CATALYST

A Publication of the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention

Redefining Resources For Prevention

In the current economic climate, with many state budget deficits rising and drastic cuts being implemented, it may seem like a challenge to enhance a campus alcohol and other drug abuse or violence prevention program or, in some cases, even to keep one going. But at colleges and universities across the country, innovative prevention professionals are expanding their resources by redefining how they think about them. They are finding new resources that, previously overlooked, can be inexpensive, accessible, and effective.

Students and Staff as Resources

One such resource is students. At Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond, students from various departments fulfill their service learning requirements by working in concert with prevention professionals at the Wellness Resource Center. Linda Hancock, the center's director, interacts with professors to identify service learning activities that will benefit students and enhance the campus's prevention programs at the same time. One of the most successful occurs in the Communication Arts Department. Hancock goes into a class, and acting like a client, she describes for students the type of alcohol prevention campaign she wants. The students work in teams to design communication strategies and create accompanying graphics. They present their strategies and graphics to Hancock, who chooses a winner.

"Students are brilliant. Even if you have lots of money, it doesn't make sense not to use students; they are the target group," says Hancock.

Hancock also works with students in nursing school courses. Every semester, she delivers a guest lecture on techniques for evaluating prevention programs. Students apply what they have learned by administering a survey designed by Hancock and entering the collected data. In this way, students get hands-on learning experiences and Hancock acquires valuable information to inform VCU's prevention activities.

All told, Hancock and her staff visit classes 60 to 100 times every year.

At Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N.J., students also serve as a resource for prevention programs. Recognized in 2000 as a model program by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, the university gives college seniors the opportunity to develop a social norms marketing campaign as part of the regular curriculum in a course titled Advanced Health Communications. After an analysis of

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student survey data, the students create the campaign, complete with posters, flyers, and other material. They then move into the interpersonal component of the course, where they design and run a fun event for first-year students at a residence hall. In the process, they develop relationships with these students who are making the sometimes difficult transition from high school to college. Alcohol Jeopardy, a beanbag toss, even cupcake decorating are examples of past activities.

"It may sound cheesy, but in some ways, it [working with first-year students] is a life-changing experience," says course instructor Lea Stewart, professor of commu-

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nications and director of the Center for Communication and Health Issues. "Students realize what kind of role models they are."

In addition to students, staff members can be a resource for prevention programs. At Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash., prevention professionals have partnered with residence life staff for the past two years. The resident directors (RDs), who are full-time professionals, keep track of alcohol-related infractions that occur in their residence halls. They identify problem halls or floors and share the data with prevention professionals.

"Instead of waiting and reacting, we can do preventive education or social norms campaigns targeting a particular hall or floor," says Karen Contardo, manager of the Student Wellness Resource Center.

Encouraged by the university, many RDs engage in collateral assignments with the Office of Student Life. Some choose to work with prevention programs. Currently, one RD spends four hours a week in such activities, "making a big difference," according to Contardo.

Law Enforcement as a Resource

Campus and community law enforcement agencies often collaborate with prevention programs and can be an important resource. Steven J. Healy, managing partner of Margolis, Healy & Associates, is the former director of public safety at Princeton University in Princeton, N.J., and former member of the Review Group of the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention. He says that campus police have contact with large segments of the campus community and "see things others don't see." Police at Princeton gather extensive data about alcohol violations during the normal course of a working day. They "slice and dice" the data and share them with health services and the dean of students. This information enables prevention professionals and campus police to target specific geographic locations or behaviors, working together to send students a consistent message.

"Sharing data is the way we do business," says Healy. "We need to have cooperation if we are going to have an impact."

At the University at Albany, State University of New York, it is the off-campus police that expand the school's prevention resources. Every day, the Albany Police Department sends a report containing the names of all those arrested, as well as all victims of crime, to Tom Gebhardt, director of personal safety and off-campus affairs for the university. Gebhardt checks the names against a student database and if a student is involved, he requests an electronic copy of the arrest report. By reading the report, he determines whether alcohol was a factor. Thus, he has a "barometer of what is going on off campus."

The information is used internally to modify environmental prevention programs. For example, if there has been a spike in the number of students who use false identification, the university might provide local tavern owners with training or technology to spot fraudulent documents.

Albany Police Department data help Gebhardt identify problem blocks in neighborhoods surrounding the college. At the beginning of the academic year, campus and city police go door-to-door on these blocks, educating residents about safety concerns and the legal consequences of alcohol abuse.

