

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

programming[®]

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WINTER 2022

NEW YEAR, NEW BEGINNINGS

**How to start (and keep)
new habits**

**Sex-Positive
Sex Education**

**NACA Foundation
Scholarships & Grants**

PLUS

**The Hidden Problem of NSSIs:
Non-Suicidal Self-Injuries**



NACA IS MADE UP OF HUNDREDS OF INSTITUTIONS, nearly 300 associate members, and a dozen affiliate members, so as a membership-based organization that strives to help members create college communities where everyone belongs the mechanisms in which we bring NACA to you vary. We intentionally work to develop a variety of in-person and virtual programs, resources, brave spaces for discussion, vehicles for crowdsourcing, and educational offerings that foster your growth, which may be an evolution of campus programming, student leadership training, change in services, professional development, and more. We seek to offer quality professional development through formal and informal formats – the soon to launch middle level practitioner training or student affairs certification, acquiring new skills through volunteer roles, or access to resources. This effort is ever present in the 2022-25 strategic plan, which builds upon recent efforts to articulate the critical role student engagement/community building plays in student retention and persistence.

As an association that represents three different audiences that encompass a variety of entities that can create a stretch and pull effect which at times is difficult to balance. We are continuously assessing how each effort and decision has an immediate and long-term impact on all members, while also considering how the actions of NACA can positively impact higher education and entertainment. NACA recognizes that we can model how to connect entertainment and education, guide theory application, and program in a manner that fosters a sense of belonging. Leading that effort requires focus and commitment!

NACA is not only growing in the services we provide our membership is growing; this year was the largest on record of new school members in a single year and we continue to welcome HBCUs and two-year institutions which has been an intentional focus. Our Association values guide our membership and organizational efforts – internally and externally. This NACA year (2021-22) has given us a lot to celebrate, the return of in-person conferences and NACA Live, launch of new curriculum and programs, extended reach across institutions, growth in our DEIA efforts, and our presence throughout higher education. Our footprint continues to grow and I am eager for what the future holds for NACA.



**AMBER SHAVERDI
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MISSION

NACA empowers members to amplify the campus experience through inclusive learning, meaningful connections, and engaging entertainment that transforms college communities.

VISION

To create college communities where everyone belongs.





**JOSHUA
BRANDFON, Ed.D.**

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As the NACA year comes to a close in the coming months, we have been provided with opportunities to celebrate our successes and look to our future.

This year's NACA Live brought together hundreds of school and associate members to learn, network, and do business. Building off the success of our last NACA Live event, the planning team – led by Thanh Lee – created an engaging and dynamic environment that encouraged relationship building and collaboration. The high-quality educational sessions, high energy showcases, and of course, the surprises sprinkled throughout the experience combined for a fantastic experience. You just never know what will happen at a NACA event!

Looking forward, the Board of Directors recently approved a new three-year strategic plan for the association that will guide our work. With a focus on **Building Communities where Everyone Belongs**, on **Training, Education, & Member Development**, and on **Business Connections**, the plan ensures that we are well positioned to meet the significant challenges facing higher education, and to continue creating college communities where everyone belongs. In addition, we are working to launch a first-of-its-kind Student Affairs Certification program in collaboration with a number of other higher education associations and will be introducing a new mid-level professionals program in April. As leaders, it is our goal for NACA to be responsive to the needs of our members, recognizing that our institutions, our professionals, and our associates do not live in a bubble.

I have been a volunteer for this association for almost two decades. I started because as a graduate student at the University of Connecticut, it was just something that you did. I quickly discovered that being involved and giving my time helped enhance my own experience, introduced me to leaders in our field that I may not have otherwise met, and provided me with skills that I wasn't learning in the classroom or on my campus. NACA colleagues turned into some of my best friends and closest confidants, and throughout my career, it has been volunteering with this association that has made the greatest impact on my professional life. While these last few years were not what anyone expected, I am proud of the ways in which our office staff, volunteers, and members have met the challenges we have faced. It has been an honor to serve alongside all of you. Thank you for the work you do for our association, our campuses, and most importantly, our students.

I wish you all the best as you continue navigating these challenging times, and can't wait to see what lies ahead for NACA.

“

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JACK CRONE currently serves as the Event Management & Training Coordinator within the Office of Student Leadership, Involvement, and Civic Engagement at Carnegie Mellon University. In his role, Jack oversees the Activities Board, develops student organization leadership trainings, assists with all student organization event planning, and various other duties since starting this role in July 2021. His professional passions include campus events, risk management, student development, and the graduate assistant experience. He received his MA from the University of Central Florida in May 2021 and his BA from the University of Kentucky in May 2019. Outside of the office, Jack enjoys all things music, supporting all the best local restaurants & businesses Pittsburgh has to offer, and hiking/exploring the hills and nature trails throughout the western Pennsylvania region.

students. In her spare time, you can find this proud Chicagoan/Davidson College alumna/Rochelle, IL native boxing, hiking, exploring local coffee shops, or despairing over Cleveland baseball.



