



Funding, Drinking, Emergency Planning To Be Key Campus Safety Issues in 2006

Funding, fighting high-risk drinking and preparing for emergency situations such as terrorism or a bird flu pandemic will be high priorities this year for those charged with keeping campuses safe, experts tell CC.



“A lot of colleges’ and universities’ budgets have seen reductions and they continue to happen,” said Priscilla Stevens, president of the International

Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators. “So our public safety officials have to look at innovative ways to respond to the community.”

Officer Retention Ties in with Budgets

The funding crunches have come with federal cuts that have forced states to tighten their own budgets. “Administrators may save [safety] for last,” Stevens told CC. “But, when they are called upon to cut their budgets, they have to do it, even when it means cutting public safety.”

One cost saving measure some departments use is Web-based training, allowing them to reduce travel costs associated with training, Stevens said.

Because budgets are tight, officer retention also will be a problem in 2006, with more officers opting to leave for jobs at municipalities or in the private sector. “It’s an issue when you hire someone and go to the expense of uniforming that person and getting them trained,” Stevens said. “There is a lot of expense involved in hiring an officer and getting them equipped. When their salaries don’t reflect what they’re doing compared to their surroundings, officers may want to leave.”

Also this year, campus officials can look forward to an increased push for student awareness about their campus safety, said Catherine Bath, executive director of Security on Campus. Last year, federal legislators passed a bill declaring Septem-

Inside This Issue

Police Records Case Crescendos.....Page 3
Penn Student Avoids Discipline.....Page 4
Glass Shape can Increase Drinking.....Page 5
CSU Bans Alcohol at Sports Events.....Page 6
Miami U. Faces Spike in Crime.....Page 7
Funding for Campus Safety Programs.....Page 8

ber National Campus Safety Awareness Month and encouraging campuses to provide students with information about how they can stay safe on campus.

“We are gathering a whole bunch of resources, so administrators, deans of students, and campus police will be able to go to that page for a one-stop shop of information,” Bath told CC. She expects the new site, which will include suggested activities and tips for the month, to be up and running this summer.

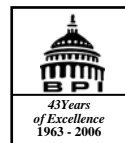
Binge Drinking Remains Hot Topic

Campuses this year will need to continue their push to curb high-risk drinking.

“Binge drinking and substance abuse: those continue to be issues on campus,” Stevens said. “This has been an issue for several years, but now, we really need to focus on being part of the education process and not just the enforcement. As we deal with alcohol and substance abuse, we need to try to look at other ways to intervene instead of just enforcement.”

The more students drink, the more likely sexual assaults are to occur, notes Bath. She expects the issue of serial acquaintance rapists on campuses to come to the forefront this year. A University of Massachusetts professor has been researching the subject, so Bath expects it to get more attention.

(Continued on p. 2)



Outlook (Cont. from p. 1)

“We are still going to keep hammering away at the issue of sexual assault on campus,” Bath said. “We are going to be getting more help for victims and waking administrators up to the fact that there are such things as serial acquaintance rapists. It is a small population. But they’re there. Sometimes they get the girl drunk or they target girls who have been drinking too much.”

Another issue that will be prominent for campus safety officials is emergency response plans for the plethora of new incidents that have emerged in recent years: terrorism, bad weather (such as Hurricane Katrina) and pandemics.

“After Sept. 11, a lot of things changed for colleges and universities, and [FBI] Director [Robert] Mueller identified colleges and universities as soft targets,” Stevens said.

Since then, campuses have scrambled to add plans to deal with terrorist events. This year, they’ll continue adding new plans, trying to figure out how to deal with the potential of a deadly bird flu outbreak. “Most colleges and universities are working to develop plans to deal with that kind of pandemic,” Stevens told CC. “This could range from potentially having employees work from their home, to actually closing down buildings, campuses, students doing work via the Web, getting down to the absolute essential key personnel who would remain on campus. People are focusing on what we can do right now, what we would do in the event that a case is first noticed here in the U.S. and then [in the state their school is located in].”