Technology Resources

Another resource for prevention programs is the effective use of technology. Gail Farmer, chair of the Washington State College Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention (CCSAP) and director of the Wellness Center at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Wash., says her use of technology is driven more by a desire to conserve time than to conserve money. Since fall 2008, Farmer has held monthly CCSAP professional development seminars online, thus eliminating travel time. A commercial webinar company provides easy-to-use software that enables the 17 or 18 attendees to view the presentation via computer and text chat in real time. They also can share PDF files, Word files, PowerPoint presentations, and e-mails.

"It's the best thing we've done in a decade," says Farmer. "The response has been incredible."

For the smaller group of about six people that comprises the CCSAP steering committee, the webinar is enhanced, enabling participants to communicate via headsets and microphones, rather than using their keyboards to text chat.

Farmer urges prospective webinar users to shop around for a commercial company that can provide the products and technical support they need. She notes that her initial attempts to find appropriate software often resulted in pricey and/or complicated products.

Use of technology is driven more by a desire to conserve time than to conserve money.

Also accessible via computer are the free resources of the Network Addressing Collegiate Alcohol and Other Drug Issues (Network), which is supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. Members can visit http://www.thenetwork.ws for these resources, which include PowerPoint presentations and brochures. For technical assistance, members can use the Web site to contact one of 18 Network regional directors.

Carla Lapelle, chair of the executive committee of the Network, says that regional directors and their team of 70 volunteers can provide "almost anything you can think of that is involved with alcohol and other drug prevention." Among other things, this includes recommendations for expert speakers, help with community-coalition building, and participation in site visits and teleconferencing.

"Every institution is at a different stage," says Lapelle. "Personal contact allows for specific customized assistance."

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Message From Kevin Jennings, OSDFS Assistant Deputy Secretary

President Obama has set an ambitious goal as part of his July 2009 American Graduation Initiative: By 2020 America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. We know that high-risk drinking and drug use by college students contribute to numerous academic, social, and health-related problems—and this must be addressed if we are to achieve the president's goal.

In the face of mounting budget problems related to rising costs and shrinking funds, colleges and universities across the country are looking for ways to expand alternative resources to support their alcohol and other drug abuse and violence prevention programs. This issue of *Catalyst* includes a number of articles on how campuses are leveraging alternative resources—both on and off campus—to keep prevention alive and well.

For example, campuses can focus on an environmental management approach to prevention, which has the key advantage of being low cost. They can also draw upon the student body itself. Virginia Commonwealth University, Rutgers University, and Gonzaga University—all Department of Education model program grantees (see http://www2.ed.gov/programs/dvpcollege/awards.html)—provide examples of how to involve students in a wide range of prevention activities. At the University at Albany, State University of New York (a 2009 model program grantee) and San Diego State University (a 2001 model program grantee), students play an important role is supporting prevention evaluation and research. Other campuses look to the school's senior administrative leadership and to law enforcement officials to help set the campus culture around behavior related to alcohol and other drug abuse.

At Montana State University, relationships and coalitions both on campus and in the community expand prevention resources. And emerging technologies have helped colleges and universities conduct prevention programs more efficiently. The Washington State College Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention now conducts its monthly professional development seminars online.

While preventing alcohol and other drug abuse and violence on college campuses depends on resources, it turns out that when resources are tight, those working on prevention find creative ways to come up with new ways to support their work. ■

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Redefining Resources for Prevention

All of this is accomplished in close partnership with the Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention. From Sept. 1, 2007, to Aug. 30, 2008, Network volunteers provided assistance to colleges on 3,100 occasions. Lapelle's goal is to "get the word out" and increase these numbers.

Leadership as a Resource

One of the most important resources and one that affects every other resource in a prevention program is leadership from senior staff of the college or university.

"Senior leadership is key, crucial, indispensable," says Virginia Mackay-Smith, then director of the Higher Education Center (and now director of the Division of Systems Development at the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention). "It's true that a prevention program coordinator is the driving engine of programs and we don't want to change that focus. But that person's work moves forward by leaps and bounds with informed support of senior staff."

How does one get that support? Knowing the concerns and priorities of leadership and presenting prevention program information in those terms is critical.

"There is no way a strong prevention program does not advance the goals of the institution," says Mackay-Smith.

Once leaders understand this, they will be more likely to support prevention activities. Still, prevention program coordinators must keep senior leadership up to speed. A short paper (such as *What College Presidents Need to Know About College Drinking* from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism [NIAAA]) that details what senior administrators can do can help.

