

News Release

For Release: Jan. 16, 2013

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Santa Rosa Junior College honored for concussion management program

NASPA names 2014 Excellence Award recipients; Santa Rosa Grand Silver winner

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Each year, NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, recognizes the outstanding contributions of members who are transforming higher education through exceptional programs, innovative services, and effective administration. The concussion management program at Santa Rosa Junior College in Santa Rosa, Calif. was named as the 2014 Grand Silver winner of the NASPA Excellence Awards. The program was selected by a peer review process that was approved by the NASPA Board of Directors during its winter board meeting. Recipients will be honored in March at the 2014 NASPA Annual Conference in Baltimore, Md.

While sports concussions are being taken more seriously implementing concussion management guidelines that recommend computerized baseline testing has been difficult, especially at community colleges. Nancy Chinn, head injury expert and chair of the Disability Resources Department at Santa Rosa, found that only 17 percent of California Community Colleges were implementing best practices, including baseline testing.

In a collaborative effort between the departments of Disability Resources and Sports Medicine, a concussion management program that emphasizes concussion education of student-athletes and coaches, computerized cognitive baseline and post-injury testing, and in an unprecedented practice, direct referral to Disability Resources for post-injury concussion education and academic accommodations to maximize recovery and promote academic success.

Since its implementation in 2010, the program has conducted computerized baseline testing and provided comprehensive concussion education to more than 1,500 student-athletes. Additionally, more than 100 student-athletes have been diagnosed with concussion and participated in a systematic interdisciplinary approach for a safer and successful return to play and the classroom.

This successful program exemplifies the kind of work NASPA stands for – promoting student health and wellness, innovating programs and assessing their success.

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