DESTINY TALLEY serves as a Graduate Assistant for Career & Professional Development. She is currently enrolled here at UNCG in the Master of Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education program and graduated in 2018 with a bachelor's degree in Sociology from UNC Chapel Hill. During her undergraduate career, she established her passion to “motivate, mentor, and mobilize” students within marginalized populations. Destiny’s current interests consist of integrating advocacy work throughout various functional areas within student affairs and researching to further the discourse on identity development for Black and Brown students on college campuses. She regards herself as a social justice proponent, pursuing professional roles that cater towards equal opportunities for all students. Outside of her dedication to educational equity, Destiny enjoys watching movies, dancing, and spending quality time with family and friends.



MARCUS PERKINS is from Kernersville, NC and is a current master’s student in the Student Affairs and Administration in Higher Education program at UNC - Greensboro. With his background in social science, Marcus decided to pursue his growing interest in student development and gain a larger understanding of the student affairs field. His interest in student affairs/higher education includes first- year experience, housing and residence curriculum development and student conduct. Marcus hopes to achieve professional excellence through groundbreaking research on black student experience and institutional support for first-generation students.

LORI VANN, an author and speaker nicknamed “The Teen Whisperer,” is regarded as a global authority on the treatment and prevention of Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI). She is also a Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor, practicing mental health counseling and LPC associate supervision in the State of Texas. Learn more about her practice at her counseling website, VannAssociates.com



ALEX PRUSATOR is a second-year master’s student in the Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education program at UNC Greensboro where she is also a graduate assistant in the Dean of Students office. In three years of customer experience work at an education tech company, Alex discovered a passion for student advocacy and decided to pursue a career in student affairs, specifically student support and outreach. Her research interests include college student sexual identity development, mental health, crisis management, and support for neurodivergent and disabled



NACA[®]
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

Mid-Level Professionals Course

The **NACA Mid-Level Professional (MLP) Course** is designed for higher education professionals who are preparing to make the transition from entry-level to mid-level. Participants will engage in synchronous learning, cohort discussions, and personal reflection.

Learn more at naca.org/MLP

NACA[®]

AMPLIFY

Members—Help Spread the Word!

Tell prospective members how your NACA membership has benefited you. Share NACA's social media posts and refer potential members to naca.org/join. Questions? Contact memberrelations@naca.org for more information.

What's In It For Me?

Recruit one new member and receive:

One free registration to a NACA event of your choice.*

Recognition in Campus Activities Programming[®] magazine.

Recruit 3+ new members and add on one of the following:

One free registration to a NACA event of your choice.*

One year of membership (of your current level).

How Do I Amplify?

Submit a referral form at naca.org/amplify

*Visit naca.org/amplify for terms and conditions.

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New Habits Start Now!

By

JACK CRONE

2021 WAS A YEAR FOR MAJOR TRANSITIONS within higher education. Many of us returned to our offices after a year and a half of remote work. Many of us learned more about our students and our advising styles, shifting often to help support our students more efficiently. Many of us are adapting to new safety policies and procedures as we try to provide our communities with spaces to create connections and spaces for our students, staff, and faculty to come together. On top of these changes, many of us have transitioned into the field from graduate school. Whether you are a newly full-time student affairs professional or a seasoned one, 2021 was full of surprises, challenges, and celebrations.

Looking to 2022, we are able to embrace this past year of major changes with a new lens of hope and criticism as we transition these changes in 2021 to habits in 2022. Here are a few tips to help ring in 2022 with a refreshed set of eyes and some new personal and professional habits and styles.

1. Find Your Balance

Balance is so important when it comes to this field! Having new job responsibilities, being in a new environment, and working at a new institution can add up. While these things will fluctuate in importance, they are all important to your mental & physical well-being.

2. Make Some Time (for You!)

Making time for yourself may feel selfish within our roles, but it is so important to recharge & reset! Schedule personal days in advance. Go home for a meal. Take a walk during a lunch break or when you get a free hour. Do whatever will help you feel refreshed. You can't fill someone else's cup without refilling your own!

3. Say Yes to (Almost) Everything

Being open to new people, places, and things is key when it comes to the newness within a position! Gaining new perspectives of your role, office, or institution can only help you smoothly transition over these next few months. Build your network & support system - see what else your institution and role can offer!

4. Give Yourself Grace

Change is always scary, especially when given new responsibility or are facing a new level of authority/responsibility. You will make mistakes. You will make the wrong calls. There will be days that you have no idea how to support your students. Having those days is perfectly acceptable. Take some deep breaths and work with your team on how to move forward!

5. Explore Your New Life

No matter what type of professional transition you may go through - the personal life also changes as well. Explore your new life (Items 1-4 can also apply to your personal life)! Find your balance between your social activities and your recharging ones. Make some intentional time to reflect and let your mind idle. Say yes to new social activities and groups - you never know who you'll meet or if you'll find a new favorite hobby! Balancing work, a social life, and personal growth can be challenging...it's okay to give yourself grace and let the dirty dishes pile up every once in a while. Explore your new life and discover more about you!



THE HIDDEN EPIDEMIC LINKED TO LIFE-THREATENING ESCAPES ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

By

LORI VANN, MA, LPC-S

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IT HAS BEEN AROUND FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. Numerous celebrities have engaged in it. Not-so-hidden references are scattered through movies, music, television, and social media. Myths abound about the behavior. It is taboo and makes many people feel uncomfortable to talk about it.