"You are not going to be in that meeting where budget decisions are made," says Mackay-Smith. "But leadership may remember that your program contributes to the goals of the college. So if you get them on your side, they will do a lot of your work."

Preventing alcohol and other drug abuse on college campuses depends on resources. When traditional resources contract, it's up to prevention professionals to find new ones. These may be as near as the computer on a desktop, as unusual as the student who decorates cupcakes as part of a class, or as inspiring as the college president who understands that a healthy campus environment contributes to academic excellence. But whatever the resource, if it enhances prevention programs, it is worth considering. ■

Environmental Management Strategies—Low-cost Prevention

by William DeJong

Most academic budgets for substance abuse prevention are inadequate, especially when compared with the financial costs of student alcohol and other drug abuse. This is a long-standing problem, of course, which moved the Presidents Leadership Group (established to underscore the important role university presidents play in successful alcohol and other drug prevention efforts on campus and in the larger community) to declare in 1997 that colleges and universities need to demonstrate their commitment to fighting this problem by boosting their spending on prevention.

With the recent downturn in the economy, however, campus administrators are instead combing through their budgets, seeking places to make cuts. That is unfortunate, but for many institutions unavoidable. This is an apt time, then, to remember a key advantage of the environmental management approach to prevention: most of the work that needs to be done costs little or no money but only requires staff to realign their priorities and refocus their energies.

Reinforce the Academic Mission

It is especially critical that the college president take a more visible stand against student alcohol and other drug abuse by announcing that solving this problem is a major priority. Doing so can galvanize every academic office and department to think about how it can make the fight against substance abuse a major, yearlong focus, while also sending a clear signal to students, parents, and alumni that the college is intent on changing its campus culture.

A hallmark of the environmental management approach is creating a social, academic, and residential environment that supports health-promoting norms. This means that campus officials must communicate clear expectations regarding student conduct. But it also means providing institutional support—for example, by increasing the number of early morning and Friday classes, bolstering academic standards, promoting greater faculty-student contact outside of class, and improving faculty mentoring. The cost: $0.

Health-promoting norms can also be supported through a social norms marketing campaign that corrects misperceptions of student drinking norms and reducing alcohol-related problems, including missed classes and dropping out. Model campaigns have relied on posters, newspaper ads, giveaway items, and other costly media channels. The fact is that a campaign can be run with adequate impact using the college's existing communications infrastructure, including residence hall workshops and meetings, e-mail, the college Web site, computer screen savers, text messages, stadium scoreboards, and so forth. Local merchants can also advance the college's social norms message through their signage, menus, packaging, and advertising.

Enrich Campus Life

The environmental management approach also entails offering and promoting social, recreational, extracurricular, and public service options that support healthy decision-making. Several institutions have built new student centers and given funding to student groups to support substance-free events and activities, but a lot can also be accomplished with little or no funding.

Based on responses from nearly 400,000 students participating in AlcoholEdu for College, an online alcohol course for first-year students (K. Timpf, "Effectively Engaging Students in Prevention," a presentation at the 2010 NASPA Annual Conference, Chicago, March 8, 2010), the three most popular

William DeJong

substance-free recreational options they identified were going to movies, listening to music, and being somewhere just to "hang out." Bringing frequent entertainment to campus costs money, but students can be charged small admissions fees to cover that. Creating an attractive place for students to be with each other can be a low-cost affair. Even the dingiest campus space could be made attractive using donated furniture and volunteer student labor.

Developing additional student service learning or volunteer activities can also be done inexpensively. Every community has businesses, community programs, health centers, and nonprofit organizations that are eager to work with students. Given the present generation's interest in community service, administrators should have a real incentive for identifying and training student volunteers to coordinate these efforts.

Focus on Policy Enforcement

Campus officials can enforce policies that limit the times and places that alcohol is available to students on campus. Key strategies include prohibiting delivery or use of kegs or other common containers, controlling or eliminating alcohol sales at sporting events,

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Environmental Management Strategies: Low-cost Prevention

and disseminating and enforcing guidelines for registered parties. Campus officials also have wide latitude to ban or restrict alcohol advertising on campus and to limit the content of party or event announcements.

In addition, administrators should take greater advantage of everyday opportunities to remind students about the college's alcohol and other drug abuse and violence prevention policies and ongoing enforcement efforts. Publishing the policies in a student handbook or posting them online is not enough. Without violating student privacy, the college's judicial affairs office can notify the student body about classmates who have been disciplined for violating specific policies. The point of having strictly enforced policies is to deter students from alcohol and other drug abuse and violence, but that deterrent effect cannot be fully realized unless students are told what's being done.

