes communicating results, reviewing data as a part of doing business, collecting more data when needed, having data analysts on staff, and providing data to interested parties both within the office and from other departments.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Lincoln, Neb.

Reducing Alcohol Related Harms Among Nebraska College Students Through Comprehensive Environmental Strategies: Replicating the NU Directions Model

Beginning Date: Oct. 1, 2005
Ending Date: March 30, 2007
Project Director: Ian M. Newman

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) was chartered in 1869 and has been a member of the Association of American Universities since 1909. UNL is a land-grant university and a member of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. In 2008 it enrolled 18,053 undergraduates and 4,920 graduates.

Background

In 2005 UNL received a model program grant from the U.S. Department of Education in recognition of its NU Directions program and to disseminate the program to publicly funded state colleges and universities in Nebraska. NU Directions is based on three distinct best practices: the use of community coalitions to employ a comprehensive environmental strategy; the use of a 3-in-1 framework that targets individuals, campuses, and communities; and the use of state initiatives to strengthen individual campus efforts to reduce alcohol consumption and related harms within college populations.

From 1997 to 2007 UNL was one of 10 campuses funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (RWJF) national effort to reduce high-risk drinking among college students. Called A Matter

of Degree (AMOD), this initiative was designed to foster collaboration between participating universities and the communities in which they are located to identify the environmental factors, such as alcohol advertising and marketing, institutional policies and practices, local ordinances—even social and cultural beliefs and behaviors—that converge to encourage alcohol abuse, and to work together to create positive changes.

UNL's NU Directions campus and community coalition was established in 1998 and included 40 members representing all aspects of the community and campus. The group operated from a strategic plan that articulated measurable goals and objectives based on environmental indicators and student survey data. It developed activities to address access to and availability of alcohol, pricing and promotions, and the normative culture, among other environmental elements. The strategic plan was supported by a comprehensive communications plan.

In 2004 the College Alcohol Study at the Harvard School of Public Health,[46] which was charged with evaluating the AMOD campuses, identified UNL as one of five sites that had successfully implemented a comprehensive environmental strategy.[47] The evaluation and the Student Omnibus Survey by UNL's Bureau of Sociological Research[48] found a reduction in student "binge" drinking rates from 62 percent in 1997 to 43 percent in 2006. Similar reductions were found in students' reported primary and secondary harms related to alcohol consumption.

Coalition members attributed the success of NU Directions to several factors, including its leadership, membership, and organizing philosophy. The group was co-chaired by two senior-level individuals representing both the campus and the community—Lincoln Chief of Police Tom Casady and UNL's then Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs Jim Griesen. Both officials were involved from the beginning. They helped write the AMOD proposal, brought other partners to the table, and were involved in developing the initial strategic plan.

Director of Student Involvement and Director of the NU Directions Campus-Community Coalition Linda Major credits Griesen for his ongoing involvement in the project. "He was very visible and vocal in his support, but even beyond that it was his daily work on the ground that was so important to us. He helped us think things through," she said.

Griesen said that in Chief Casady, "we couldn't have had a better community ally." Like Griesen, Casady provided invaluable connections and political support. He also worked side by side with coalition members, chairing a coalition work group, speaking out in support of the project, and making changes in his own department. Both Griesen and Casady also had the authority to effect policy changes. For example, Casady devoted resources to increase patrols. Griesen reviewed the student code of conduct and agreed to include operating a disorderly house, procuring for minors, and selling alcohol without a license as municipal violations that warranted campus review and adjudication. The two co-chairs also had regular contact with the chancellor and mayor. What

made it work was their ability to share information, request assistance, and solicit their involvement on an ongoing basis.

Major played an important role in the success of NU Directions. She is a longtime Lincoln resident who was hired at UNL prior to the AMOD grant based on her work in community alcohol prevention. Both her background and community connections were a significant asset for UNL's prevention efforts. Ian Newman, the Wesley C. Meierhenry Distinguished Professor of Educational Psychology at UNL and the director of the model program grant, said, "Linda Major knew the community, she knew alcohol prevention, she had relationships, and she could get things done."

