

News Release

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Sexual misconduct training program at Wilkes University honored

NASPA names Wilkes University 2015 Excellence Award Grand Gold 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. Wilkes University's "Sexual Misconduct Training" program was named as the 2015 Grand Gold 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 their winter board meeting. Recipients will be honored in March at the 2015 NASPA Annual Conference in New Orleans, La.

Wilkes University's first-year student Sexual Misconduct Training program is a comprehensive, multidimensional endeavor that features a myriad of educational approaches and high levels of collaboration across campus. Considering the complexity and gravity of this issue, the main tenet that undergirds the paradigm is that institutions cannot sufficiently augment students' acumen in matters of sexual violence with "one and done" sessions designed to mollify federal overseers. Accordingly, the model incorporates a constellation of interventions spanning throughout the students' first year. From online health-education assessments to interactive small group bystander sessions embedded into the academic curriculum, the goal is continuous message reinforcement.

The overall program, coordinated by Student Affairs, is comprised of 10 complementary pillars - each unique in pedagogical approach and delivery. While each component in isolation is certainly not a panacea, the premise is that students' learning increases exponentially when interventions are fused throughout the year.

The program includes: a victims resource center presentation, a climate study, a peer-lead bystander intervention training and deputy coordinator presentation in the first-year faculty classes, a 2-hour online health education program, a policy quiz, brochures and information on the web, a self-defense program, presentations in the residence halls and an awareness campaign.

Student and bystander intervention trainer Katharine Marianaaci says, "The University takes every possible measure to ensure that all students clearly understand the facts, myths, warning signs, and possible defense techniques in order to keep themselves, and those around them, safe."

"NASPA is comprised of outstanding members who work diligently to create a dynamic, high functioning and nurturing learning environment for students in higher education," says NASPA President Kevin Kruger. "We are proud to promote the innovative work taking place on our college campuses, and encourage institutions to follow suit and join the movement."

NASPA is the leading association for the advancement, health, and sustainability of the student affairs profession. Our work provides high-quality professional development, advocacy, and research for 14,000 members in all 50 states, 25 countries, and 8 U.S. territories.