Lessons Learned Exposed

This year schools also will get help in figuring out how to deal with natural disasters, as many of the schools affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita will be sharing what they learned from that experience — including what things they did right, and what things they will improve upon in preparation for another hurricane. IACLEA and several other campus groups are expected to host learning sessions with hurricane-impacted schools. Additionally, IACLEA this year plans to develop a model protocol campuses can follow in dealing with emergency situations. “The primary focus is terrorism, but a plan could be used for any type of emergency,” Stevens said.

On the legal front, expect some fleshing out of issues around campus crime records. Experts expect Georgia and Massachusetts legislatures to each pass laws that would require private universities to turn over their campus crime records to the public (*see story, p. 3*).

S. Daniel Carter, senior vice president at Security on Campus, said look for movement on the federal David Shick Honesty in Campus Justice Act. The bill would expand a provision of the Clery Act, the law that mandates campuses report crime publicly. “Under current law, victims of crime may be told about the outcome of the campus judicial proceeding against the perpetrator, but there is no requirement that they must be told,” Carter told CC. “This bill would make it required, just as it is in cases of sexual violence. The campus would have to tell the victim, or if the victim is deceased, their family.”

The bill is named after David Shick, a former Georgetown University (D.C.) student who died when a melee erupted on campus. Shick suffered a fatal blow to the head during the fight. The student who was convicted, through the campus judicial system, of striking him was asked only to write an essay as his punishment. The family fought for several years to find out from the university what the student’s punishment was and has been pushing vigorously for the law.

Finally, expect to see more information available about how to comply with the Clery Act. Stevens notes IACLEA has done some Web training. The Department of Education last year released a plain language handbook to help officials better comply with the law. And, with the backing of a Department of Justice grant, Security on Campus, starting this summer, will be offering training sessions on complying with the law.

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* * *

New Police Chief at SDSU — San Diego State University (Calif.) has hired John Browning as its new police chief. Browning, who was formerly captain of the Gardena Police Department, replaced Chief John Carpenter, who had been SDSU Chief of Police since the school’s Department of Public Safety was created in 1975. Browning, 52, said Carpenter would be a tough act to follow. “Chief Carpenter has done a remarkable job developing the department,” he said. “His high standards are reflected in the talent and skill of the officers and staff. I am confident that we will continue to be a positive force in this community that addresses the necessary law enforcement issues and participates in other activities that enhance the campus and surrounding environment.” *Contact:* Jason Foster, SDSU, (619) 594-2585, foster@mail.sdsu.edu.

**Outlook
2006**

*In the Courts***Battle over Private Police Records Moves from Court to Legislature**

A recent court decision in the battle over whether private university police with state-granted powers must turn over their crime records is expected to buoy advocates on both sides of the issue, experts say.

In the case, Massachusetts' highest court sided with Harvard University, denying the student newspaper, *The Crimson*, access to campus police reports. Mark Goodman, executive director of the Student Press Law Center, said the decision will not automatically affect campuses in other states.

"Because this was based on the specific application of Massachusetts law, it really has no implication in other states," said Goodman. "There are some states where if this claim arose, it would be much clearer and easier, as their laws have been written to show that these records are public. Ohio is one state where there has been a number of cases about access to records held by private companies who hold public records."

Case May Buoy Other Police

However, he said, in states with ambiguous laws, *The Crimson* case could buoy campuses' contention that they should not give police reports. "Unfortunately, this suggests that unless the statute is very clear, a private school can argue they don't have to release law enforcement records, even though that campus law enforcement agency has been delegated power by the state," Goodman told *CC*. "Under [the court's] analysis, any state police agency could say: 'we are going to go out of business and hire private contractors to do our work and the public will have no ability to find out what is going on.' So, it is problematic in many ways."

S. Daniel Carter, senior vice president at Security on Campus, agreed that the decision was disappointing, but not at all unexpected, given when many states' open records laws were adopted. "I think one of the defects in the public records laws is that they are not geared to these cases," Carter told *CC*. "Prior to 1992, campus police records were generally excluded due to conflicts in federal law. It wasn't something that was a pressing issue when they were created, so they don't spell out that campuses are included."

With that in mind, Goodman added that state legislators who have gotten wind of these cases have decided to clarify the law to show that campus police records are indeed public documents, particularly at private colleges with sworn officers. "I think there is a strong likelihood that Massachusetts' legislature will pass this bill [to require Massachusetts campuses to release records]," Goodman said. "There is also a similar case in Georgia, with Mercer [University]. The same thing

goes there. There is a bill in the state legislature to counteract that [Georgia Supreme Court decision that said private colleges do not have to turn over their police reports]. Many people think there is a good chance that will be passed, too."