Major said that two structural factors helped her exercise leadership in the project. First, she reported directly to Griesen, which helped garner support and overcome barriers. Second, Griesen located NU Directions within Student Involvement, which is an umbrella organization for numerous cocurricular opportunities, including student organizations, service learning, leadership development, and the women's center. Major said that the move from the health center to Student Involvement early in the project "changed the nature of the alcohol conversation," making it part of a larger discussion about student life and student culture rather than being treated as one of many health issues.

The coalition staff also included a full-time communications director, a part-time assistant, and a student. Coalition members rather than staff served as leaders of the coalition and its four work groups, but staff did the background work and helped the groups remain focused on the strategic plan. Major likens them to political staffers, who are not the public face of the office but instead work behind the scenes to gather and summarize information, brief everyone, and keep the work moving. Coalition members received media training from Tom Workman, communications director, so they could serve as the public face of the coalition and communicate consistent messages.

The coalition's broad-based membership was important to its success. In addition to traditional stakeholders, others such as the hospitality industry, high-risk students, and those who might be likely opponents of alcohol policy initiatives were included. Chief Casady advises others who are building coalitions to "get more people under a bigger tent. If it's the usual suspects, you won't get much accomplished."

In addition, Major's consensus-building style helped keep this diverse group focused on project goals. Workman said that Major helped him understand the importance of listening to the concerns and interests of the coalition members and then finding solutions that connect their goals with the goals of NU Directions. "This approach recognizes the multiple motivations that lead people to want to change environments that support high-risk drinking," said Workman.

For example, the coalition initiated an effort to pass state legislation to change Nebraska's driver's license to make it more difficult for underage drinkers to use it as a false ID. In addi-

tion to expected allies in the field of alcohol problem prevention, coalition members developed liaisons with other groups with their own motivations for supporting the new digital licenses, such as reducing identity theft and targeting check-cashing schemes.

Coalition staff found common ground among coalition members by frequently asking the question, "What kind of community would you personally like to live in?" Answers tended to be similar among the stakeholders, which provided a starting point for creative thinking about how to make progress in shaping that community. This process also pointed to research literature to see what actions could best support their goals.

Program Description

Ongoing strategic planning was the foundation of NU Directions because the first year of the AMOD grant was designated for planning. The coalition spent that time developing a comprehensive strategic plan based on a needs assessment, which incorporated local student behavioral and attitudinal data as well as a thorough scan of the local environment. Approximately 70 partners from across the community and campus participated in the environmental scanning and strategic planning process. The coalition reviewed data collected from the Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study and the Student Omnibus Survey conducted by UNL's Bureau of Sociological Research, which provided baseline data for student behavior. It also reviewed other social indicator data, such as "last drink" reports from Lincoln's protective custody facility, police arrest records, police calls for service, and citizen complaints. Finally, the group explored evidence-based programs, best practices, and theoretical models from the literature on alcohol problem prevention.

Using current theory and research on environmental approaches to prevention, along with promising research in social norms and brief interventions, the coalition adopted a plan that incorporated strategies targeting individuals, the campus, and the community. A comprehensive plan of 13 goals and 60 objectives that incorporated strategies designed to affect individuals, the campus, and the community was developed in order to accomplish the mission of the coalition. UNL already had educational and early intervention programs in place, so it focused on ensuring that individually focused efforts were evidence based and on implementing complementary environmental and policy efforts.

After measurable objectives were identified for each goal area, coalition members formed four work groups to accomplish the objectives. Work groups were organized around four key areas of the plan: policy and enforcement, social environment, neighborhood relations, and education. Coalition members joined work groups based on their expertise, interests, and potential contributions. Staff developed an activities timeline to assist work groups prioritize the timing of implementation and establish the length of each intervention. Work groups met regularly throughout the initial five-year period of the AMOD grant to implement activities and monitor progress. While

coalition membership was generally stable, new partners came on board as appropriate to help with specific objectives, special task forces, or project groups. One such task force brought in landlords to create model lease agreements.

The strategic plan was data driven. That way, NU Directions could be confident that its activities addressed real problems. Data-driven goals allowed objectives to be framed in terms of measurable change in the data sources, thus linking back to the identified problems. Finally, a data-driven focus helped reduce potential conflicts over goals and objectives, because problems to be addressed could be substantiated by data.