And... it is, without a doubt, on college campuses.

Before disclosing exactly what the behavior is, let us lay the foundation for its prevalence and why it is critically important to identify and treat it before it is too late.

In a 2016 study in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, the presence of this behavior in first-year college students increased the odds of attempting suicide by 3.46 times higher than young adults who did not engage in the behavior.¹

Three different studies from 2006, 2008, and 2010 found that between 17-38% of U.S. college students had a history of this coping skill.

There are over twenty-five different forms of the behavior and well over thirty reasons why people participate in this manner of coping.

Given that a recent study found that depression in adults has increased by three-fold since the start of the pandemic, this behavior has almost certainly increased, too.

¹ *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 2016, 59(4):411. Epub 2016 Jul 30

The most concerning and the most critical reason to learn about this behavior is that it has an over 60% correlation with suicidal ideation, gestures, or attempts. In fact, one study found that a concerned party only has “one year between the onset of (these) thoughts and suicide ideation to intervene.”²

What behavior is it? Self-injury. More specifically, Non-Suicidal Self-Injury. That is the clinical terminology that is to be used, not self-mutilation, cutting, self-inflicted violence, or self-abuse. NSSI is an appropriate description of the behavior and its intent. To be clear, NSSI is NOT a suicide attempt. However, based upon my professional experience during the last twenty plus years, over 570 cases, hundreds of case consults, and a mountain of research, there is a strong correlation between NSSI and suicidal ideation. And, like the first statistic quoted in this article and a subsequent research study by Columbia University³, that there is only a 12 month window to intervene between the start of self-injurious behaviors and a possible suicide attempt. Given this research, it is imperative that self-injurious behavior be identified, taken seriously, and interventions put in place to deter a suicide attempt.

First, let us define what self-injury is and is not because there have been research articles and times when the media have used it interchangeably with suicide. There are several definitions of what is formally referred to as Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI), but I prefer to keep things simple by defining it as “the intentional infliction of harm upon one’s body, usually for emotional reasons.” The focus is on the “intent” piece. It is critical that you do not make assumptions but ask about what the person’s intent was behind the injury.

There have been many instances when an individual has gone to their Resident Advisor, school nurse, or emergency room with cuts on their forearms, or even their neck, and the staff have assumed that the student must have attempted suicide. This can lead to a recommendation that may create more harm than healing. There have been times when students were not allowed back on campus until they could prove that they were no longer self-injuring or had suicidal thoughts. While it is understandable from a legal liability point of view, it may lead to the student feeling isolated, judged, ostracized, worried that they will get behind in their classes, or fearful that they may be kicked off campus.

A couple of quick points: an injury may look like an attempt, but always ask and never assume; it bears repeating, NSSI is not a suicide attempt; three, do not call someone a “cutter”, as it is a label with a negative connotation and is often inaccurate because an individual may use multiple forms of harm; four, it is not an accident; five, do not tell them to “just stop it” or “just don’t do it” because that shows a lack of understanding of the behavior and

the student will likely tune you out; and finally, do not accuse them of doing it for attention. While there may be those who do appear to “show off” their injuries, the majority of those who engage in the behavior may feel shame and try to keep it a secret. For those who do seem to draw attention to their wounds, they are also in need of professional assistance to aid them in processing the reasons why they feel the need to go to that level to receive help.

In addition to those points, there are a few myths and misinformation that need to be addressed. First, the student who may be at risk for NSSI may be the one that no one would have expected. Over a decade ago, those who participated in what was referred to, at the time, as Goth culture or were considered Emos were thought to be the prime candidates for NSSI. However, very few people talked about the straight A student, the drill team member, or the “good” kid. What we know from a 2006 Cornell University study was that approximately 17% of students from Princeton and Cornell, two of the United States’ Ivey League schools, had a history of NSSI.

Some additional misinformation that is out there is that the vast majority of those who engage in NSSI are females. While, yes, in numerous studies females have been over 50% of the cases, it is important to note that the differences between the genders is not the large gap that it may have been decades ago. It is no longer that 90% of the cases are those that identify as female. We know that males self-injure, but it often goes unnoticed or dismissed as accidents, reckless behavior that may have been substance induced, “boys being boys,” or attributed to an anger outburst. For example, a young adult male may be more inclined to hit a solid surface to feel the pain or pick a fight with someone in order to get hit. During numerous talks that I would give, I was asked about the movie, *Fight Club*, and if what took place fell under the NSSI heading. In response, I would say that many of the scenes that were depicted would fall under the NSSI category.

You may or may not be surprised to know that NSSI is on college campuses. Initially, you may have thought that other risky behaviors such as substance misuse or disordered eating was being alluded

to in the beginning paragraphs of this article. And, yes, those behaviors are also actively taking place at colleges throughout the U.S. There are correlations between substance use, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts, and self-injury; it is common for a person to go from one behavior to another. This is one of the reasons why getting treatment from an experienced provider is crucial in creating a successful outcome in not only the short term, but also the long term.

