

Campus Community Coalition

Summary of Activities

November 2005-February 2006

Neighborhoods Engaging with Students (NEST) Project
Increasing student integration in and accountability to the neighborhoods in which they live.

Neighborhood Mediation Program

A program in which students and long term neighbors are trained in conflict resolution and mediation, and then work together to prevent and resolve neighborhood conflicts.

In partnership with the Coalition, the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center has provided two levels of free training: "Dealing with Conflict" (3 hours) and "Neighborhood Conflict Management" (12 hours). 56 people completed the Dealing with Conflict training and 47 completed the Neighborhood Conflict Management training. A 40-hour intensive "Basic Mediation" training is also underway with 24 participants (maximum enrollment). Upon completion of the Basic Mediation training, an exam, and a practicum participants can become certified mediators.

The Coalition and the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center will continue working together to support the newly trained neighborhood conflict managers and mediators in their roles, and to promote the use of conflict resolution and mediation to address neighborhood conflicts.

Neighborhood Service-Learning Projects

An initiative to increase student involvement in neighborhoods through WWU courses, neighborhood association projects, and other campus and community activities.

- Students in Professor Crowder's course "Community and Urban Sociology" are focusing studies on York, Sehome, or Happy Valley neighborhoods, where they are conducting demographic analyses and "windshield surveys," and attending neighborhood association meetings. With a deepened understanding of neighborhood demographics and issues, they are participating in conflict resolution training through the Neighborhood Mediation Program. The purpose of the project is for students to acquire an understanding of the social issues facing the neighborhoods near campus, including the impact of the university, and develop skills to positively address these issues.
- Similar to fall quarter, students in Dr. Werder's course "Civil Discourse as Learning Interaction" are participating in a series of neighborhood meetings and projects as a way to experience dialog across differences. Their focus is to engage in dialog with neighbors in an effort to find common ground.
- The Coalition is participating in planning an Earth Day (April 22) event for students to do restoration work in parks and on trails in the York, Sehome, and Happy Valley neighborhoods. Other groups collaborating on the event are New Student Services; Residence Life; the Center for Service Learning; Bellingham Parks and Recreation; Learning, Environment, Action, Discovery (LEAD); and the neighborhood associations.

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Neighborhood Community Service Alternative

A pilot project testing the feasibility and efficacy of the City Attorney's Office requiring people who are charged with Minor in Possession of alcohol (MIP) to complete 2 hours of neighborhood service as part of the required 16 hours community service.

This project is currently being piloted in Happy Valley, and about 15 people have completed service with the Happy Valley Neighborhood Association. Participants are people who have received MIP citations and who both live in AND were cited in Happy Valley (due to low numbers of MIPs in York last fall, there have been no participants in York). Happy Valley participants have planted trees, worked on trails, and cleared a community garden site. Almost all have completed more than their required two hours with the neighborhood association. Initial feedback is positive; the pilot period ends March 30, 2006, and an evaluation will explore the program's continuation, expansion, and improvement.

Off-Campus U: A Road Map to Neighborhood Living

A website for students moving into Bellingham's neighborhoods, including information on renting/leasing, laws and ordinances related to neighborhood living, hosting safe and legal parties, and being a good neighbor.

Off-Campus U has changed from an on-line course to a website in order to increase students' access to off-campus living information. Website development is underway by Rusty George Design (with two WWU grads on the design team!) The Off-Campus U Work Group has provided input on the "look and feel" of the site, reviewed and revised the course content, and reviewed and made recommendations regarding the home page concepts. Off-Campus U is scheduled to "go live" in spring quarter, when many students are making plans to move off campus and securing fall rentals.

Other NEST Activities

- **Let's Talk Forum – "WWU Student: Community Member or Just Passing Through?"** Organized by the WWU Communications Department and the Coalition, this new forum creates a venue to discuss the issues facing students and long-term residents living together in Bellingham's neighborhoods. It was first held fall quarter with about 75 attendees. The winter forum drew about 60 people, and through the Coalition's efforts more community members participated, including four officers from the Bellingham Police Department. The forum is now established as a quarterly event, due to participants' appreciation for the opportunity to explore these issues together.
- **Neighborhood Association Meetings.** Coalition staff have facilitated interactive discussions at several neighborhood association meetings in Sehome and Happy Valley in an effort to "bridge the gap" between students and non-student neighbors. The York Neighborhood Association held a discussion on "neighborhood conflict" led by the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center, providing another opportunity to discuss issues related to student-neighbor relations.

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Enforcement

Increasing enforcement of underage drinking laws, publicity of enforcement, and underage access to alcohol.

The Coalition's Enforcement Work Group met in February to review fall data and discuss plans for expanding the educational component of next fall's enforcement effort.

Bellingham Police Department.

The Bellingham Police Department continued enforcement of underage drinking and off-campus parties by operating the Liquor Law Emphasis Patrols on the first five weekends of winter quarter (January 5 - February 3, 2006). Liquor Law Emphasis Patrols place 2-4 officers on foot and/or in vehicles to focus on the neighborhoods near campus and downtown, issuing citations for disorderly behaviors. 106 citations were issued winter quarter: 27 drinking in public, 21 minor in possession of alcohol, 16 urinating in public, 16 open container, 26 other (e.g., traffic violations, disorderly conduct, malicious mischief).

WA State Liquor Control Board.

The Liquor Control Board officers continue to conduct compliance checks and Cop or Clerk operations, including a focus on the establishments that sell alcohol within a 2-mile radius of WWU. Between August 31 and December 31, 2005 thirty-seven establishments were checked in Bellingham and nine of these sold alcohol to minors. This is a compliance rate of 75.66%; by comparison, the Washington state average compliance rate for the same time period was 82.77%.

LateNight@WWU

Increasing availability of and student participation in late night activities on campus.

The Associated Students organized two "Late Night at the Viking Union" events winter quarter. Concurrently, the Coalition is pilot testing extended hours at two popular campus venues: the Underground Coffeehouse and movies coordinated by Associated Student Productions. The Coalition collaborated with WWU Dining Services to offer "Underground Coffeehouse After Hours." The Coffeehouse extended its hours until 12:00 midnight or 1:00 am on four nights with a DJ, non-alcoholic drink specials, and chair massages. The Coalition has also established programming with Associated Student Productions Films to offer late night movies at the end of winter quarter.

The LateNight@WWU Work Group met in February and discussed the need to focus on developing more on-going late night programming in addition to the big events each quarter. The Coalition will work with Dining Services and the Associated Students to establish a consistent fall quarter schedule for extended hours at the Underground Coffeehouse and late night movies. The work group also began planning the "Late Night line-up" for fall 2006. Once again, WWU's Wade King Student Recreation Center, New Student Services, Associated Students, Residence Life, Athletics Department, Facilities, and Dining Services will collaborate to provide late night activities during the first several weeks of fall quarter.