

The Complete History of the Drug, Alcohol and Sexual Offenses Coalition

In the year prior to her 1989 retirement, Sergeant Charlotte Starnes, Crime Prevention Officer for the Department of Public Safety at BGSU, spoke out about her wish to rid the BGSU campus of crimes of sexual violations. She attended conferences and collected information and brought her materials to Elizabeth (Betty) Yarris and Craig Vickio, Psychologists from the Counseling Center. They decided to develop a booklet which was specific to BGSU concerning the prevention of sexual assault. Craig and Betty, along with two graduate students from the Department of Psychology, began the yearlong task of writing, editing and designing Healthy Relationships Ahead - Sexual Violations: Know the Signs. This booklet was printed in 1989 and 5,000 copies were distributed.

Dr. Mary Edmonds, (then) Vice President for Student Affairs, appointed those involved as a Student Affairs Task Force using the name *Sexual Violations Task Force (SVTF)*. The group met monthly and began to collect some resources and to coordinate both educational programming and response to sexual violations. The SVTF was able to correct misinformation about services and increased the ability to work cooperatively and share resources. This group served as the initial sounding board and support for those who wanted to begin educational programs. The link between alcohol/drug use and sexual violations was an issue that was stressed. Although it was discussed whether to first collect data to establish that sexual violations occurred at BGSU, the task force made the decision to focus on action rather than research. Craig and Betty coordinated the initial meetings and Kim Jones from Greek Life was later elected as Chair until she left BGSU in 1992. At that time, Barbara Hoffman, Certified Nurse Practitioner at the Student Health Service, and Betty Yarris from the Counseling Center, were elected Co-Chairs.

During the 1991-92 academic year, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Bob Arrowsmith, asked the SVTF to draft the Policies and Procedures for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Offenses that were to be required by an amendment to the Campus Security Act of 1990. Work on that document as well as revisions to the BGSU Student Code of Conduct (relevant to sexual offenses) was completed and published in the new "Campus Issues" for the fall 1993 semester. At that time, the SVTF requested direction from Interim Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Ron Zwierlein. Due to the federal regulations and increased publicity concerning sexual offenses, the SVTF members did not believe that they could respond to the needs as an ad hoc task force. Dr. Zwierlein appointed an "executive committee" to develop a recommended Strategic Plan for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Offenses. This plan emphasized prevention since the Policies and Procedures clearly described the mechanisms which were in place for response to sexual offenses. The Strategic Plan recommended that the Task Force be renamed to reflect more accurately a proactive and permanent group; thus began the evolution of the Coalition Against Sexual Offenses (CASO). The plan charged CASO with serving to advise the President, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Director of the Prevention Center and other relevant groups in the direction and implementation of BGSU's Strategic Plan for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Offenses.

The Strategic Plan was distributed to the President and the Board of Trustees in the spring of 1994 and has been used as a working document. As a result of recommendations in the Plan, CASO members were now appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs and a subcommittee structure had been adopted, focusing on Education, Policies and Procedures, Response and Publicity as well as having an executive subcommittee. Barbara Hoffman became Chair and Betty Yarris Vice Chair. Dr. Zwierlein followed the recommendation to centralize educational and prevention efforts in The Prevention Center. Upon his arrival in 1994, Dr. Edward G. Whipple provided CASO with funds for programming.

During the summer of 1995, the Prevention Center was moved to the Health Center and was administratively combined with the former Student Wellness Center to become the Center for Wellness and Prevention. The 1995-96 academic year began with Dr. Whipple appointing an expanded membership which included athletics, Greek participation, Womyn for Womyn, and the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Barbara Hoffman and Elizabeth Yarris continued as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively. The Student Health Service began funding CASO's budget and continues to do so.

Spring 1996 brought Craig Vickio to serve as Vice Chair. CASO increased its number of presentations and developed a new program, What Men Need to Know About Rape. College men were trained to present to only men about sexual assault, prevention, legal issues, and the issues of alcohol. More faculty and staff have been educated about sexual assault and a decision tree was developed. A new ad hoc committee dealing with diversity issues was instituted.

In the spring 1997 semester, CASO organized its first conference, Combating Sexual Offenses on a College Campus. This conference hosted almost 100 professionals and students from surrounding states (with one professional from Arkansas) as well as those from Ohio colleges and universities. Craig Vickio and Barbara Hoffman presented information about CASO at the American College Health Association Conference in May 1997. Since then, CASO has become well known, not only in Ohio, but also nationally.

Since 1998, CASO's membership consists of students (both graduate and undergraduate, representatives from various University offices and departments, and members of the Bowling Green community. In 1999, CASO received funding for a graduate assistant. A new education program, the **Sexual Assault Information Network (SAIN)** was started. This program serves as a counterpart of the What Men Need to Know About Rape program and consists of women students educating other women about sexual assault. The WMNtKAR program changed it's name to **Men Educating Men on the Prevention of Sexual Assault (MEMPSA)** to more accurately reflect the nature of the program.

University Committee on Alcohol and Other Drug Issues

The University Committee on Alcohol Issues (UCADI) was established in 1998 by President Sidney Ribeau and Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Edward Whipple. Before the start of the 2002 school year, UCAI became UCADI, University Committee on Alcohol and other Drug Issues. UCADI are faculty, staff, students and community members who were responsible for addressing alcohol-related issues affecting the University community. The committee's goal was the prevention and reduction of alcohol abuse and its associated problems among BGSU students and other members of the community. UCADI has implemented programs that provide an alternative to alcohol use.

They provide input to the Vice President of Student Affairs on policy issues related to alcohol and drug use and work to increase communication with the great Bowling Green community.

Two Become One...

Coalition for B!G Choices

During the 2005-2006 school year, there was discussion of combining CASO and UCADI to form one committee that addressed the issues of alcohol, other drugs, and sexual assault. That spring semester, Barbara Hoffman and Cullen Jackson, a College Student Personnel graduate student, wrote a NCAA Choices Grant, a three-year, \$30,000 award.

After receiving the Choices Grant, a final decision was made to combine CASO and UCADI and form the Coalition for B!G Choices. The Coalition for B!G Choices began in the Fall of 2006.

Drug, Alcohol and Sexual Offenses Coalition

In Spring 2008 the name of the organization was changed to the Drug, Alcohol and Sexual Offenses Coalition to better reflect what the coalition addresses. Faith Yingling, Director of the Wellness Connection, and Michael Ginsburg, Associate Dean of Students, currently serve as co-chairs of the coalition. The coalition meets monthly to develop and coordinate prevention and intervention strategies that promote responsible decision making in relationship to alcohol, other drugs and sexual assault.