



**University of Connecticut  
Health Education Office  
A Part of Student Health Services  
2007-2008**

## Health Education Office Staff

University Professional Staff: Joleen M. Nevers, MAEd, Health Education Coordinator

Graduate Student Staff: Theresa Matos (20 hours)  
Haley McCarthy (20 hours)  
Christina Lazar (10 hours)

Graduate Student Practicum: Collen Ruppert (10 hours Fall Semester)  
Stephanie Muehlethaler (10 hours Spring Semester)

Undergraduate Student Staff:  
(At least 4 hours to max of 10)

Katie Agostine  
Victoria Costello (work study)  
Anna Deveau-Jalbert  
Kasey Dunn  
Nyesha Eaton (work study)  
Laura Gasiorek (Fall Semester)  
Elena Gisler  
Erika Howe (Spring Semester)  
Mike Hardej  
Amanda L'Bassi  
Samati Niyomchai  
Tan Pham (Spring Semester work study)  
Tyler Shaw (Spring Semester)  
Sarah Vincent

English Writing Internships: Nicole Terrien (Fall Semester)  
Katie Doyle (Spring Semester)

Office Volunteers: Erika Howe (Fall Semester)  
Volunteer Peer Educators (Sexperts): 22 consistent volunteers



# UConn's Health Education Mission, Goals and Objectives

**Mission:** University of Connecticut's Health Education Office provides prevention, harm reduction and public health promotion services to the campus community which includes data collection and analysis, educational programs and workshops, program evaluation, health awareness events and campaigns, academic lectures, trainings and consultations. UConn's Health Education Office provides students with information and resources to make healthy decisions in the area of sexuality, stress management, body art and other areas of wellness.

## Health Education Goals:

- Target health needs through ACHA standards, Healthy People 2010 and student assessment
- Provide accurate and up-to-date health information to the UConn student body
- Engage students in outreach activities, group facilitation and one-on-one interactions
- Provide tools to allow students to make healthy decisions

## Health Education Objectives:

- Review and update program materials and handouts each semester or annually as appropriate
- Conduct literature reviews and/or web-based research using appropriate databases or search engines for each topic reviewed
- Write/establish goals for each program in accordance with ACHA and Healthy People 2010 recommendations
- Collect measurable data and feedback to make necessary program changes
- Review feedback for continuous improvement and growth
- Offer at least 7 program options per semester to the campus community
- Provide at least 5 awareness weeks or days per semester
- Provide weekly office hours and appointments as needed for consultations and/or questions from students
- Provide health handouts, pamphlets, posters and web resources to students
- Watch for indicators or trends in current or different health issues and measure where appropriate

## Goals for Sexuality Education:

- Increase students' knowledge of prevalence of Sexually Transmitted Diseases incidences in the college population
- Increase students' awareness of what sex is (oral, anal and vaginal as well as other)
- Increase students' knowledge of methods to reduce risk of pregnancy
- Increase students' knowledge of safer sex tools and how they are used
- Increase students' awareness of resources on campus for sexuality issues including: STD prevention, pregnancy prevention options, abstinence, GLBTQ issues, and others.
- Increase students' awareness of safer sex supplies within the Health Education Office and in other parts of campus
- Increase students' utilization of sexuality resources on campus

## Goals for Wellness Education:

- Increase students' knowledge and awareness of health and wellness
- Provide multifaceted programs to assist students with making connections to various dimensions of wellness
- Promote healthy behaviors to reduce risk and harm among students
- Increase students' awareness of national screening guidelines and the importance of early detection
- Increase students' awareness of wellness resources on and off campus

## Goals for Stress Management/Education:

- Increase student knowledge of stress management techniques
- Increase student utilization of stress relieving resources
- Increase student awareness of stress management resources on and off-campus

