



Success Stories

Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws Program

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Oklahoma University's Alcohol Policy has positive results.

Following the death of a freshman from alcohol poisoning in September 2004, the University of Oklahoma (OU) announced new alcohol policies that completely ban drinking in the school's fraternity houses and residence halls. The new rules took effect on January 18, 2005, at the start of the new semester. According to the University's President David Boren, students with three alcohol violations will now be suspended for one semester. "These policies send a strong signal that alcohol abuse will not be tolerated at the University of Oklahoma," Boren said.

Since January 18, 2005, when the OU banned drinking on campus, vandalism incidents are down in Greek community houses, according to Clarke Stroud, the University's Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students. OU's alcohol policy is making a difference. Stroud said, "I think the community is really being accepting of the new policy. There have been positive changes." He also commented that the Beta Theta Pi fraternity renovated its basement where drinking parties were held. The change is one example of what has been going on across campus. Stroud said, "We're seeing alumni putting money back into the houses because vandalism is down...We are seeing a real change in behavior, an indication we are making an impact." He believes that since OU banned alcohol, the University has been giving strikes to students and organizations that violate the policy or are convicted for alcohol-related offenses such as being a minor in possession of alcohol or being intoxicated in public. For a first offense, students can be fined \$75, for a second offense, \$150; and for a third offense, expulsion.

The Board of Regents made some changes to the alcohol policy in December, according to Stroud. The word "fine" was changed to "fee." Also, no strikes or fees are given until a case is adjudicated

with a conviction in municipal or State court. So far, OU has given 308 first-time strikes and 10 second-time strikes to individuals. No one has been given a third strike. Police routinely investigate loud party calls and write municipal citations to people who are violating the city's nuisance party ordinance. Lt. J.D. Younger (Norman Police Department) indicated that, since OU banned alcohol, the number of calls to off-campus parties has not significantly increased. He said, "It's been static at best. It seems to be about the same." Sgt. Gary Robinson supported Younger's comments. "We don't discern any noticeable increase," he said. "OU police continue to beef up their patrols in police cars and on foot on campus."

Robinson also mentioned that students who drink off-campus can still be arrested when they return to campus. Some parts of dormitories are patrolled for those who can be arrested on complaints of public intoxication. OU students also must complete alcohol awareness training. Stroud further added that 100 percent of new students completed online alcohol training courses and 94 percent of new freshmen have had in-person alcohol awareness training. OU President David Boren deserves the credit for the new alcohol policy. "We have, without a doubt, the most comprehensive alcohol program in the country," Stroud said. "The president has really taken a bold step."

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The views expressed in this document do not necessarily represent the views of the Office of Juvenile Justice for Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) or the Underage Drinking Enforcement Training Center (UDET) and are solely of the author/source.



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