The Power of Peers: Building Comprehensive, Sustainable Peer Education Programs Addressing Alcohol, Other Drug Abuse, and Violence Prevention

NASPA Alcohol & Other Drug Abuse Prevention & Intervention Conference
Miami Marriott Biscayne Bay - Miami, FL
January 14, 2011

University of North Carolina Wilmington
Rebecca Caldwell
Director, Substance Abuse & Violence Prevention
Aimee Hourigan
Asst. Director, CROSSROADS
Jordan Winn
CROSSROADS Peer Educator

University at Albany, SUNY
M. Dolores Cimini, Ph.D
Director, Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program
Assistant Director for Prevention & Program Evaluation
University Counseling Center
Nicholas Lansing
Assistant Hotline Coordinator
Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program
Learning Objectives

- Describe key elements relating to the development, structure, and operation of two university-based U.S. Department of Education-recognized model peer education programs addressing alcohol, other drug abuse, and violence prevention, including their focus areas, service missions, theoretical underpinnings, and recruitment, training, supervision, and retention strategies.

- Identify the ways in which program effectiveness is measured and liability issues are addressed within the context of student-staffed peer education programs.

- Apply concepts and program elements discussed in this presentation on other campuses and outline the importance of establishing linkages with university and community partners for program success.
Why Peer Education Works

- Peer influence is a key factor in determining the behavior of college students.

- College students regard their peers as a credible and trusted source of information (National College Health Assessment, 2000).

- Studies have shown that peers can be as effective as professionals in delivering alcohol interventions to college students (Fromme & Corbin, 2004).
About Our Programs
Peer Education at the University at Albany, SUMY
University at Albany
Profile

- University Center within 64-campus SUNY System
- Urban Setting
- Research University
- NCAA Division I

Students:
- Undergraduates - 13,246
- Graduate Students - 4,956

Faculty: 967

Employees: 4,197

Degree Programs:
- Undergraduate - 61
- Masters - 89
- Doctorate - 39
The Middle Earth Program: Background, Services, Marketing, & Recruitment
A Description of the UAlbany Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program

- Provide peer counseling and peer education services to support academic success and personal and social growth and development

- Enhance responsiveness and sensitivity to diversity issues on and off campus
Our Mission

“STUDENTS HELPING STUDENTS”
History of the Program

- Begun in 1970 by students as alternative to traditional counseling services
- Peer education component begun in 1980
- Currently the peer assistance arm of UAlbany Counseling Center "feeder service" to professional counseling
Program Components

- Hotline
- Peer Education
- Staff Training and Staff Development
- Peer Career Advising
Hotline Service

- Open noon-midnight, Mon.-Fri. & 24 hours on weekends
- Over 1,600 contacts per year
- Serves campus and community
- Only hotline of its type in Albany, NY
Peer Education Program

- Provides peer education workshops for campus and community
- Coordinates Sexuality Week and other campus-wide theme weeks (Sexual Assault Awareness month activities)
- Sponsors the Middle Earth Players, a campus theater group
- Authors Middle Earth Roots help column and has done a radio talk show on WCDB 90.9FM
Staff Training Program

- Trains undergraduate students in hotline counseling, peer education, and important campus issues
- Offers academic course credit (6 courses)
- Prepares students for careers in the helping/human services fields
Program Staff

- Director (Licensed Psychologist)
- Supervisors (Staff Psychologists)
- Undergraduate Student Officers/Executive Board
- 2 Psychology Interns
- 2 Graduate Assistants
- 85 Hotline Counselors
- 30 Peer Educators
- 45 Trainees
Marketing the Middle Earth Program

- Weekly article in Student Newspaper: Albany Student Press
- Information exhibits
- Facebook ads
- Fliers, posters, and table tents
- Mass emails
- Giveaways
- Student nominations
- Middle Earth Website
Recruiting Students to Work in Middle Earth

- Seeking nominations from faculty and staff
- Information exhibits
- Facebook ads
- Fliers, posters, and table tents
- Mass emails to all undergraduates
- Announcements in classrooms
- General interest meetings
- Middle Earth Website
Program Evaluation
Model Program Grant
Project Goals

▪ To increase the percentage of University at Albany students who believe that their peers drink at least once a week or less by 10 percent through exposure to social norms within peer theater

▪ To disseminate information concerning the effective components of the Middle Earth model peer theater program to colleges and universities on a local, state, and national level

(Funded by Model Program Grant, U.S. Department of Education)
Model Program Grant Evaluation Plan

**Hypothesis:**
Trained peer educators can have an additive effect in carrying out social norms interventions when compared to media campaigns alone.