My experience has been that unless you address what I refer to as the “core issues,” students will be more highly likely to transition from one unhealthy coping skill to another and then

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”

² *Journal of Affective Disorders* (239, 2018) https://nocklab.fas.harvard.edu/files/nocklab/files/the_associations_between_non-suicidal_self-injury_and_first_onset_suicidal_thoughts_and_behaviors_kiekens_et_al_2018.pdf

³ *Pediatrics*, April 2018, VOLUME 141 / ISSUE 4) <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/141/4/e20173517.full>,

possibly back to the original behavior. The particularly dangerous part is if the student gets to a point where none of the escapes are working and suicide seems like the last option to cope with whatever struggles they are dealing with at that time. Recently, a treatment center counselor informed me that they had seen several cases of those becoming “sober” from substances but had moved into self-injury as their new way to cope. Some may go from injury to substance or injury to eating disorder (ED) or participate in both concurrently; all three are forms of injuring the body, the only difference is methodology.

I would also note that another plausible reason why NSSI is often considered more shameful and kept silent is that unlike the internal scars that one receives from substance misuse, the scars from self-harm are on the outside and more readily seen. Granted, those who use needles or meth for their drug of choice will have outward scars, too. And based upon conversations and observations over the decades, I would say that they are often treated differently in the public’s eye than someone who binges on alcohol every weekend to the point of blacking out or smokes copious amounts of any substance each day where we cannot readily see the scarring of their liver, lungs, or brain. Some unsafe behaviors are placed on a continuum of, “at least I am not doing...” but it is important to remember that just because a student is snorting Adderall instead of Cocaine (which are actually both Class 2 Narcotics) or “only” engaging in bingeing and purging behavior once a week instead of taking a blade or lighter to their skin does not mean in any form or fashion that the “lesser” behavior is safe or a healthy thing to do. We must be careful with rationalizations and minimization.

So why would someone decide to engage in NSSI? It is counterintuitive to harm oneself, isn’t it? Well, we have already established that people engage in harmful behaviors that go against logic, science, physical health, and quality of life. The reasons people engage in this behavior are, with few exceptions, almost identical to the reasons why people engage in eating disordered behaviors or substance misuse. Throughout the two decades of treating this behavior and the reports from clients, I created a list of thirty-five reasons. While I will not even attempt to go through all of them nor the twenty-eight different forms of self-injury that I have chronicled, I will list out the Top 6 because many of them are a tie. If you are interested in finding out more about the other reasons or methods, then there are plenty of resources that the Institute for Non-Suicidal Self-Injury offers to answer those questions.

The first five are in no order but they are anger, sadness/depressed, stress/anxiety, guilt/punishment, and control. The first three are self-explanatory other than to add that anger is often internalized by those who engage in harm. The anger builds up and they feel that they cannot express it to the party to whom they are upset with, so they stuff it and then it comes out as injury. Often, but not always, those who harm themselves tend to be on the people-pleasing side, so when they disappoint someone, do not live up to expectations (real or imagined), or someone is upset with them, they will punish themselves. Finally, control and anxiety go together. Those who struggle with perfectionism may engage in NSSI for these two reasons. However, I would add that control is also a common theme with individuals with a history of trauma. In addition, in the second book that I wrote on NSSI, I spend a chapter discussing how NSSI and ED are correlated with control, perfectionism, and trauma. The quickest way to explain control is that everyone else is “calling the shots,” are making the decisions, that I do not feel that I get to have a say in anything happening to me. BUT what I do to my body, I have 100% control over that decision.

So, what is the top reason for self-injury? By far the number 1 reason is that the emotional pain is so uncomfortable that it is easier to deal with the physical pain; in essence, it is a release for the emotions, a catharsis. In addition, it can also serve the function of grounding the person. Grounding is a technique that is taught for anxiety management. It is also discussed in the context of trauma.

No one escapes this life without some type of trauma; the pandemic has brought many traumas from loss of life to loss of freedom to lost rites of passage. Trauma can also take form in more obvious ways, such as a natural disaster, a crash of some type, war, a house fire, or assault (physical, sexual, verbal, emotional). However, sometimes we forget the less thought of ways, such as divorce, a move, a bad break up, being suddenly alienated by your peer group, or the loss of a pet. I often say to clients that one person’s trauma may be another person’s inconvenience. Trauma is in the eye, or more accurately, the physical brain of the person impacted. The neurological changes that occur that then impact the Sympathetic Nervous System (Fight, Flight, Fawn, Freeze) are now well-documented, in addition to the impact of early relationship trauma to attachment issues and possible identity issues. But all of that information is another article that will need to be written. The point is that those who have experienced trauma are looking for ways to cope, as best they can, with the tools they have. NSSI, ED, and substance misuse may be a person’s way to cope with an abnormal situation (trauma), so compassion and providing support for them to seek help are the responses that are needed. Without that support, it is easy for a person to start considering suicide as an option. Those who engage in self-injury have already played the negative words spoken to them, the judgments given, and the feelings of being alone out in their minds; Spread Love, Not Harm is a tag line that I developed to convey the recommendation.

In the end, there are many more similarities than differences when it comes to unhealthy coping skills. The key items to remember are to ask questions and not make assumptions, become educated as to the differences between NSSI and suicide, understand how similar NSSI, ED, and substance abuse are, do not focus solely on the act, and that unless you get to the core, underlying issues that started them on their path, you risk them moving on to another detrimental behavior. There is help and there is hope for recovery. I know this for a fact based upon hundreds upon hundreds of reports. If you or someone you know needs help, please reach out to someone who is specifically trained in NSSI.