Many effective environmental prevention strategies involve little or no expenditures. What they do require, however, is the political will to move forward and time.

Collaborate With Local Officials

Another tenet of the environmental management approach is to limit the availability of alcohol in the community. At little or no financial cost, campus officials can work with local restaurant and bar owners to encourage responsible beverage service (RBS), with an emphasis on checking for fake IDs, adhering to the age 21 law, refusing to over-serve alcohol, eliminating low-price alcohol promotions, and running specials on nonalcoholic beverages. Beyond that, administrators can work with town officials to pass regulations that limit the number of alcohol outlets near campus, restrict the days or hours of alcohol sales, require keg registration, prohibit home delivery of alcohol purchases, survey alcohol-related arrestees about place of last drink to identify problematic outlets, and mandate merchants to implement an RBS training program.

Campus officials can also work with town officials to impose stricter local laws and regulations to deal with student misbehavior and violence off campus. Options include stricter penalties for creating neighborhood disturbances; working with landlords to develop stricter leases; community mediation and student ambassador programs; and targeted law enforcement strategies. Also important is for the college to extend campus jurisdiction to include off-campus behavior.

Work at the State Level

Several states have statewide initiatives to promote alcohol and other drug abuse prevention in higher education. These initiatives are concerted efforts by institutions of higher education, state government officials, and community organizations in a state to change aspects of the campus and community environment that contribute to high-risk drinking and other drug use by creating and mobilizing campus and community coalitions to local action and collaborating on state policy change. They can enhance campus work in several ways—generating media coverage that brings attention to the issue, helping build the case for environmental prevention strategies, and attracting additional funding. Especially vital, however, are the opportunities these kinds of initiatives create to affect policy at the state level.

There are several policy proposals that could have a sizable effect in reducing alcohol-related problems on campus by lowering underage students' access to alcohol and decreasing its misuse. Examples include the following:

- Requiring distinctive and tamper-proof licenses for drivers under age 21.
- Passing "use and lose" laws that impose driver's license penalties on minors who purchase or are found in possession of alcohol.

Increase Student Fees?

When economic times are tough, college and university administrators are reluctant to increase student tuition or fees, but this may be an option that many institutions will want to consider in order to improve prevention of alcohol and other drug abuse and violence.

If each undergraduate or graduate student were charged a tuition surcharge or fee of $20 per semester, how much money could that provide? On a campus of 4,000 students, that would add up to $160,000. On a campus of 10,000, the total would be $400,000.

Is that too much for students to pay? There are two ways to think about this. First, $20 is not very much money. In many communities, it costs $20 for two movie tickets. Second, the financial costs incurred by colleges and universities due to student alcohol and other drug abuse are huge, considering the administrative, health, and security staff that are required to handle the problem, plus higher insurance and property repair costs. Shouldn't students help defray these costs?

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Going Grantless

Amy Kiger of the University of Central Missouri (UCM) knows a thing or two about grants. For example—don't take them for granted!

Kiger is the assistant director of health services at UCM with responsibility for violence and alcohol and other drug abuse prevention. The university's current program to reduce sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking is a tribute to making the best of things when anticipated grant support fails to come through.

This saga goes back to 2003 when the lure of a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice led Kiger and her colleagues to plan for developing a center on the campus to provide prevention, education, and intervention services in the area of violence against women.

"We had all these partners who were excited about working together, so we started acting as though we already had the grant. We started planning for what we would do when we got the money—even started looking for space for our center. Then we found out we weren't getting the grant," Kiger told *Catalyst*.

Rather than let this head of steam dissipate, Kiger and her group decided to see what they could accomplish without grant support. The university administration let the center occupy an unused storage area on the campus to house the center. The university president's office provided some used furniture it didn't need. The student government association came through with a promised $5,000 cash contribution that was part of its commitment under the proposed grant, and this covered some expenses.

"I ended up donating the time of my graduate assistant to staff the center," says Kiger. "She would have been doing educational programs in residence halls, so I wound up doing some of those myself."

The center that finally opened its doors was more modest in its ambitions than what had been envisioned in the grant proposal. The original plan called for a campus center with a full-time coordinator providing prevention, education, and intervention services. The plan also called for a violence awareness campaign in the off-campus community of Warrensburg, and for sponsoring a conference to help train others in the state to do prevention work.