Goodman notes open records are important to helping students know how safe their campus is and ferreting out abuse. "Because this information isn't publicly accessible, who knows how many serious crimes are not being dealt with or how many instances of police misbehavior are not being dealt with."

The Decision

In its Jan. 13 ruling, Massachusetts' Supreme Judicial Court found the state's open records law applies only to employees of the state who hold the public records, not just any person who happens to have the documents. "Contrary to *The Crimson's* argument, documents in the custody of the HUPD do not become 'public records' simply because some of the HUPD officers have been appointed 'special' State police officers," the opinion said. "Nothing in the language of [the law] suggests that individuals appointed as special State police officers are 'officer[s] or employee[s]' of the department of State police."

In the final paragraph of the decision, the court implied the newspaper had wasted the court's time with the lawsuit in the first place. "On a final note, we observe that many documents created and held by the HUPD are already available to the public," the justices wrote.

The Crimson attorneys acknowledged during oral arguments that the crime logs were available but said the logs did not contain the complete information available in private HUPD reports.

Sides React Appropriately

In a statement, Harvard said it was pleased with the ruling. "The opinion upholds the university's decision to protect our students' privacy while at the same time recognizes that when the Harvard University Police Department makes arrests, records are available to the public," the statement said. "The university will continue with its ongoing cooperation with *The Crimson* to ensure that the newspaper can report on stories of public importance."

The Crimson President Lauren Schuker said the newspaper was disappointed by the decision. "This represents a serious national problem because campus police forces operate similarly across the country," she said. "The failure of HUPD to allow access to its records compromises our ability to investigate and report on issues of sexual assault and racial profiling, among other matters on the Harvard campus." Schuker added that the newspaper is supporting the state's legislation that would require Harvard to turn over its records.

(Continued on p. 4)

Harvard (*Cont. from p. 3*)

The opinion, *Harvard Crimson Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, SJC-09434, (2006 Mass Lexis 8) is online at www.mass.gov/courts/courtsandjudges/courts/supremejudicialcourt.

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*Disciplinary Policies***U. Penn Student Avoids Discipline Over Posting Sex Photos Online**

The University of Pennsylvania decided not to discipline a student who took photos of other students being intimate in a dormitory and posted them on the Internet, after receiving much negative publicity on the subject.

The student, who the university has not identified, took photos of two students who appeared to be having sex against the window of a dormitory room. The student who took the pictures spied the couple through the window on several nights and posted the photos on his website.

After the pictures were found on the student's website in September, he was charged by the Office of Student Conduct with violating (1) the university's electronic resources policies — for posting the photos on university servers — and (2) the sexual harassment policy.

School Backs Off after Publicity

After news articles appeared in the *Daily Pennsylvanian*, the *Philadelphia Daily News* and other media, the university dropped the disciplinary charges and issued the following statement:

"The university has decided not to pursue disciplinary proceedings. We are disturbed by the photographer's conduct in this matter. We are concerned about the wide dissemination of the intimate photos in a manner and to the extent that subjected another member of the Penn community to embarrassment and ridicule. We have asked the student photographer to apologize and sincerely hope he does."

Penn Professor Alan Charles Kors said the university made the right move in dismissing the charges, as the case never should have been brought. "The kid's website was password protected — only a few people had access to it," Kors told CC. "There were other students who took photographs of these people. And these students were there in the window three days in a row. You have an absolute right to photograph a public event. And

if it is in plain public view, I assume it is of a public nature."

He noted that the student did nothing wrong by taking the photos and said it is unfair to single out the student when the couple was clearly in the wrong.

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Brown Aims to Improve Campus Safety By Arming University Police Force

The Brown University (R.I.) Police force is now able to intervene in situations where students or faculty on campus are being threatened by someone with a weapon, under new rules and a program that arms the campus police force.