Congratulations to these 2021 NACA® Foundation Scholarship Recipients!



ALAN DAVIS SCHOLARSHIP

Elizabeth Braatz
Western Oregon University

I am very grateful to NACA for awarding me the Alan Davis Scholarship. The scholarship will pay a large part of my tuition and fees for the rest of this school year, so I can save more of my income to pay for grad school at Portland State

University next year. This scholarship will definitely help me reach my goal of having a career where I can help fight employment and housing discrimination.



**THOMAS E. MATTHEWS SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENT LEADERS
MID ATLANTIC UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENT LEADERS**

Grace Schuler
Drexel University

Thank you so much for awarding me with these scholarships! I am grateful for the time your scholarship will give me

to focus on learning and continuing with my volunteer efforts. Although I have been working since I was 14, and will continue to do so throughout college, it will be scholarships such as this one that will allow me to complete my education. Once again, thank you for the vote of confidence and the scholarship!



SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENT LEADERS (CENTRAL/MID AMERICA)

Kylie Stanley
Bowling Green State University

I am a first-generation student pursuing my Master's in Public Administration post-graduation in April. I am so grateful for this award, as a low-income student financing college can be difficult and

overwhelming. This award allows me to focus on my studies and passion for public service, opposed to being stressed about paying tuition. Thank you so much, NACA!

LORI RHETT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Andrea Salazar Calderon
Pima Community College

I am honored to have been chosen as a recipient of the 2021 NACA Lori Rhett Memorial Scholarship in recognition of my leadership involvement and academic achievement. These funds will help me pursue my education in business and aviation while fulfilling my passion for serving others.



**MID ATLANTIC UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENT LEADERS
ZAGUNIS STUDENT LEADER SCHOLARSHIP
TESE CALDARELLI SCHOLARSHIP**

Lucy Piscitelli
Niagara University

This past year has been one of the most difficult years of my life and I can't tell

you how excited and proud I was to learn that I was a recipient of the NACA Tese Caldarelli Memorial Scholarship, Zagunis Student Leader Scholarship and the Undergraduate Scholarship for Student Leaders.

I am proud to say that I completed my Fall 2021 semester at Niagara University as a Hospitality/Sports Management student with a final gpa of 3.89 and am excited as I begin my classes this semester.

I feel so blessed to receive this wonderful scholarship and am forever grateful for your kindness. These funds will help me to continue my schooling, allowing me to focus on my education without the fear of the financial stresses that can become overwhelming so quickly. I thank you for your confidence in my work and look forward to continuing to pursue my goals.



**SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENT LEADERS
MARKLEY SCHOLARSHIP**

Tarami Readus
University of Houston

These funds will assist me in my dream of becoming an engineer by helping to pay for tuition, books, and on campus living. This takes off a great deal of stress from myself and my family, allowing me to

focus more on achieving in the classroom.



SOUTH STUDENT LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

Lily Sweet King

University of Mississippi

I am so excited to receive the 2021 NACA South Student Leader Scholarship. Before going to college, so many people told me to get involved on campus, that it was the best way to be successful and happy while

in college. I have to say that they were right. I chose a few clubs to be a part of but participated fully. It has been gratifying to see changes come about because of some of the projects I have worked on during my four years at Ole Miss. Being involved, however, means less time to work, and that makes participation especially hard for students paying for college on their own. That's why this scholarship means so much to me. It allows me to continue my collegiate activities and worry less about the financial costs of college. Thank you so much!

SOUTH STUDENT LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

Anna Burnett

University of Georgia

Words can not express how grateful I am to be a recipient of your generous scholarship. With your help, I now have the opportunity to dedicate more time to leadership activities, my community, and academics as you have helped lift a financial burden off of my shoulders. This time will be invested wisely as it will build the foundation for my future career in speech-language pathology. I admire your organization and the emphasis that it places on campus activities. I hope to give back to my community one day just as you have done. Thank you again!



SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDENT LEADERS – NORTHEAST

Kaity Goodwin

Babson College

I'm so honored to have been awarded this NACA Student Leader Scholarship during my final semester at Babson College. Being a part of NACA, both as a conference attendee and on the

Northeast Regional Planning Team, as well as my time spent on the Campus Activities Board (CAB) here at Babson, has taught me some valuable lessons in event planning, leadership, diversity and inclusion, and adaptability. Whenever the beginning of the school year comes around and it's time to choose NACA delegates from Babson, I'm always the first to volunteer and the first to encourage as many of our CAB members to attend.

Without the amazing guidance and advice of the Campus Activities professionals and the connections made with other student leaders, I don't think I would be where I am today, ready to graduate and begin the next chapter of my life. Although I'm unsure of my next steps, the hesitation comes from having a wide variety of options to choose from and passions to peruse. Whether taking a job in events or going to grad school for design or project management, I know the skills that I have gained from NACA and CAB will stay with me for a while and will encourage and help me to be the best that I can and succeed wherever I go.

I'm so grateful for the plentiful opportunities NACA and CAB have provided me and these two amazing organizations are what I will miss the most post-grad.

