

BACCHUS attempts to save lives through alcohol concienciousness

by Felton Matthews

Although Bacchus is known to students of Greek mythology as the god of wine, BACCHUS is the acronym for Boosting Alcohol Conscienciousness Concerning the Health of University Students.

Kristi Petroni, co-chairman of the BACCHUS project, said that the program was originally started by Gerardo Gonzales in 1976

at the University of Florida. It became a national project over 10 years ago. UNLV has had the program for one year. There are over 420 chapters at colleges nationwide.

She also said that unlike Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) or Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD) the main idea of BACCHUS is to get the majority of the 60 percent of undergraduates into the

program who are 21 or younger set up into a designated driver program for the whole campus.

Petroni said the organization's endeavor is not to ban or discourage drinking, but to make it safe for all who participate in such activities, with a degree of responsibility.

"I think it (BACCHUS) is great," Petroni said. "It's good peer education. It's alright to stand out in the crowd. We support the consumption and sale of alcoholic beverages, but not the negligence coming from the results of alcoholic abuse."

The program is open to graduate and undergraduate students.

BACCHUS was a main sponsor of UNLV's Alcohol Awareness Week, despite its not being formally recognized by Student Government.

Ray Rodriguez, health educator at the Student Health Center, said that the program would not be cost-effective to the university and that they are trying to get local support and sponsorship for it.

"The program would be beneficial to the university in terms of information outreach and student dissemination," he said. "This program can reach places where professionals can't."

Police Officer Ron Pearce of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department said there are a lot of penalties for driving while intoxicated. On the first offense, a DWI is a misdemeanor with a fine from \$100 to \$500, 0-6 months incar-



Judge Valerie Vega and Attorney Tom Conner (bottom, right) prosecute a drunk driver while Attorney Dayvid Figler defends.

HIV

homosexuals.

"A study done by American College Health Association (ACHA) which took 1000 samples of blood from students at 35 colleges, including UNLV, showed that two in one thousand students tested HIV positive," Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez said he feels UNLV is "fairly representative" of the study and can be estimated to have 40 HIV positive students.

"This is just an estimation of course," he said. "I don't want to create a panic. There is currently only one reported HIV positive case at UNLV."

Mandatory testing would produce an exact number but Rodriguez said he "is against mandatory testing because it's an invasion of privacy and most importantly, it's a violation

of the individual's civil rights."

Preventative methods have been taken at great lengths at the Student Health Center.

"We pass out over 10,000 condoms a semester," Rodriguez said.

AIDS testing is free and done on the last Wednesday of the month. The results are returned the following Wednesday.

Rodriguez urges students not to be embarrassed when asking for a safe-sex kit which contains do's and don'ts on the use of the five condoms it contains.

"Students who ask for the kit," Rodriguez said, "aren't admitting to a promiscuous sex life, but are saying 'I'm going to take responsibility for myself and my partner.'"

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Student Health Center 739-3370
Nevada AIDS Hotline 1-800-842-2437
National AIDS Hotline 1-800-342-2437
Southern Nevada NAMES Project 366-001

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ceration and the suspension of the individual's driver's

license for 30 days to one year. The second offense results in at least 10 days to 6 months incarceration, a fine of \$100 to \$500 and suspension of the individual's driver's license for two years. The third offense is a felony resulting in imprisonment

for a maximum of 2-10 years incarceration with a \$2,000 fine.

For more information contact Kristi Petroni at 384-9676, or Mike Paliniri at 798-2383.

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protective covering made of latex (rubber) or animal membrane that fit over the penis and keep semen from entering vagina. A latex condom with nonoxynol-9 spermicide is the best protection available against AIDS and the transmission of other STDs. They are ineffective if used incorrectly or if broken.

Condoms are available free at SHC inside a Safe Sex kit. The kit includes a pamphlet on choosing contraception, making sex safe and five form-fitting condoms lubricated with nonoxynol-9.

Female students seeking birth control at SHC will receive a preliminary check-up prior to receiving prescriptions.

"It is important to insure that the student is in good health before they receive any prescribed birth control," said Director of Student Health Center Lori Winchell. "We also find it important to educate the students on the proper use, advantages and disadvantages of different forms of birth control."

Overall, students surveyed at UNLV indicated that they thought birth control was an individual responsibility which should be mutually shared, especially within a long term, sexually active relationship.