Plans to arm campus police officers first emerged three years ago, and were finalized in December. As of Jan. 11, Brown police officers were sporting weapons. "From the outset of these discussions, our goal has been to improve the safety of our campus for the benefit of our students, faculty and staff," said Brown President Ruth Simmons. "I believe that the steps we have already taken and [this] decision will enhance the security of our campus and create a safer environment for the entire Brown community."

The move to arm police officers arose because the university had a policy that required campus police to wait for local police to arrive before engaging suspects in situations where weapons were involved. Simmons said this put the campus community at additional risk. As part of the arming of the police force, officers underwent extensive weapons training, new criminal background checks and new psychological assessments.

Contact: Mark Porter, Brown Police Chief, (401) 863-3870, mark_porter@brown.edu; Ruth Simmons, Brown, (401) 863-2234, ruth_simmons@brown.edu.

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Lying Eyes: Fat Glasses Fool Students Into Drinking More than they Should

College students may be unintentionally drinking more alcohol than they think, according to Cornell University (N.Y.) researchers.

A new study found that when pouring drinks, people — even professional bar tenders — pour 20 to 30 percent more into short, squat glasses than they do into tall thin ones. “People who pour into short, wide glasses consistently believe that they pour less than those who pour into tall, narrow glasses,” said Brian Wansink, one of the study’s authors. “And education, practice, concentration and experience don’t correct the overpouring.”

Wansink said the overpouring is due to the “vertical-horizontal optical illusion,” in which people perceive equally sized vertical lines as longer than horizontal ones. “People generally estimate tall glasses as holding more liquid than wide ones of the same volume,” he said. “They also focus their pouring attention on the height of the liquid they are pouring and insufficiently compensate for its width.”

Research Should Enter Awareness Programs

This research suggests campuses need to educate students more about alcohol pouring. “I think this should be part of general alcohol awareness campaigns on campus,” Wansink told *CC*. “It is also worth mentioning in orientations against substance abuse. Students have left home for the first time, and there are all sorts of new experiences. They should know one of the inadvertent mistakes they may make is to pour too much into their glass.”

It would also be helpful to relay the message to Greek organizations and other campus groups that host parties with alcohol. “If someone wants to be reasonably responsible as a host, one thing to do is to tell people to drink less, but the other thing is to have taller, skinnier glasses,” Wansink said. “This doesn’t stop them from having an extra drink, but does help the people who are trying to limit their drinks.”

Wansink added another way students who do not want to drink too much at a party can ensure they keep their goal is to keep better track of how much they are drinking. “It’s very easy to lose track of what you’re doing,” he said. “When you get the [plastic cups], stack them. If you stack the full cup within your empty cup, you don’t have to wonder how many drinks you’ve had. You can count the cups and say to yourself, ‘I’ve already had two.’”

Campuses should note that Wansink and colleagues also found that telling students they poured too much did not improve their pouring. In the study, researchers asked 198 college students and 86 experienced (six year, average) professional bar

tenders to pour a 1.5 ounce shot into either a short, wide tumbler glass or a tall, thin highball glass. Students consistently poured 30 percent more liquor into the short, wide glasses, while bar tenders consistently poured 20 percent more in these fat glasses.

When students were told to practice 10 times before they poured, they still put 26 percent more liquor in the fat glass than was needed. Bar tenders, when asked to “take their time,” did just that — spending twice as long pouring the drink, but still heaping on 10 percent more liquor than was needed. Wansink concluded it is important to use the taller, skinnier glass because self-monitoring does not appear to work well.

Contact: Brian Wansink, Cornell University, (607) 255-5024, wansink@cornell.edu.

Researchers Say Rethink Alcohol Ads That Lead to Increased Student Drinking

Areas with extensive alcohol advertising have higher amounts of drinking by young people, according to a new study led by a University of Connecticut researcher.

The implication for college campuses is they should rethink their policies for allowing alcohol advertising, said the studies lead author, Leslie Snyder. “While we were only looking at the mainstream media in this particular study, I think campuses need to look at all forms of hard advertising on campuses,” Snyder told *CC*. “Maybe they are allowing advertising in campus papers, flyers in dormitories, or promotions in bars to be advertised on campus.”

She said campuses also should look at advertising practices in their campus stadiums. “Sometimes beer companies will buy a clock for the stadium,” she noted.