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Come on Down!

A Program Proposal for Promoting Sex Positivity

By

ALEX PRUSATOR

MARCUS PERKINS

and

DESTINY TALLEY



SEX EDUCATION PRACTICES IN UNITED STATES HIGH SCHOOLS commonly center abstinence, employ fear tactics, and lack medical accuracy (Astle et al., 2020). The abstinence-oriented curriculum that pervades U. S. sex education not only results in negative attitudes and double standards, but also disproportionately high rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancy when compared to other countries and age groups (Astle et al., 2020). College students recognize the need for a revised sex education curriculum that “includes discussions about pleasure, removes the gender double standard for sex, normalises a variety of sexual behaviours, and acknowledges a variety of sexual choices and identities” (Astle et al., 2020, p. 92).

Sex Week

To fill the gaps left by the inadequate sex education many students receive as adolescents, we recommend the implementation of Sex Week, a week-long series of sex positivity programming within the first month of the fall semester. The intentional timing is a sexual assault prevention tactic: statistically, around 50% of sexual violence incidents happen on college campuses between the first week of school and Thanksgiving break in a period known as the “red zone” (Branigin, 2021). Sex Week contextualizes prevention within holistic and positive discussions of sexuality. The straightforward program title is intended to discourage taboos surrounding conversations about sex.

Collaboration and Staff Considerations

Sex Week educates students on different facets of sexual health, wellness, and relationships. Due to the range of topics being discussed and explored, the program consists of collaborations with the following departments and divisions across student affairs: Student Health, Centers for Sexuality and Gender Diversity, Counseling Services, Student Conduct, Dean of Students, Student Wellness, and Title IX.

Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

Existing Sexual Identity Development Literature

Cass’s (1979) model of homosexual identity provides an initial framework for sexual identity development. This linear, six-stage model emphasizes individual and environmental factors that influence sexual orientation for students that identify as gay or lesbian. Other sexual identity literature expands on this model, accounting for its limitations. Nevertheless, much of the subsequent research still focuses on sexual orientation as the main aspect of sexual identity development and often separates their arguments upon this factor (D’Augelli, 1994; Fassinger & Miller, 1997; Worthington et al. 2002). These models either cater to non-heterosexual or heterosexual identity development, rarely overlap, and fail to account for sexual orientations outside of bisexuality, gayness, lesbianism, and heterosexuality. The models also were not created with student development as the foundational subject matter, which makes them less generalizable

to student affairs programming. College student sexual identity literature majorly focuses on how students' sexual orientation impacts or is impacted by their campus experiences, social supports, leadership, and other forms of identity development (i.e., Hughes & Hurtado, 2018; Brandon-Friedman & Kim, 2016; Dugan et al., 2008; Konik & Stewart, 2004).

Theoretical Framework

Unsurprisingly, resources and support for sexual identity development are often dispersed throughout campus based on gender and sexual orientation (e.g., Women's Centers and LGBTQ Centers) when the literature centers these factors. Though the importance of these spaces cannot be undermined, there is potential for safe sexual identity exploration and learning when various groups come together. This can also highlight unexpected differences between same group members, creating empathy for dissimilarities between peers. Thus, Sex Week uses the Unifying Model of Sexual Identity Development (Dillon et al., 2011) to deepen participants' understanding of themselves and others, with the goal of ultimately making campuses more inclusive through comprehensive sex education.

Dillon and colleagues (2011) stress that both individual and social processes influence individual sexual identity. Sex Week highlights this foundational concept by emphasizing that sexual orientation is only one dimension. Students do not have to disclose their sexuality or orientation in order to engage in Sex Week programming, creating a secure environment where participants can unlearn harmful practices and gain sex-positive knowledge. This model also acknowledges societal and interpersonal power dynamics within sexual identity development (Dillon et al., 2011). Sex Week incorporates this notion by encouraging change in students' negative perceptions of sex and sexual identity.

In alignment with the belief that college is a time for exploration, Sex Week also serves as a springboard for moving students through the sexual identity development statuses proposed by Dillon and colleagues (2011). Participation in Sex Week encourages departure from compulsory heterosexuality as it compels students to explore sexuality no matter their orientation, age, or other salient identity. It is important to note that we regard exploration as transcendent of sexual activity. This program equips them with knowledge, tools, and resources to merge toward an overall sexual self-concept or continue through safe, inclusive active exploration of sexuality through sexual acts or motivation to continue learning.

Important Terminology

The terms "sexuality", "sexual orientation", "sexual orientation identity", and "sexual identity" are often incorrectly used interchangeably. While they do share a theme, they represent four distinct concepts. Sexuality is how people express and experience themselves sexually and can include physiological, emotional, social, and spiritual feelings and behaviors (Ferrante, 2015). According to Dillon and colleagues (2011), sexual orientation describes "an individual's patterns of sexual, romantic, and affectional arousal and desire for other persons based on those persons' gender and sex characteristics" (p. 650). Sexual orientation identity refers to their "acknowledgement and internalization" (Dillon et al., p. 650) of their sexual orientation.

Orientation identity sometimes comes with certain terminology to denote that identity, such as gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, asexual, and queer, among others.

