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# Calling It Quits: Collegiate Smokeout is Coming

Every November, there is one day devoted to encouraging others to quit smoking – the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout. The BACCHUS Network™ celebrates the Collegiate Smokeout on the same day, the third Thursday in November (This year it is on November 15.).

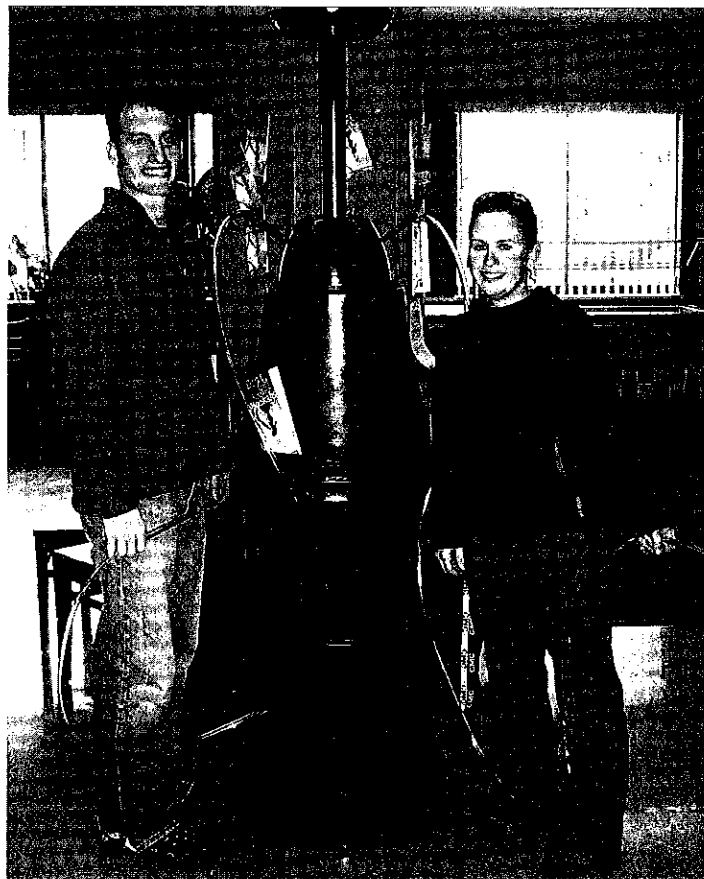
The premise of the Smokeout is simple: quit smoking or using any form of tobacco for 24 hours. If that is successful, try another day, then another, and then another. For those who do not use tobacco, they can encourage family or friends to quit.

Peer educators can play an important role in helping students quit tobacco and stay quit. There are many ways you can improve the health of your campus and community and a few ideas are summarized below. In addition, be sure to watch for our annual Smokeout programming manual, arriving to affiliates in October. Portions of the manual will also be free to download at [www.tobaccofreeU.org](http://www.tobaccofreeU.org)

**Get Connected.** There are many resources available in tobacco control. You do not have to tackle everything alone! Talk with your campus health center, counseling center, local health department, American Cancer Society, and American Lung Association about offering cessation classes or other services for students who want to quit.

**Push for Policy.** One of the quickest ways to lower tobacco use rates is to change policy, making it more difficult to obtain or use tobacco on campus and in the community. Analyze campus' current tobacco policies and discover where there are gaps or needs: Is smoking still allowed in campus buildings? Are people safe from secondhand smoke when they enter and exit buildings? Does the policy include spit tobacco and other forms of tobacco? Peer educators can talk with administrators about the possibility of changing the policy. There are more of policy-specific tips at [www.tobaccofreeU.org](http://www.tobaccofreeU.org) and in the BACCHUS *STEP By STEP* program (contact the Materials Center for details).

**When in Doubt, Refer.** Peer educators can be great listeners and support for those who are quitting tobacco. The cessation process, however, calls for specialized assistance with behavioral and physical adjustments. Refer students to the National Quit Line, 1-800-QUIT NOW, or to local cessation services. The Quit Line is free to use and connects callers with trained cessation coaches who can provide the needed help and encouragement.



*Peer educators at Colorado Mountain College—  
Timberline created a large, fake hookah for an  
educational program they held this past spring*

**Keep Talking.** Once the Smokeout passes, keep addressing tobacco issues and how they impact the campus. While the single day of awareness is great, tobacco control demands attention throughout the entire year. Peer education groups can hand out cessation information or quit kits, make informational pamphlets available to students, develop a task force to address policy, and collaborate on other local health events or cessation promotions. Be sure to peruse the BACCHUS Tobacco Materials Catalog for educational and promotional items that can increase awareness and involvement in your work. There are many ways to make an impact, and it is important to be creative all year!

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# Andrea Dudas

**Title:** Health Educator/ R.A.D. (Rape, Aggression, Defense) Systems Instructor

**Campus:** Western Kentucky University

**Name of peer education group(s) you advise:** TopperWell Peer Health Educators

**What is your area of expertise?** Sexual health education and alcohol education

**How long have you been a peer education advisor?** Two years and counting

**What do you like most about your position?** The growth I see within my students, both personally and professionally. I am so proud of the accomplishments and how they work together as a team. They all have great futures ahead of them and knowing that can put a huge smile on my face any day!

**Describe an inspirational moment/event while working with students.** The most inspirational moment thus far would have to be during our first fall 2006 semester meeting. I had attended a conference where I heard David Hellstrom speak about advisors' roles and how hard, yet at the same time, rewarding our jobs can be. He said something that stuck with me. He said, "If you, as the advisor, are doing more work than your students, then you're doing something wrong." That statement hit me hard.

I came back and told my students that I was not going to stress over them anymore, that this group was "their baby to hold and take care of," and I was placing the power in their hands

for creative ideas, programming, etc. I reminded them that I would always be there for them as a guide, or for assistance, but otherwise, it was all up to them.

At that moment, they all looked at me like I was crazy, and then burst into a mass discussion with one another about plans and ideas of what they can do to help better their events for that year. They felt powerful and were extremely motivated to make an impact. It made me so proud!

**What is your advice to others who are working in the area of health/prevention education?** My advice would be to stick with it – to realize that there are going to be trying times when it comes to figuring out a training session for your peer educators, or how to keep them motivated to stay in the group, or how best to teach them the idea of working hard while in the group, and so forth.

It's hard, but one must also remember that they are not alone in this fight, and that there are many other advisors out there doing, or attempting to do, the same things they are. I would also say to have faith in your students – believe in them. Trust me, the hard work does pay off. It just takes time to see that pay come through!

**What do you like to do in your free time?** During my free time I enjoy playing at home with my cat, Dante. That alone can be entertaining! I also love to go walking, as well as to read a variety of books.

**Favorite quote:** "Live your life to the fullest, never regretting a thing."  
– Anonymous

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Although we have come a long way in decreasing tobacco use rates, it is still a large health problem in the world today, especially with the college-age population. Student leaders are creating positive change every day by initiating policy change, by educating others on the dangers of secondhand smoke, and by helping a friend quit tobacco for good. All of these important components will help achieve the overarching goal of creating tobacco-free generations for the future.

### Tobacco-Free U Tube: Broadcast Your Health

Keep your eyes on your mailbox for this year's Collegiate Smokeout programming manual! In this manual, you will find detailed information on creating policy change on campus as well as how to best help students with cessation. The manual will walk you through understanding what a tobacco user may encounter in the quit process. As always, we will include examples from college campuses that are working on tobacco control efforts. We will also have a contest for BACCHUS affiliates to create their own original video. Start brainstorming the creative ways you can promote quitting and gaining support for a tobacco-free campus!