"The problems we were trying to solve pointed the coalition to certain solutions," said Griesen. For example, large numbers of off-campus parties, which student survey data identified as the most frequent location for heavy drinking, posed a number of health and safety risks as well as adversely affecting neighborhoods. Moreover, students reported little concern that they would suffer legal consequences for underage drinking at these parties. The Lincoln Police Department (LPD) determined that its low-key approach to student parties, which focused on dispersing crowds using minimal resources, with few arrests and resulting paperwork, had actually exacerbated problems, because out-of-control party hosts felt little risk of arrest or citation. As a result, the policy and enforcement work group adopted Party Patrol as one of its strategies, which fell under the work group's goal number four—increase enforcement to create greater risk associated with high-risk consumption.

Party Patrol was a targeted enforcement by LPD to increase the number of arrests at such parties, especially at locations that generated repeated complaints, and to publicize these actions in media outlets to let students know that unruly parties with high-risk drinking would no longer be tolerated. Party Patrol resulted in increases in arrests for minor in possession of alcohol and maintaining a disorderly house, and in decreases in police dispatches to previously troublesome apartment complexes and rental properties. In the first three years of the NU Directions project, student surveys found that UNL students' perception of the risk of being caught drinking at an off-campus party increased from 33 percent in 1997 to 43 percent in 2000.

In order to be useful for planning, the data had to be easily interpretable by coalition members. Understanding that "a picture is worth a thousand words," NU Directions staff summarized and displayed data in graphic formats to facilitate use in planning. These displays also helped to highlight the environmental contributors to alcohol-related problems by illustrating, for example, the relationship between outlet density and crime, the locations of bars offering drink specials near campus, and the distribution of neighborhood complaints about party houses. For example, NU Directions created graphs showing where alcohol was consumed, maps comparing alcohol-related problems during daytime versus nighttime football games, and tables showing "place of last drink" data for students admitted to the detoxification center.

To help guide work groups in translating problems into strategies, NU Directions staff created a three-component model focusing on three main influences on human behavior that work together to inform choices: policy, education, and enforcement. Major said that this framework was a helpful environmental analysis tool. For any given problem, coalition members would ask: What policies are people now operating under? Where did they learn that policy? What positive or negative consequences are they experiencing that encourage or dissuade them from the behavior? What messages are teaching them how to engage in the behavior in a way that minimizes negative consequences and maximizes positive outcomes? What, given this reality, do we need to change in the policy itself, the way people are being educated about it, or the types of consequences they are experiencing?

Communications—The Key

NU Directions operated a "parallel" communications plan that was carried out by Workman. Rather than disseminating general alcohol messages, the communications plan was carefully designed to support and advance the strategic plan and to keep the coalition informed, unified, and motivated. Much like the selection of project strategies, communication messages and vehicles were driven by local circumstances and desired outcomes. For example, as noted earlier, a key component of the Party Patrol strategy was publicizing student arrests in the media. Each Party Patrol detail was followed by a Monday media briefing by the police department, which collaborated with Workman to frame messages in a way that would support the coalition's objectives to increase the perceived risk of arrest and to promote safe behavior. Briefings avoided warlike terms such as "crackdown," "get tough," and "zero tolerance," and instead emphasized the coalition's concern with effects on the neighborhood and high-risk behaviors. Media briefings also shared commonsense precautions for hosting safe and responsible parties.

Sustainability

Achieving early wins helped to energize the project, but the coalition was determined to follow its strategic plan, which involved longer-term work on multiple policy and environmental changes. Only after implementation of multiple initiatives over time did NU Directions see the reductions it sought in alcohol use and related harms. This persistence paid off, as these reductions have continued.

In addition, coalition members thought deeply about sustainability throughout the project, including having philosophical discussions about what that concept really means. Major said that the coalition paid close attention to the institutionalization of specific initiatives throughout the life of the project.

"We asked, 'who will own this?' and then worked toward that end," said Major. Both UNL and the city of Lincoln have provided institutional homes for several coalition projects to ensure their ongoing implementation.