Proposed Program

Sex positivity is a shame-free ideal that embraces sex and sexuality as a component of a holistic, balanced life for many people and affirms all sexual identities, sexual orientations, and individual consensual sexual choices, including the choice not to engage in sexual activity ("Healthy Sexuality", 2020). Sex Week consists of five days of classic-game-show-themed programming with one program each day covering one aspect of sex-positive education. A final program on Saturday night synthesizes the results of the pre-program assessment and the content of the programming as a culminating celebration of Sex Week and sex positivity.

As the fear tactics employed in abstinence-based sex education continue to prove woefully ineffective, the light-heartedness of classic game shows encourages students to associate sex education with fun, which improves program efficacy. Laughing about taboo topics makes students more comfortable and allows them to voice concerns, ask questions, and better retain information (Gordon & Gere, 2016). Each program includes a presentation and facilitates dialogue for students to engage and reflect on their own experiences. Attendance would be voluntary yet incentivized with earned or raffled prizes at each program. Satisfaction of co-curricular education quotas would additionally incentivize attendance for first-year students and members of university-sanctioned fraternities and sororities. By making this event an appealing option for educational requirements, we hope to reach the students who most need to engage with the content: the ones who would downplay its importance and not otherwise participate.

Monday: Sexuality and Sexual Identity – Wheel of Fortune

Monday's program explores definitions of sexuality and sexual identity. Students play Wheel of Fortune to understand sexual identities by spinning a wheel to uncover letters that spell out various terms. The gradual reveals of each phrase and definition represent individual journeys of sexual identity, which students often discover bit by bit through lifelong processes. Each revealed phrase prompts discussion about that sexual identity in the contexts of individuality and group dynamics.

Tuesday: Healthy Sexual Relationships – Deal or No Deal

Tuesday's program helps students identify characteristics of healthy and unhealthy intimate relationships. As a metaphor for consent, the interactive portion of the event mimics elements from Deal or No Deal to explain the concept of affirmative, enthusiastic consent. Contestants choose numbered cases, and each case poses a potential "red flag" scenario depicting an intimate situation in which they practice asserting personal agency.

Wednesday: Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

Wednesday of Sex Week consists of sexual assault prevention and response education. Due to the topic's sensitive nature, this program is the only event in the series not modeled after a game show. This program helps students identify reliable resources for responding to sexual violence on and off campus. We recommend

“
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”

holding space for reflection during and after the program and having mental health campus partners on standby to support students who may experience re-traumatization and need to remove themselves from the event.

Thursday: Sexual Wellness – Jeopardy!

Sexual wellness programming takes place on Thursday. Participants play rounds of Jeopardy! in which they answer clues pertaining to body image, sex anatomy, and pleasure-focused education. The event empowers students to understand sex positivity and their own sexual wellness.

Friday: Sexual Health and Safety – The Price is Right

Friday’s event consists of several traditional The Price is Right minigames (e.g. Plinko, Higher or Lower, and Showcase Showdown). To participate in each minigame, students answer trivia questions about STI prevention and treatment, effective contraceptive methods, and the overall concept of sexual health. Prizes may include intimate items like condoms, lube, and dental dams.

Saturday: Putting It All Together – Family Feud

On Saturday night, a Family Feud game show presents the results of the pre-assessment in a way that compares and contrasts campus perceptions and the realities of sexuality and sex positivity. Upon entering the auditorium, students can sign up to play, and then two teams of five students are drawn from the signups and called to the. Results of the pre-assessment are tallied for points and presented as prompts for each preliminary round. The rounds conclude with discussions of what the survey said, i.e. campus perception, in comparison to factuality. For the sake of time and audience attention span, the Fast Money rounds are adapted from past Family Feud episodes. After one game, the host repeats the contestant selection process for a second game.

Research Question

Sex Week aims to foster agency and individuality in sexual situations and reduce incidences of sexual violence on campus. Guided by the following learning outcomes, our assessments will answer: how well does this institution support students’ sexual identity development and promote their safety in sexual situations?

Learning Outcomes

- As a result of Sex Week programming, students will be able to:
- Understand diverse sexual identities in the context of individuality.
- Identify markers of healthy and unhealthy interpersonal relationships.

- Identify on- and off-campus resources for responding to sexual violence.
- Explain the concept of sex positivity and the role of pleasure in sexual wellness and decision-making.
- Assess the risks associated with sexual activity to make informed decisions about their sexual health.

Assessment Recommendations

We recommend a pre-program assessment and post-program assessments. The pre-assessment is a mixed-method campus-wide survey that gauges the campus climate on prevalent attitudes towards sexuality and establishes students’ baseline knowledge of sex and sexual identity. To reach the most students, the pre-assessment would be distributed via email during the first and second week of school. The survey would consist of prompts for short answers (limited to 25 characters) in alignment with each of the five sex positivity topics. To identify trends and patterns, the researchers will serve as the primary assessment tool, sorting the short answers into categories, coding the responses as correct or incorrect, and then drawing conclusions about the current student population’s knowledge to tailor Sex Week programs annually. For example, if the survey results indicate familiarity with condoms as a form of contraception, program facilitators know to spend more time discussing other birth control options. Some possible short answer prompts:

- Name a sexual orientation identity.
- Name one quality of a healthy sexual relationship.
- Name one place on campus where you can report sexual assault.
- Name one part of female sex anatomy.
- Name one risk factor for contracting STIs.

