

The Partnership for Alcohol Safety

Annual Report

2011

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The Partnership for Alcohol Safety (PAS) is a joint project of The University of Iowa and the City of Iowa City that began in 2009.

PAS Mission Statement:

The Partnership for Alcohol Safety exists to identify and advocate for strategies that reduce high-risk drinking and promote a vibrant downtown.

PAS membership includes:

- City of Iowa City elected officials and administrators
- University of Iowa students, administrators, faculty and staff
- Downtown Iowa City business owners, including bar & restaurant owners
- Public health professionals
- Law enforcement
- K-12 school board members and administrators
- Faith community
- Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division staff
- News media

PAS Success:

The PAS is a campus-community coalition that has resulted in increased communication, improved relationships and successful collaborative efforts among diverse stakeholders throughout Iowa City and the University of Iowa. In 2011, PAS actions helped to create a healthier, safer alcohol environment in our community while also moving toward developing a more vibrant downtown entertainment, restaurant and retail district for all ages. Although there is much more work to do to increase health and safety in our community around alcohol, below are some of the improvements that have occurred since the beginning of the PAS in 2009 (percent change= $((y2 - y1) / y1) * 100$).

Improvements to health and safety since the beginning of the PAS:

- ↓ **8%** decrease in the UI student high risk drinking rate from 2009 to 2011; the first decrease in 10 years (70.3% in 2009, 64.5% in 2011; Source: National College Health Assessment (NCHA).
- ↓ **10%** decrease in public intoxication arrests by Iowa City and University of Iowa police from 2009-2011 (1577 in 2009, 1417 in 2011; Source: ICPD and UIPD arrest statistics).
- ↓ **11%** decrease in disorderly house arrests from 2010-2011 (273 in 2010, 244 in 2011; Source: ICPD arrest statistics).
- ↓ **14%** decrease in the average number of drinks that UI students reported drinking per occasion from 2009-2011 (7.43 in 2009, 6.39 in 2011; Source: NCHA).
- ↓ **16%** decrease in the percent of UI students reporting drinking 10 or more days per month from 2009-2011 (36.4% in 2009, 30.4% in 2011; Source: NCHA).
- ↓ **16%** decrease in alcohol-related emergency room visits for UI students (ages 18-22) in the year following the 21 Ordinance (218 pre-ordinance, 183 post-ordinance; Source: Takacs, 2011).
- ↓ **25%** decrease in alcohol-related emergency room visits for non-UI students (ages 18-22) in the year following the 21 Ordinance (235 pre-ordinance, 176 post-ordinance; Source: Takacs, 2011).

The following is a timeline of PAS events and community changes that have contributed to the development of a healthier and safer alcohol environment:

March 2009

- ❖ The first Partnership for Alcohol Safety Summit is held with broad representation from throughout Iowa City and the University of Iowa (UI). Participants collaborate to define the problem and identify effective strategies to reduce high risk forms of drinking and its related harmful consequences. Wallace Loh, UI Executive Vice President and Provost, and Regenia Bailey, Mayor of Iowa City, act as co-chairs for this initial event.

January 2010

- ❖ Tom Rocklin, UI Vice President for Student Life, and Matt Hayek, Mayor of Iowa City become co-chairs of PAS.

May 2010

- ❖ Representatives from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln visit Iowa City to meet with PAS, City and UI leaders and bar owners to share their successful model to reduce high risk drinking in a college community.

June 2010

- ❖ Following a vote by the City Council, the 21 Ordinance takes effect.

August 2010

- ❖ The UI launches its internal Alcohol Harm Reduction (AHR) plan, which includes multiple goals and strategies to change campus alcohol culture. The strategies included in the UI AHR plan and the PAS strengthen one another by creating a comprehensive campus-community prevention plan.
- ❖ The UI launches “Think Before You Drink” initiative for football game days.

November 2010

- ❖ The 21 Ordinance is upheld by a public referendum. Although members of the PAS take opposite positions on the ordinance, all members remain committed to the PAS.