As the RWJF funding came to an end, the coalition concluded that sustainability did not mean continuing NU Directions as it existed, but rather evolving the prevention work to a new form adapted to current circumstances. In 2007, NU Directions dissolved the single campus and community coalition and replaced it with three entities, each including appropriate partners and focusing on defined areas of the environment. The first is the UNL Campus Task Force, which includes mostly campus-based stakeholders and focuses on UNL policy and campus culture. The second is the Lincoln College Partnership, which includes other local higher education institutions and NU Directions' community partners and addresses community-based environmental issues, city ordinances, the city entertainment district, alcohol retail outlets in Lincoln, and quality of life in area neighborhoods.

The third is the Nebraska Collegiate Consortium,[49] which involves multiple campuses across the state and focuses on statewide data collection, statewide policy, and resource sharing. UNL received its model program grant to support this consortium, which now includes 13 Nebraska colleges, universities, and community colleges through dissemination of the tools, technical assistance, and training needed to replicate the NU Directions strategies.

The project's initial intent was to "establish a State wide network of campus-community coalitions in Nebraska to replicate the NU Directions framework and employ comprehensive environmental strategies"[50] to address the specific needs of the different campuses. To achieve this, the consortium leadership group would provide technical assistance, training, and strategic planning tools to the member institutions, that is, the publicly supported IHEs in Nebraska. Half of the member institutions completed all the steps in the strategic planning process. Campus coalitions were developed, but because of changes in the community coalition's structure, campus-community coalitions were not fully established at the end of the project. Nevertheless, the consortium was mature enough at the end of its Department of Education funding to obtain alternative funding for at least two years from the Office of Highway Safety, Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles.

According to Casady, while the NU Directions coalition itself does not exist anymore, people still talk and act as if it is still in place. "It's part of the fabric now," he said. "I realized that things really had changed when an important alumni club applied for a special license to provide alcohol in its parking lot on football game days and the city council voted unanimously against it, even without organized opposition from the coalition."

Conclusions

UNL and the Lincoln community had a high degree of readiness for alcohol and other drug problem prevention and were able to take advantage of that readiness when the AMOD grant opportunity came along. They had a base of useful data, such as the College Alcohol Study and place-of-last-drink data collected in student surveys since 1994; some campus policies already

in place; and strong collaborations, thanks to Major's many years of community involvement. Later, Workman brought strong communication skills, which also enhanced readiness.

NU Directions spent a full year developing a strategic plan that was collaborative, comprehensive, data based, and guided by evidence. NU Directions staff utilized the precede-proceed model of community planning, which helped to support the planning process. This model provides a comprehensive structure for assessing health and quality-of-life needs and for designing, implementing, and evaluating health promotion and other public health programs to meet those needs.

NU Directions benefited from a strong coalition. In addition to the diversity of its membership, a survey of coalition members conducted by the project evaluators indicated high levels of satisfaction and retention among members. Newman said the coalition membership was stable "because they could see things getting done, and people are pleased to come and be a part of things when they can see success."

Major and Workman emphasize that the skills and authority required to direct a project like NU Directions are not commonly found in an alcohol and other drug educator located in the health center. A coalition coordinator needs community organizing skills and must be in a position in the institution that facilitates partnerships with campus and community entities. In addition, that person needs direct access to the senior student affairs administrator. The work of prevention is not the sole responsibility of a prevention staff person. At NU Directions, the director facilitated and supported a comprehensive plan that was carried out by individuals from across the campus and community.

Changes in the environment often do not appear to have an effect for years. While NU Directions adhered closely to the strategic plan, it also seized opportunities to have some "early wins." In the first year of the grant, for example, NU Directions successfully opposed a "bottle club" license that would have allowed members to consume their own alcohol within an establishment outside of state-controlled hours of operation. With this success the coalition members saw that the coalition could have an effect on the community and were energized at an early stage.

Virginia Commonwealth University

Richmond, Va.

Changing Perceptions With the "Click" of a Button

Beginning Date: Oct. 1, 2005
Ending Date: July 31, 2007
Project Director: Linda Hancock

Virginia Commonwealth University, located in Richmond, is the largest university in Virginia, enrolling in 2008 nearly 32,000 students, of whom 22,163 were undergraduates. The university takes its founding date of 1838 from the year the Medical College of Virginia (MCV) was created as the medical department of Hampden-Sydney College. In 1968, MCV and the Richmond Professional merged to become Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).

