

Campus Community Coalition

Summary of Activities

June-October 2007

New Projects

▪ **Hospitality Resource Alliance**

The Hospitality Resource Alliance (HRA) started in 1996, but the group had not been active for several years. The group was reconvened in August, with downtown bar owners meeting to identify and discuss current concerns. Subsequent meetings in September and October brought together representatives from downtown bars and restaurants, the Liquor Control Board, the Bellingham Police Department, Bellingham's Downtown Alliance of Music and Nightlife, and the Downtown Renaissance Network. Several main issues emerged in these meetings:

- The importance/value of communication and cooperation among bar owners and staff, law enforcement, and others.
- Overconsumption/overservice and the related issues downtown, and how we might work together to reduce these issues.
- Conflict about noise downtown, as the number of downtown residences increases.

The HRA's next step will be a meeting in early December on ways to reduce issues related to alcohol overconsumption/overservice downtown. This interactive work session will draw on group members' knowledge and experience as well as resources from other communities. There has also been an initial discussion with the Downtown Renaissance Network about partnering to address the complex issue of noise downtown, but no specific plan is in place.

▪ **Campus Alcohol Advertising and Policy Project**

A group of WWU Lifestyle Advisors (peer health educators) are using a public health approach to assess current alcohol advertising practices and policies on Western's campus. They are conducting an environmental scan for alcohol-related advertising and researching the existing policies regarding alcohol advertising on campus. Their findings so far reveal very little advertising on campus that promotes high-risk drinking.

▪ **Students on neighborhood association boards**

At the May 2007 Coalition meeting, several members recommended establishing a systematic way to encourage WWU students to join their neighborhood association boards. Associated Students supported the suggestion, and it has been discussed with neighborhood association leaders through e-mail and at a Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission meeting. There is general agreement that student board members would be an asset, and that they should be referred to the neighborhood association and follow the procedures of the specific association. Currently a referral process is being explored with the Associated Students Personnel Office, which recruits students to campus committees.

Ongoing Projects

Over the last several years a variety of Coalition projects were started or enhanced with the support of a grant award from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). The NIAAA award will officially end this year, and we are working to ensure that many of these projects continue as part of the Coalition's ongoing work.

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

- **“Think Locally-Act Neighborly” Doorknockers.** About 3,000 educational doorknockers were distributed in the York, Sehome, and Happy Valley neighborhoods the week before fall quarter by students, neighborhood association members, and Coalition staff. The doorknockers include information about getting to know your neighbors and keeping parties safe and legal, as well as possible alcohol-related citations. This fall they also promoted upcoming neighborhood association meetings and the neighborhood Let's Talk Forums.
- **Off-Campus WWU: A Student Road Map to Neighborhood Living.** Launched in spring 2006, Off-Campus WWU is an educational website for students moving into Bellingham's neighborhoods, including information on renting, laws and ordinances related to neighborhood living, hosting safe and legal parties, and being a good neighbor. The hosting and maintenance contract with the web developer has been extended through August 2008.
- **Let's Talk Forum – “Living Together in Bellingham: Student Parties, Enforcement Practices, and Neighborly Relations.”** Based on feedback from Coalition members, this fall neighborhood-based forums were held in York, Sehome, and Happy Valley. About 120 students, community members, and law enforcement personnel participated in the discussions about the issues facing students and long-term residents living together in Bellingham's neighborhoods. The forums are a collaborative effort organized by the WWU Communications Department, the WWU Teaching Learning Academy, and the Coalition.
- **Neighborhood Service Learning Projects.** The partnership with Dr. Carmen Werder's course “Civil Discourse as Learning Interaction” continues this fall. Students participate in neighborhood association meetings and help facilitate the neighborhood “Let's Talk” forums to experience and reflect on dialogue across differences. Their focus is to engage in dialogue with neighbors in an effort to find common ground.
- **Letter to Rental Property Owners**
This fall the City of Bellingham joined the Coalition and the neighborhood associations in York, Sehome, and Happy Valley to send letters to 1,080 rental property owners in those neighborhoods (314 in York, 342 in Sehome, and 432 in Happy Valley). The letter emphasizes that rental owners have a unique and important role in communicating clear expectations for their tenants in encouraging them to be good neighbors. It reminds them of city ordinances regarding parking, litter, and noise, and shares information about the Block Watch program, Crime Free Multi-Housing training, Neighborhood Mediation Program, and the Off-Campus WWU website. It also includes guidelines that can be distributed to renters.

Neighborhoods Table at WWU Info Fair

The Coalition once again had a booth at the WWU Associated Students Information Fair to educate students about Bellingham's neighborhoods and encourage them to get involved with their neighborhood associations and other neighborhood activities.

- **Neighborhood Community Service Alternative**

This collaborative program among the Coalition, neighborhood associations, and City Attorney's Office requires people who are charged with Minor in Possession of alcohol (MIP) to complete two hours of neighborhood service as part of their community service requirement. The program is now operating in York, Sehome, and Happy Valley, Bellingham's three neighborhoods with the most WWU student residents.

Enforcement

Increasing enforcement of underage drinking laws and publicity of enforcement.

In recent years the Coalition has provided supplemental funding to the Bellingham Police Department, University Police Department, and the Liquor Control Board to support their alcohol-related enforcement efforts. This year the Coalition is not able to provide these monies due to funding constraints. However, working with local enforcement agencies to support their efforts and foster collaboration remains an important strategy for the Coalition.

The Enforcement Work Group met in September to review plans for fall enforcement and enforcement education. Law enforcement personnel have also consistently participated in the "Living Together in Bellingham" Let's Talk Forums. This involvement from the Bellingham Police Department, University Police Department, the Liquor Control Board, Sheriff's Department, and City Attorney's Office is critical to the forum's success, as many students say that "talking with the cops" is the most valuable aspect of the forum.

LateNight@WWU

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

Three successful late night events were held during the first week of fall quarter: Late Night at the Student Recreation Center, Viking Union Late Night, and a late night movie. Attendance was similar to last year, with over 2,000 students at the Recreation Center event, about 1,800 at the Viking Union event, and 175 at the movie. This year Dining Services made a tremendous contribution to all the late night events by providing free food and organizing numerous off-campus businesses to do the same.

LateNight@WWU is transitioning from a "Coalition project" to an integral aspect of WWU's campus culture. This year John Purdie from Residence Life is coordinating the LateNight@WWU work group, which includes the Wade King Student Recreation Center, New Student Services, Associated Students, Residence Life, Athletics Department, Viking Union Facilities, Dining Services, Prevention and Wellness Services, and the Coalition.