Study Results

The study looked at drinking patterns of 15-to-26 year olds and the amount of advertising they were exposed to and reported noticing. The study asked the youth questions about how much they drank and how much advertising for alcohol they had seen. It also looked at how much money the alcohol industry was spending in that area.

What they found is that youngsters in areas highly saturated with alcohol advertising reported drinking much more. “The results indicate that a 20-year-old man who saw few alcohol advertisements and lived in a market with minimal alcohol advertising expenditures per capita was predicted to have nine alcoholic drinks in the past month compared

(Continued on p. 6)

Alcohol Advertising (Cont. from p. 5)

with 16 drinks if he saw many advertisements,” the study said. “A man with the same profile but living in a market with the highest advertising spending per capita was predicted to have 15 drinks if he reported little advertising exposure and 26 drinks if he saw many advertisements.”

The study noted that areas with high alcohol advertising also cause students to maintain a drinking lifestyle. For areas where alcohol advertising is low, drinking peaks around age 22, with a steady decline thereafter. However, in areas highly saturated with alcohol advertising, there is a steadiness in excessive drinking, well into the mid-20s.

The effect of the alcohol advertising was cumulative. “We did not find that a lot of ads one month [equaled] drinking a lot but not a lot of ads the next month decreased drinking,” she said. “It was really more a cumulative effective, where the more time they spent exposed to advertising, the more they would drink.”

Georgetown University’s (D.C.) Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth Executive Director David Jernigan said the study is ample proof that reducing youth exposure to alcohol ads will help reduce the underage drinking problem.

“The new study shows that reducing teen access to alcohol is only one part of the solution. We must also limit the appeal,” he said. “We need to reduce youth exposure to alcohol ads as a necessary and effective step in curbing underage drinking.”

Contact: Leslie Snyder, University of Connecticut, (860) 486-4383, leslie.snyder@uconn.edu; David Jernigan, CAMY, (202) 687-1019, www.camy.org.

Calif. State Univ. Bans Alcohol At All Campus Sporting Events

California State University has banned alcohol sales at college athletic events on its 23 campuses in an effort to curb underage and high-risk drinking by students.

“The CSU believes that service of alcoholic beverages at intercollegiate athletic events in university owned or operated facilities is contrary to its system-wide alcohol policy and to its purpose of promoting a safe and healthy learning environment for all members of the university community,” said CSU Chancellor Charles Reed.

The ban went into effect last month, though there is an exception for existing contracts with outside vendors to sell alcohol. However, the university will not allow any of those contracts to be re-

newed or extended beyond the current end date. Campuses with alcoholic sales contracts must ensure alcohol is sold in accordance with state laws, require appropriate training for servers, and avoid alcohol promotions that “encourage any form of alcohol abuse or place emphasis on quantity and frequency of use.”

“I believe this policy is the logical and appropriate next step for the CSU to take,” said John Welty, president of CSU-Fresno and chair of the CSU Alcohol Policies and Prevention Programs Committee. “This policy is consistent with the purposes of our system alcohol policy and with the efforts of the National Collegiate Athletic Association to reduce the emphasis on alcohol at intercollegiate athletic events.”

Contact: CSU Chancellor, (562) 951-4000.

Legislation

Violence Against Women Act Renewed; Preserving Funding for Resources, COPS

The Violence Against Women Act reauthorization was signed by President Bush early this month, renewing many programs that help victims of crime on campus.

The newly passed bill also increases funding for rape crisis centers; increases funding to combat violent crimes on campuses; places special victim assistants in local law enforcement agencies to serve as liaisons between law enforcement and victims; creates a separate stream of funding dedicated to sexual assault services; creates a new program to improve teenagers’ access to the courts; and creates a national education curriculum for state and national judicial educators to ensure that all courts have access to information about relevant laws and best practices.

“This is a comprehensive law that strikes the right balance between rejuvenating core programs, making targeted improvements and responsibly expanding the Violence Against Women Act to reach the needs of America’s families,” said Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.). “The Violence Against Women Act of 2005 provides cities and towns with the tools they need to combat domestic violence, assist victims and go after abusers when it occurs.”

Also funded in VAWA reauthorization is the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, which provides grants and resources to help local and campus police more effectively do their jobs. VAWA is online at <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

Contact: Sen. Joseph Biden, (202) 224-5042, <http://biden.senate.gov>.

