

UA Campus Steps Up to Violence Prevention

A nationally recognized intervention program developed at the UA will serve as the foundation for a training program being implemented and evaluated for students, faculty and staff.



By University Communications
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Building upon its success in proactive prevention measures, the University of Arizona is implementing and evaluating a comprehensive violence prevention program for students, staff and faculty.

The University's [Campus Health Service](#) will adapt [Step Up!](#), a national leadership training program developed in part by Becky Bell of Arizona Athletics and the C.A.T.S., or Commitment to an Athlete's Total Success, program.

Bell created the Step Up! program in collaboration with the National Collegiate Athletic Association and national experts as a pro-social behavior and bystander intervention program that educates students to be proactive in helping others.

A two-year U.S. Department of Education grant totaling \$339,930 will fund the UA training session which will be offered to students beginning this semester and to staff and faculty beginning in the spring of 2010.

The project will focus on training students as peer mentors with a focus on first-year and on-campus students, fraternities and sororities, athletes and students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning.

Melissa Vito, vice president for [student affairs](#), who serves as the project's program director, said she will work with UA Campus Health staff to foster a campus where more individuals are willing to intervene – or Step Up! – to prevent potentially dangerous situations.

"Step Up! education provides our students with the skills and confidence to acknowledge inappropriate or unsafe behavior or attitudes and to challenge it. This grant will help us build on the campus-wide training that the University of Arizona sponsored last year in which 700 faculty and staff attended workshops to help them identify threatening behavior," Vito said.

To date, this is the twelfth competitive grant the [Health Promotion and Preventive Services](#) unit of the UA Campus Health Service has been awarded from the U.S. Department of Education in the past sixteen years. This includes two prestigious "Model Program" designations for their work on reducing student alcohol use.

According to Campus Health's annual Health and Wellness Survey, 38 percent of undergraduates have been in a situation where intervention was needed to ensure someone's personal safety. While most students consider UA to be a safe place, one in four was unaware of the many resources that are available to report a crime or act of violence. More than 1,700 students completed the annual survey during the spring 2009 semester in a random selection of classes.

David Salafsky, director of health promotion and preventive services at Campus Health, said that this grant complements many other programs and services that, taken together, make UA a nationally recognized leader in promoting student health.

"By coming together across the campus community and supporting each other, we can continue to make the UA an even better place to work, live and study," he added.

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Extra Info |
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