Background

One impetus behind VCU's alcohol and other drug prevention programming was an alcohol-related car crash in 1987 that claimed the lives of three students. In response to this tragedy, the provost's office formed a task force that was the genesis of the University Substance Abuse Committee, which was established in 1989. This committee is helmed by VCU's Office of Health Promotion (OHP).

VCU had traditionally been a commuter campus, but in 1999 the university's strategic plan called for a substantial increase in out-of-state recruitment, resulting in an expansion of residence hall capacity. Concerned that the change in student make-up might have an effect on alcohol and other drug abuse problems, OHP conducted a needs assessment in conjunction with a random mail-out survey using the National College Health Assessment[51] to gather baseline data on alcohol and other drug abuse problems at VCU.

Each year since then VCU has increased recruitment of out-of-state students and students from outside the Richmond vicinity. The student population has transitioned from being primarily commuter to a more traditional, residential student body, creating the kind of campus environment related to higher levels of risky drinking.

Program Description

The OHP model program employed multiple, complementary components. The central piece of the universal prevention component is a social norms marketing campaign that was theory based and student informed, covered a broad range of health behaviors, and included personal protective behaviors. OHP partnered with students to construct media messages that resonated with the true injunctive health norms of college students and captured the diversity of VCU students. The main theme woven through the campaign was: "VCU students are healthier than you think." A variety of health misperceptions were included in the campaign to avoid the backlash that an alcohol-only campaign can provoke. Messages for the campaign's personal protective behaviors were displayed in a poster series called "What's Your Strategy?" The campaign also emphasized protective behaviors and harm reduction strategies in an online alcohol assessment tool. The "What's Your Strategy?" social norms marketing campaign began in 2002, with funding from the National Social Norms Resource Center. VCU received its U.S. Department of Education model program grant in 2005.

Strategic Planning

Project Director Linda Hancock, who is also director of health promotion, said that VCU prevention efforts followed an "informal" strategic planning process. Much of the work of Hancock and teams in OHP was based on the university's strategic plan, which is a very strong and comprehensive plan that has been well publicized to the campus and wider community. The OHP teams ensured that their work related to alcohol and other drug abuse prevention fit into this plan. Being a part of the "bigger picture" of the university benefited OHP in many ways. Most notably, it kept the work in line with the institution's priorities, which by default kept the work timely and important to the institution.

Hancock said that two important components of OHP's strategic planning process were staying current with prevention research and working to gain faculty involvement. Networking with other campuses to gather ideas, looking at successful initiatives on other campuses, and learning how to adapt those successful programs to VCU and OHP were also very important. According to Hancock, this information gathering was a "two-way street," meaning that VCU shared its experiences with alcohol and other drug abuse prevention work, as well as other topic areas. VCU valued sharing success as a way to generate future success for its own program and that of others. "We share our ideas because others are then willing to share their good research and work," said Hancock.

OHP has conducted annual retreats during which it identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (a SWOT analysis) related to the office and its programs and initiatives. During an annual retreat the wellness team reviews the university's strategic plan and OHP goals to ensure that they were in line with and complemented the university's strategic plan. This process was done regularly to monitor progress and make program adjustments as needed to meet program goals and objectives. The SWOT analysis also provided a way for OHP to capitalize on new opportunities, such as funding, in an effort to best enhance successes.

A strong component of VCU's program has been deliberate collaboration with other departments and offices, as well as students. Hancock pointed to faculty members who welcomed project staff into their classrooms to present social norms marketing data through the use of clicker technology in presentations, a technology-based approach that allows students to give immediate feedback on social norms perceptions and misperceptions.

The wellness team has worked with nursing students to train them on how to conduct intercept surveys and how to use such surveys in VCU's Social Norms Marketing program. The nursing students then conduct intercept surveys for a "pulse check" for OHP programs. OHP has capitalized on this approach to data collection by having the same students also input the data and provide a report of their findings that is used to further prevention work on campus.

Hancock also cited some examples of faculty from the Department of Communication Arts and Design and other departments that worked with OHP to engage their students with social norms marketing projects as the topic of a class assignment. Some of the products of these collaborations have included innovative messaging techniques, such as a social norms marketing message on "5th pocket" identification holders (see http://www.yourstrategy.org). Hancock said that these partnerships produced work and came up with creative ideas the OHP staff would not have developed on their own. These new and innovative ideas made the project's work and products more interesting and better received by the target audiences.