January Riddled with Crime For Miami University Students

Miami University (Ohio) has seen a spike in crime this month, with a student being robbed and raped, another held at gunpoint in bed, a third kidnapped by men in a van, and a fourth attacked in her apartment.

The first incident occurred Jan. 9, where a female student was awakened in her off campus apartment at gun point, then raped and robbed. In a Jan. 11 incident, a male student reported he was awakened in his off campus apartment by an intruder brandishing a gun.

The third incident took place Jan. 13 and involved a male student and two friends walking home late at night. A van pulled over and offered them a ride to a campus building. One student agreed and got in the van. However, when the van turned the opposite direction of the previously discussed location, the two friends called the police. The student was beaten, robbed and left on a deserted highway in Indiana, where a resident of a nearby farm house called 911. A fourth incident, in which a man tried to force himself into a female student's off campus apartment, occurred Jan. 15.

Campus Steps up Patrols

In the wake of the incidents, all of which occurred off campus, the university is working to maintain calm while beefing up security, said university spokesman Richard Little.

"We've increased patrols, and are working in tandem with the Oxford police," Little told *CC*. "We've been able to complement the Oxford police off campus as well, and the local sheriff's office has been increasing its patrols as well."

Little noted that because all the incidents happened off campus, the university's police are not handling the investigation. So far, three people have been arrested in the kidnapping incident, and police have a "person of interest" in the rape case. Oxford police also are investigating whether the rape and armed break-in are related.

Little said about half of the university's 15,000 undergraduate students live on campus. In addition to the increased patrols by security, the school has given students safety tips and asked them to be vigilant. "Also, the staff have been much more cautious in going around and making sure doors haven't been left open and things like that," he added.

Little did not know what may have precipitated the recent spike in crime against university students.

Contact: Richard Little, Miami University, (513) 529-7592; Miami University Police, (513) 529-2222, www.units.muohio.edu/psf/police; Oxford,

Ohio, Police, (513) 524-5240, www.cityofoxford.org/SectionIndex.asp?SectionID=59.

William and Mary Plans Changes To Fire Systems to Improve Safety

The College of William and Mary (Va.) will be updating its fire alarm systems and installing sprinkler systems in the coming years in an effort to improve campus safety.

"Our students' safety is our primary responsibility and we are moving in a deliberate manner to enhance our fire safety program on campus," said Gene Nichol, president of the university.

In May of 2005, a fire gutted the top floor of Preston Residence Hall. All students escaped unharmed. The college plans to upgrade its systems based on the recommendations of an independent firm that analyzed the school's fire safety after the Preston Hall blaze. The report, finished late last year, said the school had good safety measures in place, but recommended a three-phase plan to ensure fire safety was up to date.

Three Phases Extend over 20 Years

Phase one of the plan calls for replacing fire alarm systems in 12 residence halls, based on the age and condition of the system, the type of smoke detectors and whether the building has sprinklers. This phase is expected to last up to three years and cost \$2.1 million. The second phase requires the school to replace the fire systems in 21 residence halls (\$2 million) and install automatic sprinklers in buildings that do not have them (\$8.1 million). Phase three involves maintaining current systems and replacing them as needed based on age. This phase is scheduled for 10 to 20 years from now.

Vice President of Administration Anna Martin said the recommendations will help ensure continued safety of students. "All of our buildings were built strictly to fire code regulations at the time they were built, but we realize the need to address this issue in a more focused manner," she said. "In addition to the recommendations to enhance our system, I am pleased that this report also recognizes the good work we have been doing for years."

Contact: Anna Martin, William and Mary, (757) 221-2553, martin@wm.edu.

KEEP IN TOUCH — *Campus Crime* welcomes your comments, questions and suggestions. *Contact:* Rasheeda Crayton Childress, Editor, 2601 University Blvd. W, 2nd floor, Silver Spring, MD 20902; (301) 731-0555; news@crayton.net.

Education Department Funds Projects To Reduce Campus Drinking, Violence

The Department of Education is offering \$1.75 million for campus programs that prevent high-risk drinking and violent behavior by students through its Grant Competition to Prevent High-Risk Drinking or Violent Behavior Among College Students.