Even without the grant, however, the center was able to develop a volunteer sexual assault response team to visit assault victims. "We had a domestic violence center in our town but victims of sexual assault didn't have a place to go. We developed a volunteer sexual assault response team that would be called in when there was an assault. They would go to the hospital or to law enforcement and meet the victim for advocacy," Kiger said.

Going grantless taught Kiger and her group the value of partnerships. "We found there were many people concerned about violence against women and who were willing to work together on the problem. Often it is not people you would think about as typical partners. You might have somebody in the history department who is personally very interested in the topic, but if you only reach out to social workers or people in psychology or criminal justice you're going to miss those folks. It's important to try to engage the entire community.

"I think the most important thing for us is the relationships we've been able to build. It takes individual meetings, it takes multiple conversations, it takes being able to forgive people when they misspeak and get frustrated. It takes a lot of time and energy but it's definitely worth it. That's how you sustain projects," Kiger said.

The picture changed abruptly for the CMU center when word came in 2005 that the Department of Justice had approved grants of $100,000 a year for two years to sustain the program. This helped ease staffing problems and allowed the development of new activities, such as extending educational and prevention activities into the surrounding community. "The grant allowed us to develop a more educational focus—to deliver a message that violence against women is an important issue for the community," Kiger said.

But the additional funding was short lived. After two years the grant was not extended, and Kiger and her crew were faced once again with trying to sustain a program with limited funds.

The solution was to juggle positions and salaries—with an emphasis on part-time and temporary status—and to spread responsibility for the most critical services to three separate offices on campus—University Health Services, with its responsibility for prevention; the Counseling Center, which provides counseling and psychological services; and the University Health Center, with its emphasis on clinical services. "We had to stop doing some of the things we

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Students as a Resource For Prevention Research And Evaluation

Colleges and universities want to know whether their prevention efforts are effective when it comes to reducing problems related to alcohol and other drug abuse and violence. But often funds for conducting prevention activities themselves are limited, much less for evaluating those efforts. One way that campuses can meet their need to know—and be accountable to others for investment in prevention—is to engage students in prevention research and evaluation.

Sally Linowski, director of the Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention at University of Massachusetts Amherst, cautions that working with students does pose some challenges. "Some issues are the need for supervision and training for students. The turnover in student assistants, including undergraduates and graduates, means you are always training new people so it is quite time intensive, requiring a lot of start-up time for research projects. For us, often by the time we have a great student trained and working at peak performance, they are gone and you have to start all over again," she said.

But at two campuses, using students to assist in research projects has paid off in a number of ways.

University at Albany, State University of New York

The University at Albany uses involvement in evaluation as a training opportunity for students who are entering the social sciences fields, including psychology, social welfare, medicine, and other fields where research is important.

"It gives them their first experience on what it is like to conduct research. Graduate schools look very highly on students who have had research experience, which is a big selling point for students. We look for the best and the brightest students and recruit them either in person or via a letter offering them a 'golden opportunity' to do research with us. Most of the students we recruit for research take us up on our offer," said Dolores Cimini, director of the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program in the University Counseling Center, a U.S. Department of Education 2000 Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention on College Campuses model program grantee.

Drew Anderson, associate professor in the Department of Psychology, says that involving his students in prevention evaluation efforts acts as a labor multiplier. "In my laboratory I have five graduate students and a number of undergraduate students, all of whom are interested in research. The undergraduates want to go on to graduate school and really want to get some research experience and, of course, the graduate students are also interested in research. They are available to help with the kind of evaluation tasks that take a lot of time, from data entry to giving out questionnaires. When faculty members are interested in the topic area, everybody gets enthusiastic about the project. It is a chance to get extra data in areas of interest, so everybody wins. Students get experience. Faculty members get opportunities to do some additional research and evaluation. In this case Middle Earth gets help with program evaluation."

"Students who work on evaluation projects for Middle Earth can gain experience in research from the beginning to the end, including data collection through the administration of surveys, data analysis, and helping to write publications," said Cimini.

According to Mitch Earleywine, associate professor of psychology, students receive academic credit for their involvement in evaluation efforts by registering for research credit in the Psychology Department. "Students can bring a lot of insights to some of the simpler things that we might overlook. When they pretest surveys we want to administer, they are quick to point out how questions can be misinterpreted, which items are less likely to elicit truthful responses, how to word items in a way to encourage anonymity, what approaches to take to assure data are as accurate as possible, and how to increase participation in surveys. What looks to us like a great incentive to participate in a survey about an intervention is often laughably inaccurate and students are pretty quick to point out ways to make improvements."