**Evaluation Method:**
- Experimental vs. control group design
- Pre-post evaluations with ACHA and CORE Social Norms surveys
Overall Findings

- Significant decrease in frequency of alcohol use
- Significant decrease in driving after drinking any amount of alcohol ($f=9.47, p.<.01$) and after having more than 4 drinks
- Significant decrease in behaviors that were later regretted
- Significant decrease in students’ definition of acceptable drinking in terms of occasions per week
Results

- **Increase** in participant engagement in **protective behaviors**, including:
  - use of a designated driver
  - pacing drinks to one or fewer per hour
  - keeping track of how many drinks

- **Decrease** in participant engagement in **high risk behaviors**, including:
  - missing classes
  - physical injury to self
  - having unprotected sex.
Results

Project Goal: To increase the percentage of 1st year students who perceive that their peers drink once per week or less by 10%.
Results

% Increase in Frequent Binge Drinking

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

% Increase in Frequent Binge Drinking

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

Results

% Increase in Frequent Binge Drinking

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

Results

% Increase in Frequent Binge Drinking

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

Results

% Increase in Frequent Binge Drinking

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

Results

% Increase in Frequent Binge Drinking

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

Results

% Increase in Frequent Binge Drinking

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

Results

% Increase in Frequent Binge Drinking

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture

-10  -5   0   5   10
ME Player Academic Lecture
Peer Education at the University of North Carolina Wilmington
University of North Carolina Wilmington

- Public 4-Year Institution in southeastern North Carolina
  - 5 miles from Atlantic Ocean
- Enrollment: 12,195 (10,989 undergraduate, 1,206 graduate)
- 58% female, 42% male
- 85% white, 5% African-American
- 3rd most competitive state institution for admissions after flagships (Chapel Hill & NC State)
Peer Education Models

- College level peer-to-peer education

- College to high school peer education two-tiered model
  - College mentors recruit, train, and advise high-school peer educators.
  - High school peer educators deliver prevention programs to fellow high school students.
College Peer Education: Generalists to Specialists

- Substance Abuse Peer Educators
- Specialized Topics:
  - Gender and Alcohol Peer Educators
  - Tobacco Awareness Peer Educators
- Violence Prevention Peer Educators
  - 1 in 4 Men’s Sexual Assault Prevention Peer Educators
Background, Services, Marketing, & Recruitment
History of the CROSSROADS Program

- Substance Abuse Prevention at UNCW started in 1988 with FIPSE grant, including peer education.

- Local school system approached UNCW to bring peer education programs into schools in 1997.

- Developed, with NIDA funding, a market-ready effective product.
Changing a High-Risk Drinking Culture through the Lens of Gender: A Promising Model Program

- Tiered series of programs related to gender-specific aspects of college drinking.
- Peers are involved in: classroom presentations, normative feedback sessions with high-risk groups, development of gender-based social norms campaign.
Sample of Other Peer Education Programs:

- The Tiki Bar: interactive “bar” program
- Girls Night In: women, alcohol, & stress
- Fatal Vision goggles & golf cart, twister, or other activities.
- Drinking Games- interactive series of carnival games.
- Energy Drinks: Truth or Fiction
- Vicodin, Adderall & Xanax, Oh my!
CROSSROADS High School Drug Prevention Program

Consists of:

- Alcohol and Drug Prevention Curriculum, lessons designed to be team taught by teachers and peer educators in health class.
- Social Norms campaign
- School-wide Drug Information Booths
- College Mentors work with high school peer educators.
- High school peer educators deliver program to the school.
History of UNCW CARE

- Founded in 2005, a year after two campus tragedies.
- Original staff was one counselor from the Counseling Center and one from CROSSROADS.
- Coordinator for Men’s Programs position was added in 2006 with U.S. Department of Education funds.
- Victim Advocate was added in 2010 with U.S. Department of Justice funds.
Sample of CARE peer-led programs

- I CARE: How to Help training
- First Aide: Bystander Intervention program
- 1 in 4 Men’s Sexual Assault Prevention
- Long Distance Relationships
- Take Back the Night speak out
- Clothesline Campaign display
Recruiting Students

Recruitment Strategies are matched to each program.

Examples include:

- **1 in 4**: Nominations from faculty and staff
- **College Mentors**: Snowball recruitment
- **CROSSROADS Peer Educator**: Peer Educators are challenged to attract and encourage the next peer group.
- **CARE Peer Educators**: Approach facilitators after classes and presentations.
- **High School Peer Educators**: Class survey identifies students with social capital, teachers pick students who are high-risk.
LOOKING FOR AN ON CAMPUS JOB?

Plan events
Educate your friends
Recognize signs of abuse
Help someone quit smoking
Learn about health
Advocate for change
Be a leader

Priority deadline is March 1st!
Applications available in Westside Hall 2nd floor & Student Recreation Center #104
Call 962-4136 with questions
uncw.edu/crossroads or uncw.edu/care

BE A PEER EDUCATOR!