The program supports two-year projects by colleges and universities that enhance, implement or evaluate programs that prevent high-risk drinking or violence. Projects should identify a specific student population to target, show evidence that this group needs targeting and use research and student input to develop strategies for the project.

About 14 new grants are expected, with awards ranging from \$100,000 to \$150,000 per year. More information about applying appears in the Dec. 23 *Federal Register* (pp. 76267-76270) and online at www.edc.org/hec/grants/high-risk/0512. The application deadline is **Feb. 6**.

Contact: Richard Lucey, Jr., Department of Education, (202) 205-5471, richard.lucey@ed.gov.

Campus Safety Initiatives Funded with CNCS Grant

Colleges and universities could earn funding to improve safety for students who occupy off campus housing through the Corporation for National and Community Service's 2006 Learn and Serve America Higher Education Grant Program.

The goal of the program is to use institutions of higher education to help improve neighboring communities in a variety of areas, including public safety. As neighborhoods surrounding campuses often complain of problems by students who inhabit those communities, the grant can be used to help projects that improve the safety of that community and the students who reside there.

About \$9 million in funding is available for the higher education portion of the grant program. The application deadline is **Feb. 28**. More information is available online at www.learnandserve.gov.

Contact: Amiko Matsumoto, CNCS, (202) 606-7510, LSAHigherEd@cns.gov.

* * *

New Public Safety VP at Duke — Duke University (N.C.) has named Aaron Graves, 52, the new Associate Vice President for Public Safety and Security. Graves, previously director of public safety at the University of Southern California, started his new post Jan. 9. In the newly created position, the North

Carolina native "will oversee strategic and tactical initiatives to ensure an enhanced and integrated approach to safety and security at the university and medical campuses." At USC, Graves managed a staff of 220 full-time employees and an \$18 million budget. "Providing a safe and secure environment for students, faculty, staff and the many visitors to campus is essential if the university is to achieve its educational missions," he said. Kemel Dawkins, vice president for campus services, said Duke looks forward to Graves employing the successful methods he used at USC. "I am particularly impressed by the role Aaron played in leading a number of initiatives at USC to improve relations between students and neighbors," he said. *Contact:* Aaron Graves, Duke, (919) 684-2444, aaron.graves@duke.edu; Kemel Dawkins, Duke, (919) 684-3640, kemel.dawkins@duke.edu.

Campaign Seeks to Reduce Suicide — A new University of Washington campaign is aimed at saving 1 million lives worldwide. And a big chunk of those lives to be saved — 160,000 — would be saved by treating depressed people and keeping them from committing suicide. The fact that suicides comprise such a large part of the goal should be of note to college campuses. In recent years, many campuses have been beefing up their mental health services to help cope with students afflicted with depression and other mental illnesses that lead to suicide. "This does not require striking new research breakthroughs nor does it require redirection of enormous sums of money," said professors Frederick Rivara and Charles Mock, who are leading the campaign. "It does require adopting the vision and having the will to accomplish this goal." *Contact:* Frederick Rivara, University of Washington, (206) 744-9449, fpr@u.washington.edu; Charles Mock, University of Washington, (206) 744-9430, mock@u.washington.edu.

END

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Helping Handouts

News You Can Use for Students

January 2006

As Valentine's Candle-Lit Dinners Near, Experts Warn of Fire Dangers



With Valentine's Day approaching, fire safety experts warn students to be careful their romantic adventures don't become, literally, too hot to handle.

In order to set the mood, people often choose to cook romantic dinners, light candles, burn incense and have a little wine. While these things can inspire romance, they also contribute to most fires, say experts.

On Campus Versus Off Campus

Students living on campus will be limited to the fire damage they can do based on campus housing rules. Most schools prohibit burning things (candles, incense, etc.) and cooking devices, precisely because they can start fires. Ed Comeau, director of the Center for Campus Fire Safety, said it is important for students to follow the rules in place.

"It is important for students to understand there are reasons behind the rules and follow them," Comeau told *Helping Handouts*. "Last year, there was a fire at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. A student was cooking in his room with a George Foreman Grill and fell asleep. The grill — which was not allowed — ignited his bedroom. The fire got big enough that Secret Service agents who happened to be outside the building could see it nine stories down."