For example, one of the first Middle Earth alcohol assessment questionnaires asked about wine coolers. "The students let us know that they are completely un-hip and no longer part of the drinking scene," said Earleywine. "Then there are the little things, such as how best to display online survey questions, such as whether a question should ask for a true or false answer or agreement levels on a scale of zero to nine."

Many campuses have competing opportunities for students interested in getting involved with research and evaluation activities. But according to Anderson, issues related to alcohol and other drug abuse and violence resonate with both undergraduates and graduate students at U-Albany.

"Students can conduct research on something that illuminates how the brain reacts to something or on finding something out about whether an intervention decreases depression

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Students as a Resource for Prevention Research and Evaluation

or suicidal thoughts or binge drinking. What a surprise—we get a long list of students who want to sign up for the latter. Some of our colleagues are a bit envious because our research opportunities appeal to a wide range of students," said Anderson.

But program evaluation poses a real conundrum at some campuses because prevention staff think that they do not have the expertise, time, or resources for conducting "good" evaluation. Earleywine thinks that is because faculty in departments like psychology or sociology tend to think about evaluation in terms of conducting a perfect experiment with randomized control trials.

"That is just too much to ask, at least in the beginning. Instead, campuses can first get a feel for what students think about one particular issue by adding a couple of items to a survey that is already going out to students. Maybe a sample of students are willing to fill out something for free on the Web," said Earleywine. "Information gained in even a small survey can open up the conversation and generate enough hypotheses to really get things going."

Cimini also recommends that those working in prevention look for other offices on campus that can help with evaluation, particularly with obtaining in-class samples or random samples of students. "Most schools have an office of institutional research or an enrollment office that maintains lists of enrolled students. To get a stratified random sample with an equivalent number of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors, they can draw the sample as well as provide contact information for the students."

San Diego State University

The Center for Alcohol Studies at San Diego State University makes good use of students in its research and evaluation projects as well. Both graduate and undergraduate students work at the center as research assistants and interns. According to John Clapp, center director and professor at the School of Social Work and director of the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention, some students get paid, but others work for course credit.

"Research assistants can be either paid or volunteers. Currently we pay about $10 an hour for graduate student research assistants, which is pretty inexpensive labor for what we get. We also have paid interns who earn about $3,000 for 20 to 25 hours a week during the academic year. For the level of work and the amount of money, that's also a very good investment. We also have research assistants and interns who work at the center 16 hours a week for a whole semester on our projects to get course credit," said Clapp.

Those who work at the center for course credit are seniors taking independent study classes in public health, social work, and psychology. Center staff provide two to three hours of supervision a month. Students work on a range of activities, such as data collection and literature searches. They can also do data analysis, which for a number of students is an opportunity to get some applied research experience. Other benefits for students include a reference letter for graduate school.

"Master-level students want recommendations so that they can get into a doctoral program, and undergraduates want recommendations for master's programs," said Clapp. "Another benefit for graduate students is a chance to get published in a scholarly journal. In fact, postdoctoral fellows have approached me to volunteer on projects so they can get publications. For example, currently two individuals who are postdoctoral fellows in psychology at the University of California, San Diego are working at the center because they like the applied nature of our work. They see better professional potential for them in this field, so they offered to write manuscripts for free."

Clapp points out that involving students in the work of the center—especially during a time of limited funding and resources—allows staff to do things that they might not otherwise be able to do. "Students are collecting extra data, getting more interviews or more subjects in research projects, or helping with the development of new proposals to bring in new resources that we otherwise would not have the time to do ourselves," said Clapp.

But there is another benefit beyond expanding resources to getting students involved in center activities. "Students get exposed to alcohol prevention research projects. Because they like the experience, a good number of them want to end up working in the area, either professionally or academically," said Clapp. "It ends up putting more people in the alcohol and other drug abuse prevention field." ■

2009 Models of Exemplary, Effective, and Promising Alcohol or Other Drug Abuse Prevention Programs on College Campuses Awards

The 2009 Models of Exemplary, Effective, and Promising Alcohol or Other Drug Abuse Prevention Programs on College Campuses awards have been made to the following five universities: University at Albany, State University of New York; University of California, Santa Barbara; University of Florida; University of North Carolina Wilmington; and University of West Florida. Abstracts of funded projects are available online at http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvpcollege/fy09awards.html.

THE Network
ADDRESSING COLLEGIATE ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ISSUES

Prevention on a Shoestring at Montana State University

A Q&A With Jenny Haubenreiser

Jenny Haubenreiser is the director of Health Promotion at Montana State University (MSU) in Bozeman, Mont., a member campus of the Network Addressing Collegiate Alcohol and Other Drug Issues. MSU has been able to sustain its prevention initiatives with and without grant funding, and regardless of the source of funding. Haubenreiser describes those efforts for both campus and community prevention efforts.