## Health Education Overview 2007-2008

The Health Education Office had a busy year with 23,247 UConn Storrs students attending a class, program, event or having individual contact with our office. There were a total of 310 programs, 144 of those during the day with 5 of those programs at 3 different UConn branches and 8 programs at other colleges, high schools and middle schools. The remaining 143 programs were in the evening in the residence halls, cultural centers, Greek Life, student groups, etc. The Health Education office was also busy with students stopping by the office. Students came by the office to obtain goodie bags (a pre-assembled bag of assorted condoms, dental dams and lubrication) of which 1,817 were given out while 1,553 condom/dental dam/lubrication were requested by students which doubled from the previous year. We increased our abstinence kit distribution through office visits to 257 which is an increase of 116% from the previous year and 330 bulletin boards were given out to CAs during the two semesters. The Health Education Coordinator also had 361 individual appointments with students throughout the 2007-2008 year. Surveys were conducted on our programs to make sure that we were meeting the intended goals that were set forth. A literature review was started on evidence based sexuality methods and several surveys were created to measure evidence based practices during the spring semester to be implemented during the 2008-2009 academic year.

### Active Programming:



### Events and Awareness Weeks

Health Education provided 68 workshops, events and awareness weeks throughout the 2007-2008 academic year to 8,534 students. The workshops are an opportunity for professional staff to present on specific topics where more elaboration, detail and expertise is utilized. A few of the sexuality topics included sex toy safety and break-up etiquette.

Events are prescheduled programs that Health Education staff organizes for the UConn community. Some of the events that were sponsored or co-sponsored through Health Education included our Stop Over-Stressing series that 122 students attend and our Stress Down Days events each semester that a combined total of 252 students attended. Health Education also participated in 7 Student Union Late Night events to support non-alcoholic University sponsored events, serving mocktails and offering safer sex supplies and/or abstinence kits to students, with 4,431 in attendance.

Health Education hosted several awareness weeks throughout campus including Watch Your Mouth-Oral Health, World AIDS Week, Smokeout, Sleep, Stress & Safer Sex, Sexual Responsibility, Spring Break, STD and Breast/Testicular Cancer. During these awareness weeks, Health Education highlights these topics with current information, resources and, when appropriate, give-a-ways that support the topic. For example, for Spring Break awareness we gave out information about sun safety with sunscreen and during Oral Health awareness we gave out toothpaste, tooth brushes, floss, etc. donated to us by local dentists. Through our week long events we interacted with 2,364 students.

For World AIDS Week the Health Education office sponsored its second ART4AIDS show in the SU. We had over 10 different artists participate and had over 50 people attend our opening night. The display was up for two weeks and many artists donated their pieces to the office for future display purposes. Health Education also hosted its second annual event to raise money for the Hole in the Wall Gang Camp in Ashford, CT. The Health Education Office and its peer education group, the Sexperts, raised money during the weeks leading up to World AIDS Week for the camp. The Health Education Office and the Sexperts raised over \$1,100 for the camp's HIV+ week. Instead of pledging money for a walk-a-thon, for each dollar raised we hoped to teach a safer sex skill to a University of Connecticut student. To do so, Health Education hosted its second annual Condom-A-Thon during a Late Night event during World AIDS Week. Over 150 students participated by practicing a safer sex technique e.g.—how to put on a condom or cut a condom into a dental dam. The Health Education office also provided monthly free rapid HIV testing through a community organization which tested 59 students over the course of two semesters. Due to its popularity in the fall, hours for testing were increased during the spring semester.

## Active Programming:

### Programs

When a person calls to request a Health Education presentation for a class, residence hall, student group presentation, etc, it is classified as a program since it was not previously scheduled by Health Education and it is not necessarily open to the entire UConn community. The Health Education Coordinator and Graduate Student Staff presented 144 day programs to 4,125 students including 93 First Year Experience Classes to 1,587 incoming students and 5 presentations to UConn Branches. The Health Education Coordinator also provided 8 trainings to CAs (RAs) throughout the year and 23 Orientation sessions to 1,551 students.