OHP made it a priority to engage students from various disciplines (e.g., journalism, graphic design, and sociology) as part-time staff for the project. One innovative idea resulting from this interdisciplinary approach was the very popular *Stall Street Journal.* VCU borrowed the idea from the University of Virginia but has placed its own spin on this media. This graphically designed one-page newspaper, written in a lively, journalistic style on topics related to healthy and safe behavior, was posted periodically in toilet stalls all over campus.

For work on the model program grant and other alcohol and other drug prevention, VCU made it a point to involve students. Having student employees involved in the project was beneficial for several reasons. First, students were best able to design and provide feedback on marketing materials for the campaign's target audience, which were students themselves. Second, students provided several

impromptu "teachable" moments to other students, such as one student who had discussions with peers "off the clock" on program materials and how the research was indeed valid and reliable.

In addition, a Gold Team, which included key members from the Division of Student Affairs and campus police, met weekly to discuss students of concern. This measure helped improve communication between offices to ensure that students receive the help and attention they may need.

OHP recently worked with the Counseling Center to have it take over the "Pathways" course, a 2.5-hour class followed by an individual session using motivational interviewing techniques.[52] The class was designed as a judicial sanction for offenders whose behavior warrants significant concern for their health and well-being. With the Counseling Center conducting this class, OHP, which started the class, could focus more time and attention on other prevention efforts—both established and promising. It also freed up time and personnel to devote more time to further evaluation and research on environmental issues related to alcohol and other drug use on campus.

Hancock believes that strong policies are important for a successful prevention program. VCU distributed its alcohol and other drug abuse policy in numerous ways to ensure it was available to and understood by students, faculty, and staff. VCU established a strong University Substance Abuse Committee that meets periodically to review and update the policy.

A strength of the committee is the number and variety of people involved. The common links include respect for OHP and its work and a solid understanding of prevention work on campus. Faculty, staff, and students from various constituencies around the campus are well represented and well engaged. The diversity of the team helped ensure a thorough policy review and, perhaps more important, broad dissemination of the policy and the committee's work back to the campus.

Evaluation and Assessment

According to Hancock, the OHP team had some concerns regarding the in-class survey method VCU used from 2002 to 2007 and conducted during the grant. One potential way to get a random sample of students to respond was to move to an online method, which VCU did in 2008, although OHP staff are aware that the online survey technique also has issues related to the representative nature of the sample. Demographics from online surveys may not necessarily be representative because of who normally completes them. For example, according to Hancock, anecdotal evidence suggests that more women than men may be more likely to complete an online instrument, skewing the data. Despite challenges in data collection, VCU was committed to gathering and analyzing campus data on an annual basis.

OHP has collected and tracked a great deal of data over the years, which helped prove the case for prevention and provided the basis for social norms marketing messages to various audiences. At the core of social norms marketing are student misperceptions about certain behaviors that can be cor-

rected. While the clicker program worked well at doing this in small-group settings, it was effective only because the correct information has been shared with the larger target audience.

Another area of data collection that will help with prevention efforts is geographical information systems (GIS) mapping of neighborhoods around the campus. OHP hopes to use this information to graphically illustrate whether students' residential areas are correlated with problem areas and "hot spots" for violations and disturbances. GIS does this by examining the geographic distribution of drinking-related events, such as the locations of alcohol-related traffic crashes, arrests for public drunkenness, and other alcohol-related problems. It draws on archival data, such as police reports, and emphasizes the importance of mapping to understanding alcohol problems. If there is a regular and predictable geographic distribution of problem events, then some feature of the environment (e.g., high density of students or bars) may be related to those problems. Hancock believes that such information will further support the case for expanded prevention work.

OHP also has worked with faculty members to get help with research projects. Faculty members were able to use project data for journal articles and research projects. These working relationships helped OHP staff both to digest and understand the mountains of data it had collected and to disseminate information about VCU prevention activities to both the field and other departments on campus.

VCU was very concerned about its relationship with the city of Richmond and the five distinct residential districts surrounding the campus. VCU administrators met regularly with a community board that included representatives from all five districts. In addition, VCU and the city have partnered to conduct party patrols. VCU has struggled with how to balance the community's and neighbors' expectations regarding controlling student behavior with what really can be accomplished. VCU's student body has been growing, with more students living on and near campus in apartments and other spaces converted for residential use.

