

**IATF FALL 2007 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ALCOHOL AWARENESS WEEK
PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IATF ASSOCIATION MEMBER PUBLICATION RELEASE
[Association of College & University Housing Officers \(ACUHO-I\)](#)

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**Fall Observance of National Collegiate Alcohol Awareness Week
Focuses Campus Attention on Alcohol Abuse Prevention
*RU Connected?***

In October, college and university students will join with their peers on more than 1,000 campuses across the country to promote National Collegiate Alcohol Awareness Week (NCAAW), October 21-27. During NCAAW, students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of events, all designed by the campus to reinforce personal responsibility and respect for current state laws and school policies when it comes to the consumption of alcohol beverages.

NCAAW has grown to become the largest single event in all of academia because students take the ownership in designing and implementing this observance for their campus communities. This week gives campuses the opportunity to showcase healthy lifestyles free from the abuse or illegal use of alcohol and to combat negative stereotypes of college drinking behavior.

"NCAAW remains a cornerstone in campus alcohol abuse prevention efforts," said Dr. Edward Hammond, NCAAW's Chairman and President of Fort Hays State University in Kansas. "Ultimately, campuses need to educate students about excessive drinking and consequences that can occur on both a personal and academic level. All college and university offices need to empower students to take responsibility for their own decisions and the campus environment when it comes to alcohol. Participation in NCAAW helps students and college administrators work together to increase awareness and strengthen year-round prevention efforts. We have to engage and empower students to take care of themselves and each other."

NCAAW is promoted by the Inter-Association Task Force on Alcohol and Other Substance Abuse Issues. This coalition of higher education associations is dedicated to promoting education, prevention, research, networking, and national initiatives to help eliminate substance abuse and the problems it causes on our college and university campuses. ACUHO-I president, David Holmes (Associate Director, Residential Services, La Trobe University, Australia) would like to see this initiative receive recognition worldwide. He said 'having a similar program in our universities in Australia and New Zealand would create a positive awareness in educating students of more sensible drinking habits, as students appear to be increasingly pushing the limits of high risk drinking'. ACUHO-I is one of the member associations of the Task Force.

College administrators play a vital role in working with students to educate them alcohol. "We need to do a better job of showing college students - particularly new students - that most of their peers are not abusing alcohol and making bad decisions," said David Holmes, ACUHO-I President. "Students want to fit in and follow campus norms. If we incorrectly lead them to believe that everyone is getting drunk on a regular basis, then that's what they will do. We have a responsibility to inform students that making healthy choices and responsible behavior is the behavior of the majority of students. Then, we can begin changing attitudes and behavior."

The 2007 NCAAW Campaign Theme developed by The BACCHUS Network contains a message of student empowerment to make and keep connections with friends and stay safe in social situations where alcohol may be present. The RU Connected? campaign messages support personal responsibility and practical safety tips about avoiding excessive drinking, driving after drinking and not riding with a driver who has been drinking. It reminds students to stay connected to friends for safety.

NCAAW activities vary from campus to campus, but typically include informative presentations and social events that promote responsibility and healthy, safe decisions about alcohol. For additional information, visit at the Inter-Association Task Force Web Site at www.iatf.org. For campaign educational materials for NCAAW and alcohol abuse prevention, visit www.bacchusnetwork.org.