The Health Education office and it's peer education group the Sexperts, provided 143 evening programs to 2,929 students throughout the year. Programs included topics on sexuality (62 programs to 1,629 students) and wellness topics (81 to 1,300 students) including aromatherapy, Spring Break Taboos, Massage 101, Pillows, Body Art and Sleep.

The total amount of programs presented throughout the 2007-2008 year was 297 serving 8,071 UConn students.



## Passive Programming:



The Health Education office offered 25 Stall Street News editions to the residence halls throughout the academic year. The Stall Street News is posted to areas where a common bathroom is shared by the students. Additional Stall Street News are left outside of the Health Education office or taken to awareness events for individual students to obtain. This year the Health Education Office debuted a new edition of the Stall Street News in a comic format titled "the Safer Sex Squad". We will be launching a year's worth of comics during the 2008-2009 academic year with a whole host of characters that are created by Health Education staff. Other materials for students are also provided outside of the office including pamphlets, Health Education handouts, etc.

Health Education provides safer sex supplies to CAs (RAs), cultural centers and other areas of campus to have available for students to obtain. We also worked with a Greek affiliate to provide them with safer sex supplies for their members. Health Education provided 420 condom bags to offices. The Health Education office also provides a basket of condoms for students outside of it's office in South campus.

The Health Education undergraduate student staff create new bulletin boards that are distributed to CAs (RAs) with accurate information on various topics. Each year the staff creates 3-4 new topics and the office offered 20 bulletin board topics to 330 CAs (RAs). During the spring semester a graduate student was assigned to review, edit, and update all of the bulletin boards.

Health Education continued to update its website throughout the semester. Six new pages were added this year including: Go Green, HIV/AIDS Events, Health Education for Professionals, Resource to Help Save the Planet, Health Education Alumni and a Donate to Health Education. Also, Health Education continues to maintain it's weekly email list serve to over 250 university students and staff.

## Peer Education Program: The Sexperts

The Health Education office has an established peer education group, the Sexperts, for the past seven years. This year we had 20 volunteers in the fall and 25 volunteers in the spring who assisted with evening programming requests across campus. They are required to participate in a mandatory Saturday training each semester, a mid semester meeting between the Health Education Coordinator and graduate students, one late night commitment and 3 hours a week for programming and the mandatory weekly meeting. The mandatory weekly meeting continues the educational component of the program for the Sexperts and invites experts from other areas on and off campus to train or talk with the group. Students pick which night of the week works best for their schedule for the semester and they are assigned programs each week by the Health Education Coordinator. Students are required to show up a half hour before each program for set up and to allow time for the presenters to review the material. After the program when a staff or graduate student is present, the program is processed for approximately a half hour to discuss strengths and weaknesses of the overall program, presentation techniques of the individuals, personal development and management of the participants. New Sexperts observe sexuality programs the first semester while practicing the presentation skills through aromatherapy, pillows and massage. After the first semester, students are paired with an experienced Sexpert, usually someone who has been with the group for a year or more. Students who become Sexperts increase their own knowledge about the topic areas, develop professional language and practice their public speaking and communication skills.



## Collaborative Professional Development, Serving as a Professional Resource and Professional Growth

Joleen Nevers, the Health Education Coordinator, presented at three conferences. During the fall semester in Saratoga Springs NY, *The Break Up Workshop* was presented at the combined New York/New England College Health Association (NY/NECHA) Conference. In the spring semester *The Break Up Workshop* was presented twice by Joleen at the True Colors Conference XIV and Haley McCarthy presented *Sexual Feud* twice at the same conference. Three presentations were accepted and presented at the BACCHUS Network Annual Conference hosted by Wesleyan University. Joleen presented to the advisors a round table discussion on *Evidence Based Programming* while the Sexperts presented *Retention and Recruitment* and *Rubberwear* to fellow peer educators. Joleen was the program coordinator for the Bacchus regional conference in the spring and the Sexperts who presented at the conference assisted with program selection. Joleen is also the coordinator of the Connecticut Health Educators group, ACTWELL, which meets two times per semester. She coordinates the meeting locations and dates and generates the agenda for each meeting based on requests of colleagues. Joleen is a member-at-large for the NECHA board where she is responsible for representing both Connecticut College Health & Health Education perspectives, writing articles for the newsletter, participating on a grant committee and other duties. Joleen also participated in the University of Connecticut's campus-wide Peerfest conference and created a PowerPoint presentation over the course of the two day conference highlighting moments and events for the end of the conference activity.