Q: What has been the history of funding for Montana State University's Health Promotion program?

A: MSU has always had some funding for health promotion from student health fees. In addition, we have had a few small grants and one large U.S. Department of Education grant, which helped us build momentum that continued once the grants ended.

But often with outside funding, the funder directs the work by setting goals that may or may not be feasible. Ultimately, we need to work toward self-sustainability, no matter what the source of funding is. The most basic way to do this is by building strong relationships on campus, in the community, with state agencies, and nationally, essentially creating a larger web of relationships and resources. For example, the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention has long benefited the field by helping us develop skills and knowledge around environmental management strategies. I think it is less about funding and more about the strategy. For me it's a matter of asking what kind of relationships can we foster on campus and beyond.

One example of this strategy has been my work with the local Mothers Against Drunk Driving board in Bozeman. Through this relationship, I became involved in state legislative efforts and had a number of new doors open in the community. The then-president of the board set up meetings with MSU's president to discuss campus efforts. At that point I would be brought in to talk about effective collegiate prevention, including the importance of using environmental strategies that are based on collaboration, which require little in the way of funding.

It is also very important to stay visible within the campus community, especially during times of limited funding. Some people on campus may think, "Oh they're doing some big event with pizza and sumo suits." We need to communicate better that such activities are part of a strategic environmental intervention. Providing alternative social and recreational events are an important element of campus environments. If we do not communicate clearly what we are doing and why, people may think that these efforts are a waste of money.

Jenny Haubenreiser

Fortunately, we have many allies on campus, including the dean's office, residence life staff, and health service providers. Those who volunteer at these events realize such events are important for the campus culture. We can then build broader buy-in, which helps promote all our work. In short, we need to constantly educate stakeholders in creative ways.

I also teach sociology classes, which helps me see prevention work as part of broader social systems. Many goals and agendas compete within any system. Health promotion is not the primary goal of other entities, such as the administration, athletics, or residential life. Financial concerns seem to trump everything right now, even though we know the importance of prevention and health promotion

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Prevention on a Shoestring at Montana State University: A Q&A With Jenny Haubenreiser

in the enhancement of personal, social, and academic success. That means we have to realize that the best way to reach others is to frame our goals to reflect their goals.

The vice president for student affairs and I recently discussed the impact of substance abuse and violence on retention rates and costs at MSU. While I generally do not take the perspective that health promotion has cost benefits, it does tie our work into the institutional goal of increasing retention and maintaining the financial viability. Unless health promotion is seen as a tangible financial asset for institutions, it might be the first program to go. In fact, some time ago we changed the mission statement of Health Promotion to reflect how it supports the academic mission of the institution.

Q: What types of alternate support has your office developed for carrying out its mission?

A: Students are our biggest resource. Student interns can do amazing things. It is helpful to connect with specific faculty on campus to identify strong students. MSU offers a degree in health and human development. Faculty members in that department have referred some very sharp students to us as interns. We all get energy from and are motivated by the creativity that students bring to the office.

Students can also ask questions directly to top administrators on campus, including the president. Since they do not have to follow the same channels of authority as staff members, they can be very effective messengers in communicating the importance of this work. Also, senior administrators listen to the students differently, so they can be effective in promoting our work.

In addition, I work with a group of state agencies that report to the state Interagency Coordinating Council. This group includes 10 Montana state agency directors, Children's Trust Fund, the lieutenant governor—an ex-officio member—and two persons appointed by the governor who have experiences related to the private or nonprofit provision of prevention programs and services. Higher education had long been excluded from this group, but after I had an opportunity to give a presentation on NIAAA's *A Call to Action* to a group of stakeholders in Helena (the state capital), I was invited to be involved in some of the state prevention efforts.

Q: What recommendations would you make to others who are attempting to support prevention efforts "on a shoestring"?

A: I recommend reaching out to other departments because they are likely facing similar challenges. Recently I had a very motivating conversation with the director of student activities. We both agreed that it is important to create a positive campus environment for students. Like the administrators, students are stressed about the economy and their personal finances, which makes creating a positive campus environment even more important. To communicate this, we need to pull together a collaborative voice from many departments. Finding even one like-minded colleague can make a big difference for increasing capacity, creativity, and morale.