Sustainability

Hancock and her team credit much of the success of OHP to the fact that many of its activities were entertaining and fun, which made them attractive to students and resulted in requests for numerous presentations in classrooms and at other student gatherings and groups. This exposure led to greater successes.

"OHP staff are often invited because they are fun and approachable. We use these opportunities to further develop relationships and enhance our work," said Hancock.

VCU's upper-level administration was both aware and supportive of OHP's work, as well as some of the challenges related to student alcohol and other drug use. According to Henry G. Rhone, vice provost for student affairs and enrollment services, a challenge at VCU was that

students seemed to identify drinking as a basic element of college life. In addition, parents seemed to accept drinking as a normal and expected part of college life. While these concerns and observations were not new to OHP staff, that upper administration shared them revealed the degree to which the message and concerns of OHP had filtered up through the university's ranks.

Not only did OHP have the support of upper-level administration, it also had strong leadership at the program level. Hancock has a solid background and history at VCU, which provided her with a good understanding of how the university works. This depth of experience enabled her to identify and capitalize on opportunities as they arose, in addition to developing initiatives to support prevention efforts. Hancock was particularly adept at "connecting the dots" to build upon existing efforts with new ideas or activities to enhance the program's success.

In the summer of 2008, VCU's Office of Health Promotion changed names and moved to a larger, more central location on campus. This office was renamed the Wellness Resource Center, or as the students refer to it, "The Well."

Conclusions

VCU's program experiences reflect core elements of successful programs as described in the Department's publication *Experiences in Effective Prevention: The U.S. Department of Education's Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants.*

While OHP did not engage in an elaborate strategic planning process in the traditional sense, several elements of planning were evident in program development. Many actions were explained as intentional, such as making a point to follow current research, looking to others for successful ideas, and taking the path of least resistance to achieve program objectives.

In terms of program evaluation, the OHP wellness team knew that there is no perfect method of data collection but was also aware that the value of data in guiding practice is crucial. VCU has been developing ways to improve data collection and analysis practices and share the data with campus partners.

The OHP wellness team has worked to institutionalize prevention primarily through the wide variety of partnerships formed between the office and others on campus—departments, faculty members, students, academic programs, and so on. This branching out and collaboration has brought OHP efforts to a wider group of people who are now invested and intimately involved in the running and success of the program. By permeating these other areas the program will likely remain viable and sustainable, as it has become more than a program or initiative of the OHP and truly a concern for the university. The vision and actions of Hancock and the wellness team lent themselves to the long view and were likely a contributing factor to VCU's success in alcohol and other drug prevention. Hancock

communicates the importance of viewing prevention as an ongoing effort that can always be improved. She and the wellness team have continued to look for ways to tweak and improve the program and find new partners, angles, and resources on which to build more success.

Resources

Model Program Web Sites

The model program grantees have Web sites that contain a wide range of information and resources regarding their prevention activities. Some include copies of reports, PowerPoint presentations, examples of campaign materials, and articles on prevention projects.

George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia
COMPASS: A Road Map to Healthy Living
www.compass.gmu.edu/about.html

Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington
Project REAL
www.gonzaga.edu/Student-Life/Support-for-Students/Wellness/SWRC/default.asp

Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, New York
Alcohol Education Project
alcohol.hws.edu/

Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, California
Heads UP! Campus-Wide Responsible Drinking Program
www.lmu.edu/PageFactory.aspx?PageID=24929

Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan
Social Norms Program
www.socialnorms.msu.edu/

Montclair State University, Montclair, New Jersey
Social Norms Program
www.montclair.edu/Wellness/socialnorms

The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
Student Wellness (Office of Student Life)
swc.osu.edu/

University at Albany, State University of New York, Albany, New York
Committee on University & Community Relations
police.albany.edu/2ColPage.asp?PageSName=OCA3

University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
Campus Health Service
www.health.arizona.edu/webfiles/hpps_about_us_community.htm

University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, Missouri
MU Mythbusters Initiative
wellness.missouri.edu/Mythbusters/about.html

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska
NU Directions Program
www.nudirections.org/