## Collaborations

The Health Education office collaborated with many departments and student groups throughout the year including but not limited to:

### Offices on Campus

- Recreational Services
- The Women's Center
- Nutrition Services at Student Health Services
- Asian American Cultural Center
- The Rainbow Center
- Campus Activities
- Puerto Rican Latin American Cultural Center
- African American Cultural Center
- Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life
- First Year Experience Office
- Community Outreach
- English Department
- Women's Studies
- Sociology Department
- Off Campus Housing
- Alcohol & Other Drugs Services
- Residential Life

- Center for Health Intervention and Prevention (CHIP)
- Counseling & Mental Health Services
- Women's Clinic
- Community Outreach

### Student Groups

- Undergraduate Student Government
- Relay For Life
- Honors Fraternity
- AQUA (Allies and Queers Undergraduate Assoc.)
- QUAD (Queers United Against Discrimination)
- Violence Against Women's Prevention Program
- Lambda Kappa Sigma Pharmacy Sorority
- Undergraduate Student Board of Governors (SUBOG)
- UNESCO
- VDay Campaign
- Order of Omega

### Off Campus Organizations

- Windham Regional Community Council, Inc.
- Planned Parenthood



## Assessment:

Health Education created, implemented and compiled surveys from FYE classes this semester. From analyzing the FYE surveys, it is clear that for the most part, the Health Education Office is obtaining the objectives that it has set out for the Sex Jeopardy program. After the program, students are able to identify HPV and Herpes as the two most common STDs on UConn's campus. More students recognize Herpes as one of the most common STDs, but the gap between Herpes and HPV has been closing between the past two years. The majority of students also define sex as oral, vaginal and anal and define abstinence as choosing not to engage in any form of sex, which is in line with the program's objectives. Most students are also able to list four methods of contraception and three ways of reducing the risk of STDs.

In assessing the effectiveness of the Health Education Office, 85% of students surveyed see the office as a resource for sexuality. However, 95% of students surveyed see Student Health Services as a resource for sexuality. The office faces the challenge of finding a way to redirect some of these students to the Health Education Office, which has a greater focus on sexuality than Student Health Services. This disparity may also be due to confusion that can arise due to the similar names of the two departments; so it is also important to differentiate between Student Health Services and the Health Education Office whenever possible.

Of the students who are obtaining their condoms locally (from Health Education, CAs, Women's Clinic, Cultural Centers, pharmacies and Planned Parenthood), 35% are obtaining their condoms from the Health Education Office. This represents a higher percentage than any of the other alternatives. The office must now continue this strong trend and get even more students to utilize its services.

Health Education created surveys to measure objectives for all of the programs it offers. This information is used to modify the programs for better student learning as well as to make sure we are meeting the objectives for each program. In campus-wide surveys, Health Ed was named more often than other departments as resources for stress management, safer sex supplies, sexual responsibility and STDs. When surveying 516 students about the enjoyment and effectiveness of the Health Education Office in tabling and programming, NO students gave a negative response and 86.24% of those surveyed were very satisfied with the programs (Aromatherapy, Massage 101, Pillows, Rubberwear & You Don't Know Jack) and events (Stress Down Days) they attended.

This year we devoted the spring semester to creating satisfaction surveys, using Survey Monkey, for different areas of the office including overall satisfaction with the Health Education Office, Sexpert Exit Survey, Stall Street Survey, etc. These surveys will be implemented during the 2008-2009 academic year. During the spring semester we also conducted a literature review of evidence based sexuality methods. This review and data collection is still in process at this time. Joleen Nevers has also had the opportunity to email and have conversations with several professionals from around the country on this topic.