Students living off campus have to be more vigilant. Because they don't have restrictions on cooking, candles and smoking, off campus students are more likely to be victims of fire. "Almost 80 percent of college fire fatalities occur off campus," Comeau said.

The key things for students living off campus to remember are to (1) keep heat sources — such as candles, incense, cigarettes and even halogen light bulbs — away from things that can catch fire, such as clothes, curtains or papers and (2) have a working smoke detector.

(Continued on next page)

If You've Gotta Burn...

Most dormitories do not allow candles, and experts suggest avoiding them. But if you live in a place that allows candles, here are some tips for reducing the likelihood that they start a fire:

- 🕯 Put them on a heat resistant surface. Some candles get hot enough to melt plastic (TVs are not fire-resistant objects).
- 🕯 Use a proper, stable holder that will not fall over.
- 🕯 Position them away from curtains, do not put them under shelves, and keep them away from clothes and hair. (Also, do not put candles anywhere you might need to lean over them — such as in the middle of the table; it might catch your clothing or hair on fire).
- 🕯 Keep candles at least four inches (10 cm) apart.
- 🕯 Votive and scented candles turn to liquid to release their fragrance, so put them in a glass or metal holder.
- 🕯 Don't move candles while they're burning.
- 🕯 Don't leave burning candles unattended — extinguish them when you leave the room.
- 🕯 Use a snuffer or a spoon to put them out — it's safer than blowing them, which can send sparks and hot wax flying.
- 🕯 Double-check they're out.

Source: Warwickshire County (England) Fire Department

Fire (Cont. from p. 1)

“We strongly encourage them to not disable smoke alarms,” Comeau said. “If you don’t have one, get one. For the price of a pizza, you can improve the safety of your house. That will give the vital notification needed to get out.”

Inebriation and Fire Don’t Mix

Those planning to have a little wine with their romantic meal should be aware that alcohol is a contributing factor in fires and fire fatalities.

“There are two different scenarios we encounter with alcohol and fire,” Comeau said. “One is the person who has been drinking is the source of the fire — a person fell asleep while they are smoking. The other is they are inebriated, so they cannot react to the fire appropriately.”

According to a U.S. Fire Administration report, one study found that 83 percent of the people between the age of 15 and 60 who died in fires had been drinking. The agencies also cited studies showing that intoxication impairs one’s ability to detect smoke — as it suppresses the choking/gagging reflex — making it less likely someone will awake during a fire. Also, alcohol impairs the body’s ability to heal from burns.

Comeau noted that when students host a party, such as a big Valentine’s Day blowout, they should have a designated fire person, just like they have a designated driver. That person should stay sober, and when the party is over, make sure no incendiary things are lying around (such as candles or cigarettes) and take out the trash. Comeau said many fires start because someone threw a cigarette butt in a trash can that smolders and catches on fire.

General Fire Safety

If a fire does occur, Comeau said it is important for students to keep some things in mind. “Wherever you are at, whether it’s the place you live, a restaurant, a place you’re visiting, you should know a second way out,” he said. “That night club fire down in Rhode Island [in 2003] — if those people had known to look for a second way out, instead of all going back through that front door, then a lot of lives would have been saved.”

As a safety measure, he said students should not store things in hallways, as they become impediments in fires. “We do training where we fill corridors with smoke to teach students how to move

General Fire Safety Tips

- 🔊 Have a fire extinguisher or know where one is
- 🔊 Know how to use a fire extinguisher
- 🔊 Know at least two exits
- 🔊 Crawl low in smoke
- 🔊 Test the door to see if it is hot
- 🔊 Evacuate when the alarm sounds
- 🔊 Sound the alarm and warn others
- 🔊 Once out stay out

Source: Living with Fire Project

through them,” Comeau said. “In a dark situation, something as small as a waste basket becomes a huge hurdle. They get confused, turned around and aren’t able to get out.”

Because fire is deadly, students should take it seriously, follow dorm rules and take precautions if they live off campus. “Students have a great sense of personal responsibility in this issue,” Comeau said. “It is for your own safety, if not that of those living around you.”

Contact: Ed Comeau, CCFS, (413) 323-6002, www.campusfire.org.

We have moved!

As of January 1, 2006

Business Publishers, Inc.

is now located at:

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