Keep in mind that working on a shoestring is not always bad. When funding does come in, a program can sometimes get overextended, to the point where it no longer reflects what is consistent with local needs. Without external funding, it is possible—even necessary—to step back and reestablish core objectives and trim fat. To be both strategic and creative with limited resources can force people out of their silos so that they develop relationships on campus, in the community, within the state, and at the national level. ■

Join the Network

Welcome New Network Members

Developed in 1987 by the U.S. Department of Education, the Network Addressing Collegiate Alcohol and Other Drug Issues (Network) is a voluntary membership organization whose member institutions agree to work toward a set of standards aimed at reducing alcohol and other drug (AOD) problems at colleges and universities.

The Network welcomes new members from across the nation, representing all types of institutions of higher education, from community colleges to universities. A list of new members who have joined since the last *Catalyst* issue was published is available here.

The Network develops collaborative AOD prevention efforts among colleges and universities through electronic information exchange, printed materials, and sponsorship of national, regional, and state activities and conferences. Each Network member has a campus contact who, as part of the constituency of the region, helps determine activities of the Network.

As of January 2010, Network membership stood at 1,622 postsecondary institutions.

To learn more about the Network, visit the Network's Web site. ■

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Going Grantless

had been doing before," Kiger explained. "In my office, we had regarded our mission as wellness. So we changed the emphasis to violence and substance abuse prevention because of the impact those problems have on the retention of students as well as the lifelong impact. For instance, we stopped doing our program on diabetes. Not that diabetes isn't important, but we had to make a choice."

When grant funding runs out, priorities emerge when efforts are made to sustain grant-funded activities. At CMU, said Kiger, considerable time and effort went into establishing a "peer theater" project with grant support. In this approach, a facilitator sets up threatening situations that a student might encounter and people step in to explore different options to handle the problems. "The coordinator we employed with the grant recruited and trained a group to carry this program into classrooms and residence halls, and it took quite a bit of time to do that. So when the grant ended we got resources from the university to continue the program." In another case, a temporary, one-year position was created to keep an activity alive while efforts were made to secure its long-term future.

During the start-up time when there was no grant support for the program, Kiger and her colleagues learned a few things about prevention and advocacy that they did not know when they wrote their grant proposal. Given such experience, they might have written the proposal differently.

"We've learned that it's really important to only apply for a grant if it fits into something you already had in mind—your plan, your goals," she said. "When we applied for our grant we thought—Oh look, here's a way to get money to do part of what we wanted to do. The grant had several minimum requirements that were not our top priorities, and they took a lot of time. Now our rule of thumb is that we definitely never apply for a grant unless it's going to complement a plan we already have in place." ■

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Environmental Management Strategies: Low-cost Prevention

- Passing more stringent laws against the manufacture, sale, possession, and use of false age identification licenses and documents.
- Increasing penalties for illegal service or provision of alcohol to minors.
- Requiring responsible beverage service training and certification for commercial alcohol servers, either at the state level (through alcoholic beverage control statute) or at the local level (through conditional use permit or business licensing).
- Increasing excise tax rates on beer and wine to the same level (by alcohol content) as for distilled spirits, and linking future increases to the rate of inflation.
- Passing social host and dramshop liability laws that make serving an intoxicated drinker or a minor a cause of legal action.

New laws can also focus on reducing alcohol-impaired driving, though what may be more critical is increased state funding to bolster local enforcement efforts.

Conclusion

Many effective environmental prevention strategies involve little or no expenditures. What they do require, however, is the political will to move forward and time. These are investments well worth the effort, for changing the campus and community environment to help students make healthier decisions is the foundation of effective prevention.

William DeJong is a professor of social and behavioral sciences at the Boston University School of Public Health. ■

Higher Education Center
for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse
and Violence Prevention
Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's
Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

Catalyst is a publication of the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention.

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Our Mission

The mission of the U.S. Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention is to assist institutions of higher education in developing, implementing, and evaluating alcohol and other drug abuse and violence prevention policies and programs that will foster students' academic and social development and promote campus and community safety.

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How We Can Help

- Resources, referrals, and consultations
- Training and professional development activities
- Publication and dissemination of prevention materials
- Assessment, evaluation, and analysis activities
- Web site featuring online resources, news, and information
- Support for the Network Addressing Collegiate Alcohol and Other Drug Issues

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 representative was 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. All URLs were last accessed on Feb. 5, 2010.

Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

If you would like more information about the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS), please visit the office's Web site at http://www.ed.gov/OSDFS. For more information about the office's higher education initiatives, please contact:

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