In Fall 2008, a baseline satisfaction assessment of UConn Health Education's peer education group, the Sexperts, was conducted. This assessment was used to measure the satisfaction level of the volunteers with the organization and also to gauge how interested group members would be in leadership positions and other activities, such as additional opportunities within the organization's structure. The assessment consisted of a 23-item questionnaire, which all 20 members completed and a hour long focus group, which 11 group members participated in. Seventy percent of the participants were extremely satisfied with their experience and 30% of the participants were very satisfied with their experience with the group. The survey revealed that while participants were enjoying their experience, they would like to see more opportunities for leadership roles and social activities for group bonding. Overall, the survey provided a solid baseline to be used to track trends in the group's satisfaction. The office held a social gathering for the group in the spring semester with more to follow in the fall to increase satisfaction through group bonding. Also, new leadership positions are in the process of being created including a position that is paid to coordinate World AIDS week and a volunteer position to assist with social activities.



## Volunteer Experiences and Awards

The Health Education Coordinator, Joleen Nevers, volunteered in several University and community initiatives throughout the year. This included the Vagina Monologues (approx 15 hours) which is a play that has goals to end violence against and sexual assault against women and girls around the world. She was a mentor in the UConnects program which assists students who are not navigating the University system as well as they can, by pairing them up with a volunteer for the semester to help him/her succeed.

The BACCHUS Network Area 10 Outstanding Alumnus Award was given to Haley McCarthy. This award is given to an alumnus of either a peer education group or an advising role who has, since graduating or leaving the position, contributed to their community through their work or philanthropy and has served as a positive role model to BACCHUS.

Joleen Nevers received the University of Connecticut's "Student's First Award". This award recognizes special, unique or extraordinary efforts on behalf of students that reflect the Division's motto, "Students First." These individuals offer what we do best in the best possible way, while thoughtfully balancing educational needs and customer service. Nominees endeavored to make procedures, services, facilities, programs, and/or the general collegiate learning environment welcoming, efficient, and of exceptional quality in order to enhance student success. Others, especially students, may comment on the helpfulness, professionalism and assistance of these individuals and on their willingness to create a positive, active and inclusive learning community.

Joleen Nevers also received the "Outstanding Ally Individual" award from the Rainbow Center in Recognition of valuable contributions to the University of Connecticut's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and ally community. In addition to Joleen receiving this humbling award, the Health Education Office was recognized with an "Outstanding Ally Office" award. This award is highly respected by the Health Education Office who has made it a commitment to be open and accepting to all students. This achievement could not have occurred without the amazing teamwork of undergraduate volunteers, student workers, interns, graduate assistants, graduate practicum students and staff.



## IRB Research

The Health Education office has been recording Institutional Review Board research for approximately four years. This research includes several assessment surveys that were exempt and an IRB-1 protocol on body art which has created the program Ins and Outs of Body Art. Students who choose to participate take part in a qualitative interview that lasts approximately one hour. The answers from the interviews and photos taken are used in presentations to provide students with information to make positive choices around body art. To date 23 students have been interviewed. Through the qualitative interview process some themes and trends seemed to emerge. Due to these trends, an exempt survey was created to gather quantitative data to get more information about the population on this subject.

## Literature Review and Survey Development

The Health Education office spent the spring semester conducting a literature review of evidence based sexuality programs. Several Health Educators around the country who primarily work in the field of sexuality education were contacted prior to the review to assess if this type of research was necessary. At the time that they were contacted, none had known of any review that had been shared at ACHA. The Health Education Coordinator and two graduate students began a literature review and at the time of this report, the review and reading of documents is still occurring. Through some of the suggestions from colleagues several new surveys were created by a graduate student. Some of the surveys created are satisfaction surveys while others are more assessment and behavior change oriented. The assessment and behavior change surveys are being reviewed by a researcher from the Center for Health, Intervention and Prevention, a research center that studies the dynamics of health risk behavior and processes of health behavioral change in individuals and targeted at-risk populations.