

APPLE

Promoting Student-Athlete Wellness
and Substance Abuse Prevention

A training institute to learn how to apply the APPLE model within athletics departments to prevent student-athlete substance abuse and promote health and wellness.

Greetings!

The fall semester is well underway and athletic departments are in full swing. It is also a good time to make sure you are addressing student-athlete substance abuse prevention. Many schools hold peer-led sessions with their student-athletes to address alcohol misuse, hazing prevention and how to intervene to help a teammate. In this issue, we highlight resources available to NCAA member schools, and the work of the Stony Brook University APPLE Team. Remember that student-athlete involvement is the key to any substance abuse prevention initiative!

Susie Bruce, Director
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2017 APPLE Training Institute



This year APPLE will be in Charlottesville, VA, January 13-15 and Nashville, TN, January 20-22. We are now full and have started a waitlist. If your school is interested in attending in January, be sure to add your school to the [waitlist](#). We do our best to take a few extra schools so continue to sign-up!

Resources to Use



New! Student-Athlete BAC Cards

As a result of APPLE, you know about the many ways that alcohol use can impact athletic performance. Part of the challenge after APPLE is finding ways to share that information with the student-athletes at your institution. This summer, the Gordie Center created a [Student-Athlete BAC card](#), available in the [GORDIEstore](#), with athlete-specific information including healthy social norms and how alcohol use before or after activity can have unintended consequences. The student-athlete data was provided by [NCAA Sport Science Institute staff](#). These wallet-sized cards are great to handout to student-athletes as an easy resource and are being used at NCAA-member schools across the country.

APPLE schools get a 20% discount on all GORDIEstore products.



Addressing Student-Athlete Hazing

We've all heard the myths of hazing - bonding activities will bring the team closer together, new teammates need to earn their spot and prove themselves worthy of the jersey, activities are all in good fun and people can always choose not to participate. The reality is that hazing is associated with lower team cohesion and can put personal, academic, and athletic goals out of reach. A comprehensive plan for preventing and responding to hazing within athletic teams is essential. One of the critical components is empowering student-athletes to take the lead in discussions and programs. The NCAA has a number of excellent programs to support you in addressing hazing on your campus including the guide [Building New Traditions: Hazing Prevention in College Athletics](#) and the recent article, [Addressing Student-Athlete Hazing](#), written by APPLE staff.

APPLE Team Spotlight: Stony Brook University

PACK Mentors Changing Campus Culture

The [Stony Brook University](#) (Stony Brook, NY) student-athlete culture has experienced major change in the area of student-athlete substance abuse prevention efforts over the last 6 years - and Stony Brook credits their attendance at APPLE as integral to that culture shift. After receiving a [CHOICES grant](#), the athletics department and Dean of Students office at this [NCAA Division I-America East Conference](#) school created long-standing partnerships that have had a profound impact on their prevention efforts. The Stony Brook APPLE team (led by Ellen Driscoll, Assistant Dean of Students, and Greta Strenger, Life Skills Coordinator) implemented ideas from APPLE to complement the other efforts on campus, such as the creation of the Life Skills Office and a peer-led education and mentorship program. The PACK Mentor



program is now considered the foundation of Stony Brook's student-athlete programs, with PACK Mentors serving as first-year student-athlete orientation leaders, and all initiatives build upon the group.

This fall, all 450 student-athletes attended an event titled "This is Our Time: Building Our Community." Held in the basketball arena, the event began with a panel of speakers, including the head football coach and former student-athletes, sharing their

stories about the impact of drug and alcohol abuse and mental health issues. Prior to the event, current student-athletes were provided the opportunity to anonymously submit their own stories, and those stories were shared aloud by PACK Mentors at the event. After the speakers, the student-athletes were divided into diverse groups of 10 (determined by randomly assigned seat tickets handed to each student-athlete upon entry to the event) to engage in discussions led by PACK Mentors.

The student-led discussions involved participants sharing personal examples of how alcohol has affected or still is affecting their athletic/academic performance, relationships, family, and/or friends. The groups also brainstormed ideas to keep each other safe from consequences around alcohol/other drugs and mental health issues. The PACK Mentors documented the answers, and plan to utilize the responses to get a better idea of the Stony Brook culture. To end the evening, all 450 student-athletes held a long



red string and created a circle around the arena, emphasizing that they are all part of the Stony Brook athletic community and connected to each other. Participants were then handed scissors and cut their own piece of the red string to remember their commitment. Overall, the program was a very powerful statement of expectations and attitudes around substance use and mental health, and worked to build community and support for student-athletes.

Culture change takes time and requires the involvement of student-athletes. Driscoll and Strenger believe that you must empower student-athletes to make a difference. They are very strategic about which student-athletes are chosen to attend APPLE: APPLE team membership is an honor for Stony Brook student-athletes. The student-athlete APPLE team members return from APPLE as colleagues in prevention and are highly respected in the athletics department both by their peers and administration. Stony Brook is a fantastic example that making a difference in culture and substance abuse takes time, strong campus collaborations, and empowering student-athletes to take the lead.

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