The post-assessment is a quantitative survey that corresponds with the content explored in each session. Each assessment is formatted on a Likert scale between 1-5, with “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree” serving as polar extremes. The assessments include 5 content-based questions asking students to reflect on their own level of agreement with each “I” statement provided, with a final statement assessing overall knowledge growth. For example, see Figure 1 below:

I can define “safe sex”	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
I can name at least 3 forms of contraception	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
I can name at least 3 STIs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
I can name at least 3 risk factors for contracting STIs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
I know where to go for STI testing on campus	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
I learned something new in this session	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

FIGURE 1
Sexual Health and Safety- Friday Post Assessment

Sharing Results/Closing the Loop

We recommend sharing Sex Week assessment results with both internal and external stakeholders. Prior to Sex Week, results of the campus climate pre-assessment would go to campus partners who provide the content for each day of programming so they can tailor their content to the baseline knowledge of survey respondents. We will share with students the results from 100 randomly selected completed pre-assessment surveys in the form of Family Feud game content (while acknowledging that, due to the random sample, the numbers in the game show program may not be generalizable to institution's student population as a whole). Internal stakeholders will also receive a detailed report of post-assessment results that they can use to inform their programming throughout the year.

We also plan to share the campus climate survey results externally on the institution's Student Affairs website. Making the assessment results publicly available, especially for current and prospective students, fosters institutional trust as it adds a level of transparency to the school's social culture. Future directions include generating community buy-in for Sex Week through distribution of executive summaries and detailed reports of the post-assessment surveys to potential community partners such as Planned Parenthood. Expanding local partnerships and increasing collaboration has the added benefit of strengthening town-gown relations.

Conclusion

Adequate sex education is necessary for holistic individual student development as well as the safety and wellness of college campuses. Inclusive, pleasure-focused sexual health and wellness serves not just the individual, but also acts as a means of sexual assault prevention. It emphasizes the idea that sex should be safe and enjoyable for everyone, and it encourages empathetic and open dialogue about agency and consent. Sex-positive education should be seen as a non-negotiable investment in student identity, campus safety, and institutional well-being.

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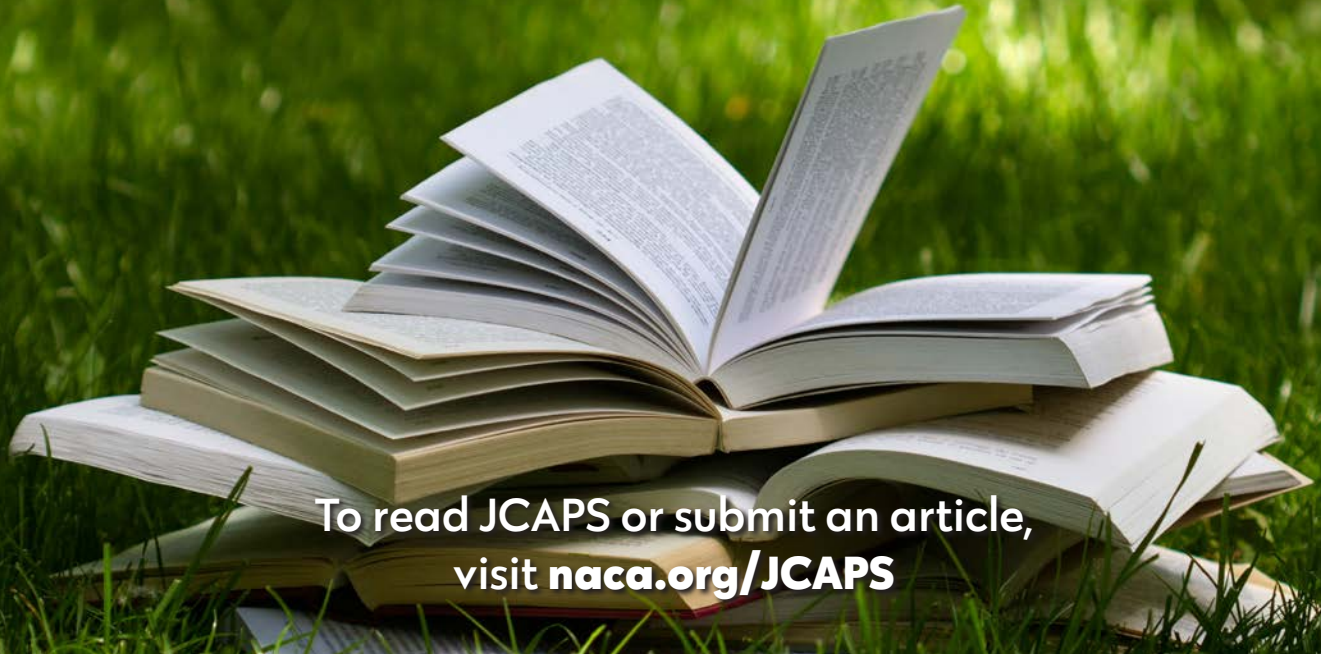


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