February 2011

- ❖ A PAS Strategic Planning Retreat is held to identify mission, vision, and strategic priorities for 2011-2013.

June 2011

- ❖ The UI hires Kelly Bender to a new position called Coordinator of Campus-Community Harm Reduction Initiatives. Bender takes over coordination responsibilities for the UI AHR plan and the PAS allowing for direct linkages and communication between the two plans and planning groups.

December 2011

- ❖ The City Council passes the Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) to allow for focused marketing and economic development of downtown Iowa City, to diversify the entertainment, restaurant, and retail environment; and to create a more vibrant downtown where high risk drinking is not the norm.

Following the PAS strategic planning retreat in February 2011, members of the PAS identified four core areas of focus for the three-year period 2011-2013 and created committees for each area:

- Diversified Downtown
- Legislative and Policy Solutions
- Neighborhood Issues
- Communication, Membership, Structure

Below are 10 strategic priorities identified for 2011-2013 and the progress made by PAS committees in 2011:

DIVERSIFIED DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE

- 1. Serve as a catalyst by building relationships to affect change in unused and under-used space in downtown Iowa City.**
 - ✓ The committee served as a catalyst to get City of Iowa City and UI officials together to discuss the best use of downtown space and provided the opportunity to start conversations about how we can diversify the use of downtown space.
- 2. Continue to gather ideas to feed to other existing groups working to support economic development and cultural vibrancy in downtown Iowa City.**
 - ✓ Committee members invited John Millar, a real estate consultant and expert on college-town economic development, to deliver a presentation on “The Hidden Economies in College Towns.” As a result of his visit, the Iowa City contracted with Millar to conduct a strategic analysis of retail opportunities in downtown Iowa City to be used in future economic development efforts.
 - ✓ Committee members participated in articulating a vision for a diversified downtown and joined with Downtown Association members to create a petition to pass a Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) for downtown Iowa City. The goal of SSMID is to focus the marketing and development of downtown to attract diverse entertainment, restaurant and retail establishments that cater to all ages and where high risk drinking is not the norm.
 - ✓ Crossover support was achieved for SSMID between public and private sectors of the community, including a financial commitment from the UI, to support the proposal with several PAS members involved as leaders in the process.
 - ✓ The SSMID proposal was submitted to the City Council for approval in fall 2011 and passed unanimously on Dec. 6, 2011.

LEGISLATIVE POLICY SOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

- 3. Identify strategies to work with bars with higher rates of violations**
 - a. Establish core group to develop rapport with bar owners**
 - b. Prevention/intervention focus**
 - c. Explore the model established at The University of Nebraska**

- ✓ Committee members, (including two bar owners, identified weaknesses in the 21 Ordinance food-related exception certificate that were leading to an increase in underage access to alcohol and related problems downtown.
- ✓ Committee members reached out to additional bar owners for input, resulting in 10 bar and restaurant owners representing 15 establishments creating recommendations to strengthen the 21 Ordinance food-related exception certificates.
- ✓ Bar owner and PAS recommendations for changes to the 21 Ordinance were submitted to the City Council in October 2011. The Council unanimously supported the recommendations at a first reading in December 2011. Final passage is anticipated after the third and final reading in early 2012.
- ✓ Committee members consulted with leaders of responsible hospitality groups in Lincoln, Neb. and Boulder, Colo. to identify effective strategies for starting and sustaining a similar group in Iowa City.
- ✓ Committee members identified that the goal of a local responsible hospitality group would be to promote responsible alcohol sales and service practices within the industry and to open lines of communication to allow bar owners, law enforcement, and the City to work collaboratively to resolve problems.
- ✓ Committee members identified the Responsible Hospitality Institute as a possible resource for future on-site consultation and training.
- ✓ Committee members began exploration of interest among downtown bar and restaurant owners in starting a local responsible hospitality group.

4. Conduct a needs assessment regarding hard alcohol (pricing, container size); share results with policy makers.

- No action was taken toward this goal in 2011. It was determined that this committee will concentrate on the other priority areas for the remainder of 2011-2013.

NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES COMMITTEE

5. Continue late-night activities, including more big events, and find more campus and downtown spaces for student events.

- Committee members did not take any specific action on this item in 2011; however it was noted and shared with committee members that during the 2010-2011 academic year, 150 late night activities were implemented by UI student organizations, drawing over 40,000 students. Committee members determined that this goal is being adequately addressed within the UI Alcohol Harm Reduction plan and will revise its committee goals for 2012.

6. Complete 360-degree information gathering in student neighborhoods.

- ✓ Committee members gathered information from the following sources to give them a better understanding of current resources dedicated to increasing safety related to house parties as well as the prevalence and severity of house parties:
 - City of Iowa City
 - Students
 - Neighborhood associations
 - Law enforcement

7. Continue educational efforts to improve relationships in student neighborhoods, including further investigation of strategies such as a party registration program and a neighborhood liaison program modeled on the Michigan State example.

- ✓ Committee members invited Marcia Bollinger, City of Iowa City Neighborhood Liaison, to join the committee resulting in a direct connection with neighborhood associations for future collaborations.
- ✓ Committee members collaborated with UI Student Government (UISG) to hold a “Meet Your Neighbors” picnic in College Green Park in September 2011 to promote and support positive relationships between students and permanent residents. Two hundred people attended the picnic.
- ✓ Committee members created “It’s all Good in the Neighborhood” brochures that include education about safe partying and tips for successful off-campus living to distribute to UI students starting in the fall of 2011. Logos from PAS, Iowa City, UISG and the UI were included on the brochure to demonstrate a unified message and collaboration.
- ✓ The “It’s all Good in the Neighborhood” brochures were emailed with a letter introducing PAS to all landlords included on the UI Off-Campus Housing mailing list inviting them to use the brochure as a resource with their tenants.

COMMUNICATIONS, MEMBERSHIP, STRUCTURE COMMITTEE

8. Further develop partnership structure, especially to clarify membership and committee roles.

- ✓ Committee members developed recommendations for 1) partnership structure, 2) membership commitment, 3) media relations, and 4) partnership and committee communications which were approved by the PAS.

9. Develop a marketing and communications plan.

- ✓ PAS meetings were opened to the media in 2011 resulting in multiple members of the media attending meetings regularly.
- ✓ Agenda items and outcomes of PAS meetings are regularly publicized by the media resulting in raising community awareness of the PAS and its activities.
- ✓ Committee members developed plans to create a PAS year-end report to disseminate to PAS members, media, and community as a method to document and celebrate progress.

10. Grow and diversify membership to include more students and bar owners.

- ✓ Invitations to become PAS members were sent to students and bar owners in spring 2011. Bar owner and student membership increased with five bar owners and seven students included on the 2011 PAS roster.

Based on the experiences and progress made in 2011, the PAS strategic priorities were updated for 2012 to include the following:

Diversified Downtown Committee:

1. Advocate for diverse use of space in downtown Iowa City.
2. Act as a liaison between PAS and other existing groups working to support economic development and cultural vibrancy in downtown Iowa City.

Legislative Policy Solutions Committee:

3. Identify and advocate for policies and practices that reduce underage access and over-service of alcohol.
4. Support the development of a local responsible hospitality group to promote responsible alcohol sales and service practices throughout the industry and cooperatively resolve problems that arise by opening lines of communication between bar owners, law enforcement, and the City.
5. Establish strong relationships with state and local policy makers through regular communication of PAS activities.

Neighborhood Issues Committee:

6. Conduct ongoing 360 degree information gathering with students, neighborhood associations, landlords, Iowa City officials and law enforcement to determine areas of need related to high risk drinking and related problems in neighborhoods and identify opportunities for collaboration to effectively address concerns.
7. Conduct educational efforts that support positive neighborhood relations and promote student safety and success living off-campus.

Communications, Membership, Structure Committee:

8. Monitor PAS membership to maintain membership diversity.
9. Monitor marketing and communication of PAS efforts and make recommendations as needed.
10. Create and distribute year-end reports documenting PAS activities and progress.

For more information:

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