Plan events on campus
Educate your friends
Recognize signs of abuse
Help someone quit smoking
Encourage healthy relationships
Learn about health
Advocate for change

BE A LEADER

Priority application deadline is March 1st!
Applications available now in Westside Hall and Student Recreation Center #104
Online: uncw.edu/crossroads or uncw.edu/care
Call 962-4136 with questions
Marketing Programs

- Direct to faculty: Don’t Cancel that Class!
- Weekly Happy Hour program on Thursday afternoons
- Peer educators market their program to their other student groups, i.e. 1 in 4 members arrange a presentation to their fraternity.
- Resident Assistant & Seahawk Link training
- Information exhibits
- Facebook ads & Group
- High Profile program weeks and months: Alcohol Awareness Week or Sexual Assault Awareness Month.
- Giveaways
How do we know that these programs work?
Learning Outcomes: What Do Peers Learn?

- Divisional and departmental learning outcomes.
- Evidence of change in individuals.
- We measure:
  - Behavior change - pre & post-tests
  - Development of skills & attitudes - post-test
  - Performance and Fidelity - observation rubrics
  - Accurate Knowledge - direct assessment
  - Their experiences - focus groups
College Peer Education: Peer Delivery is Effective

Element of 2009 Dept. of Ed. Promising Model Program designation project.

Efficacy of the intervention itself is already published.
- Mayhew, Caldwell, & Hourigan, 2008

Randomized design by classroom
- Conditions: Peer delivery, Professional delivery, Delayed control, Control.
- Same program is delivered by either peers or professionals.
Peer Delivery is More Effective than Professional Delivery

Outcome is a score based on drinks per week, drinks per occasion, and days drinking per month.
CROSSROADS Adolescent Drug Prevention Program: Evidence

- Phase I NIDA-funded trial - 4 school randomized trial
- Phase II NIDA-funded trial - 30+ school randomized trial in four states
- Middle school-high school partnerships trial in 2010-2011
Phase I Trial Logic Model

Classroom Sessions
Drug Info Booths
College Mentors
Peer Educators
Social Norms Campaign

Beliefs about Consequences

Normative Beliefs
Resistance Skills
Decision Making Skills

Intention to Use Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana

Use of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana

Intention to use alcohol was reduced.
CROSSROADS prevented the initiation of alcohol use.
Results Lasted

At follow-up, CROSSROADS participants were still significantly lower than non-participants on:

- Rode with a drunk driver ever or last 30 days
- Ever gotten drunk or been drunk in the last 30 days
- Ever used drugs (all drugs minus alcohol and tobacco) or used drugs in the last 30 days
- Ever used alcohol or used alcohol in last 30 days
- Ever smoked cigarettes or smoked a cigarette in the last 30 days.
Taking the First Step

Starting a Campus-Based Peer Education Program: Issues to Consider
Consideration #1: Focus of Services

- What do you think of when someone says ‘Peer Education Program’?
- What do you want your peer education program to focus on?
- What programs will it include?
- What are some of the most important traits that a peer educator/mentor should have?
Consideration #2: Staffing and Resources

- Who will serve as the peer education program director? How much time will that individual devote to running the program?
- How many hours will the program operate? How many students will be needed to operate the program, and what will be their time commitment?
- Where will the program be located? Who will supply the furniture for the office? How will the phone system work?
- How much funding and other resources will the program need to operate?
Consideration #3: Training and Supervision

- What will be the focus of our peer education program?
- What training model shall we use? How will the training program be structured?
- What will be the training contract with students (volunteer basis, course credit, money)?
- What is our mechanism for ongoing supervision of students?
Consideration #4: Recruitment & Retention

- How will I recruit students for my peer education program?
- What qualifications should I look for?
- How should I conduct my application process?
- How can I motivate and reward our Peer Educator/Mentor undergraduate students once they become a part of the program?
- How should I address issues of performance and discipline in our program?
Consideration #5: Marketing the Program

- How will we market our program?
- Who will fund our marketing efforts?
- Can we partner with other campus groups, offices, or community agencies to help advertise our programs?
- How can our own students serve as ambassadors for our program?
- How can we work with our campus and community media offices to advertise our services?
Consideration #6: Liability Issues

- Does your program have clear protocols addressing how to respond to situations that are urgent or life-threatening, such as sexual assault, suicide or homicide risk?

- Does your hotline program have a mental health backup system staffed by a licensed mental health professional or agency in place to respond to urgent and emergency situations?

- Do referral networks with community agencies exist for times in which your program is not open, and are these advertised?

- Does your university have a document/contract specifying who accepts the liability for the program?

- Is there a malpractice policy in place for your program?
Consideration #7: Evaluating Effectiveness

- What mechanisms do we have in place to track and monitor the course of contacts to our peer education program? How are these records kept secure and confidential?

- What mechanisms do we have in place to track the performance of our undergraduate peer educators/mentors?

- Do we have templates to produce annual reports for our program, highlighting data on effectiveness?

- Do we have a “brag document” or organizational resume that we can use to let people know of our accomplishments and successes?
Contact Information

M. Dolores Cimini, Ph.D.
dcimini@uamail.albany.edu
518-442-5800

Nicholas Lansing
hotlinecoordinator1@uamail.albany.edu
518-442-5800

Rebecca Caldwell
caldwellr@uncw.edu
910-962-7360

Aimee Hourigan
hourigana@uncw.edu
910-962-7458