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia
What's Your Strategy?
www.yourstrategy.org/

Other Web Resources

A Matter of Degree Initiative to Reduce Binge Drinking at Colleges and Universities: Lessons Learned. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2008.
www.rwjf.org/files/research/051308matterofdegree.pdf

A Matter of Degree Advocacy Initiative. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2003.
www.rwjf.org/files/research/111703amod.initiative.pdf

College Drinking: Changing the Culture. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2002.
www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov

Experiences in Effective Prevention: The U.S. Department of Education's Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campuses Grants, 2007.
www.higheredcenter.org/files/product/effective-prevention.pdf

Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention
www.higheredcenter.org

Publications

Bonnie, R. J., and O'Connell, M. E. (eds.) *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine, 2003).

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Appendix: Interview Questions

Program Development Issues

1. How important was campus leadership in the early stages of your program development? How did you engage that leadership? Who on campus and/or in the community exercised that leadership? How did they demonstrate that leadership to the campus/community?
2. What kinds of collaborations were needed to advance your program efforts? How were individuals identified? Did you structure collaborations formally through the use of coalitions or task forces? If so, how were they structured? If not, how were collaborations maintained?
3. What types of communications strategies did you employ to support your early program efforts, especially among collaborators? How important were communications to your successes?
4. How did you determine which prevention approach to use in your program?

Essential Aspects of Prevention Work

Strategic Planning

1. Please describe the strategic planning process you engaged in to develop your programs. Who was involved? How long did you engage in planning?
2. Did you conduct a problem analysis? If so, did you gather data on the nature and scope of the problems? What kinds of data did you use to inform your problem analysis? How were those data collected—by whom and from what sources?
3. Did you examine existing resources and assets that could be used to support your strategic plan? Who was engaged in that process? What planning model did you use?
4. Did you analyze and summarize the information gathered in problem assessment to clarify needs and opportunities? If so, who was involved in this process? Did you share this information with others? If so, with whom?
5. Did you establish long-term goals and objectives? Were they based on problem assessment and the data collected? Who was involved in setting goals and objectives? Did you also identify immediate and short-range objectives and supporting activities?
6. Did you consult existing research, program experience, and theory to identify potential strategies? Who did this? How were these strategies translated into a strategic plan? How did you determine whether the strategies had the potential to be effective on your campus?
7. How did you obtain campus and/or community buy-in for your strategic plan? Was your plan formal or informal?
8. What steps did you follow to develop a work plan for implementing your strategic plan?
9. Were you successful in implementing your strategic plan?

Conducting a Program Evaluation

1. Did you build in evaluation activities as part of your strategic plan? If so, what activities did you include as ways to measure your progress in meeting your goal and objectives?
2. Who was responsible for evaluating your efforts? Did you measure both process and outcomes? If so what were your process measures? What were your outcome measures?
3. How did you collect data to measure for both process and outcomes? How did you measure your successes? Did you make midcourse adjustments to your plans? Were changes in the plan based on data? If so, what kinds of data? How were data obtained and used?
4. Did you evaluate whether you met your long-term goals? If so, what data did you collect? Who collected them? (For programs still in midcourse, ask what provisions they have made to measure their long-term goals upon program completion.)

Working Toward Program Sustainability

1. Given the inevitable end to outside funding for your prevention work, what steps have you taken to work toward program sustainability?
2. What are the most important factors for achieving sustainability on your campus? How did you work with campus and/or community leadership to secure their ongoing interest and support for your activities?
3. Were you able to generate support for your activities from other campus sectors? If so, what sectors? What arguments were you able to make to convince others to use limited campus resources to support your efforts?
4. What advice do you have for other campuses that are struggling to achieve sustainability for their prevention work?

Taking the Long View

1. Because there are no "quick fixes" when it comes to preventing alcohol and other drug problems, were you able to convince your campus and/or community that it is necessary to take a "long view" for your prevention efforts?
2. If so, what arguments were you able to bring forward? To whom?
3. What kinds of responses did you have for those who want quick results? Were there specific issues that were most compelling in getting others to support prevention as a long-term commitment?

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16. S. Coleman and D. S. Anderson, eds., *Charting Your Course: A Life-long Guide to Health and Compassion* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998).

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