

NATIONAL HAZING PREVENTION WEEK

STRONGER

WHEN

TOGETHER

WE CAN END HAZING

— september 20-24 —

National Hazing  
*Prevention Week*

HAZINGPREVENTION.ORG™

2021  
Resource Guide

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Org's resources on  
our website.

# Together, we can prevent hazing by learning from successful programs

The theme of the 2021 National Hazing Prevention Week is “Stronger Together,” an idea that is exemplified by students, parents and professionals connecting virtually to share and learn from successful efforts to combat hazing.

HazingPrevention.org is pleased to bring you a week of shining a spotlight on success stories from our peers across the broad spectrum of campus life. HPO is dedicated to empowering people to prevent hazing through education, and this week’s sessions will advance our mission.

Our speakers will share how their programs helped prevent hazing in athletics, fraternity/sorority life and in the performing arts. We will observe National GORDIEday and take a deeper dive into the role alcohol plays in hazing incidents.

This guide will also provide additional hazing prevention information that will help you raise awareness and promote hazing prevention.

Our mission remains as important as ever. After a one-year reprieve due to the COVID-19 pandemic changing campus life, hazing has taken young lives during 2021. From 1969-2020, at least one college student died each year in a hazing-related incident.

We thank you for your dedication to hazing prevention and your participation in National Hazing Prevention Week. **We are truly Stronger Together!**



*Marc Mores*

President, HazingPrevention.org



*Travis Appgar*

Chair, National Hazing Prevention Week

# STRONGER TOGETHER

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All NHPW virtual sessions will begin at 4 p.m. EDT daily and feature 30 minutes of Q&A following the presentation.

## *Monday, September 20:*

### **Letter Campaign for Collin's Law in Ohio**

**Speaker:** Molly Shea Davis, Vice President of Development, Ohio University's Women's Panhellenic Association

## *Tuesday, September 21:*

### **Breathe, Nolan, Breathe**

**Speaker:** Michael Rafo, M.A., Coordinator of Fraternity & Sorority Life, Florida Gulf Coast University

## *Wednesday, September 22:*

### **How "Innocent Fun" Gets Out of Tune Fast**

**Speaker:** Archie Messersmith-Bunting, Archie Cares, LLC

## *Thursday, September 23:*

### **National GORDIEday—Liquid Courage: Alcohol and Hazing**

**Speakers:** Susie Bruce, M.Ed., Director, and Jill Maurer, National Development & Program Coordinator, The Gordie Center, University of Virginia

## *Friday, September 24:*

### **Hazing Prevention and Intervention Strategies and Early Warning Signs**

**Speakers:** Pietro Sasso, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Stephen F. Austin University & Piazza Center Research Fellow; and Brian Joyce, Ph.D., Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life, George Washington University & Piazza Center Scholar

# SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

## National Hazing Prevention Week Presenters

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*Monday, September 20*

### Letter Campaign for Collin's Law in Ohio

Molly Shea Davis, Vice President of Development,  
Ohio University's Women's Panhellenic Association

Molly Shea Davis was the main contact and advocate for Collin's Law on the Ohio University Campus. Her successful letter campaign resulted in more than 1,000 letters being sent from her campus to Ohio legislators in support of the passage of the law. Collin's Law, named after Collin Wiant who died as the result of hazing, was signed into law in July 2021. The effort also included the virtual Ohio Schools for Collin's Law, which gave students from across the state a chance to hear Collin's mother, Kathleen, speak about hazing prevention and the law. It served as the kickoff event for letter campaigns all over Ohio.

The law expands the state's definition of hazing to include coercion to consume alcohol or drugs, increases reporting requirements, increases training requirements, and sets stronger penalties.

### About the Presenter:

Molly Davis, a senior at Ohio University studying Public Health and Business Administration, is involved in anti-hazing movements as a member of the Women's Panhellenic Association. She serves as vice president of development. Her initiatives led for her to be the main contact and advocate for Collin's law on campus at Ohio University. She is currently a teaching assistant for the entrance class that all new sorority and fraternity members have to take at Ohio University. She is humbled and proud to speak about her experiences and how she will continue to be committed to putting an end to hazing.



# SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

## National Hazing Prevention Week Presenters

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*Tuesday, September 21*

### **Sorority and Fraternity Life: Breathe, Nolan, Breathe**

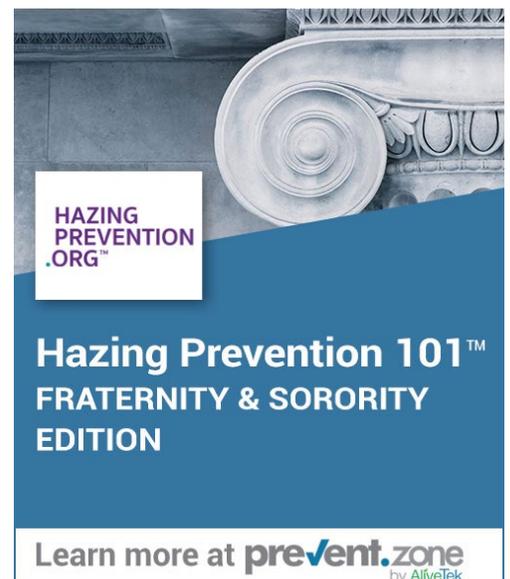
Michael Rafo, M.A., Coordinator of Fraternity & Sorority Life  
Florida Gulf Coast University

This presentation will cover the successful Breathe Nolan Breathe Lunch and Learn that took place during the Spring 2021 semester on the campus of Florida Gulf Coast University. The presenter will share how the program was envisioned and how it came together. He will discuss the collaboration, marketing and execution of the program. The successes and shortcomings of the program will be shared. Attendees will learn how to bring this type of program to their own campus.

#### **About the Presenter:**

Michael Rafo serves as the coordinator of Fraternity and Sorority Life at Florida Gulf Coast University. He is the advisor for the Panhellenic Association and the co-advisor for the National Pan-Hellenic Council. He also serves as the chapter liaison for 14 chapters from all four councils. Michael has been at FGCU since 2020 and is affiliated with Delta Sigma Phi.

He attended Eastern Michigan University for his bachelor's degree. He earned his master's degree in Higher Education Administration from Central Michigan University, where he also served as the Fraternity and Sorority Life graduate assistant.



# SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

## National Hazing Prevention Week Presenters

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*Wednesday, September 22*

### How “Innocent Fun” Gets Out of Tune Fast

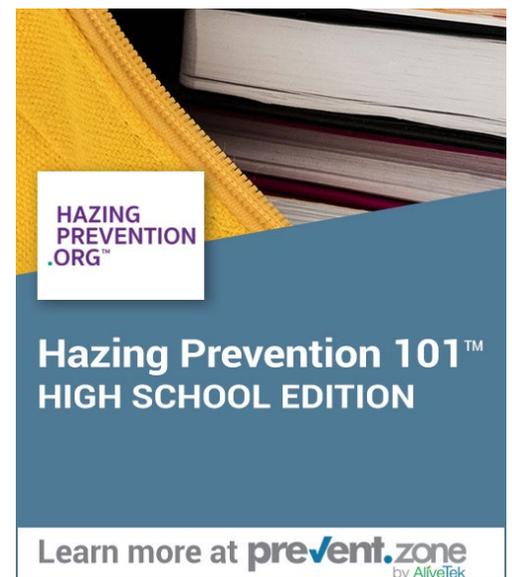
Archie Messersmith-Bunting, Archie Cares, LLC

Participating in the arts can be both a transformative experience and a place of refuge for those who might feel like they don't fit in anywhere else. But when we allow practices of hazing to slip in, things can go flat very fast. Join Archie Messersmith-Bunting as he shares from personal experience how hazing can dampen a young flame and learn ways to support your arts groups as they seek to build community in positive ways.

#### About the Presenter:

Using dynamism and authenticity, Archie Messersmith-Bunting, or The Feelings Guy™, champions mental health awareness worldwide at corporations and universities. He challenges people to rethink complicated and emotional topics like depression, suicide, alcohol and drug addiction. Through his company ArchieCares, LLC, Messersmith-Bunting aims to re-frame the narrative surrounding mental illness and addiction by facilitating honest and vulnerable conversations. Messersmith-Bunting reaches individuals personally as he openly and honestly shares his own struggle with addiction and clinical depression.

Messersmith-Bunting graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Samford University and a Master of Science in College and Student Personnel Administration from Illinois State University. He was recognized by Illinois State University with the Outstanding New Professional Award and Outstanding Faculty/Staff Advisor of the Year.



# SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

## National Hazing Prevention Week Presenters

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*Thursday, September 23*

### **National GORDIEday - Liquid Courage: Alcohol and Hazing**

Susie Bruce, M.Ed., Director, and  
Jill Maurer, National Development &  
Program Coordinator, The Gordie Center,  
University of Virginia

National GORDIEday is held on the Thursday of National Hazing Prevention Week to remember Gordie Bailey and raise awareness of the dangers of hazing and alcohol. This interactive program educates students on the relationship between alcohol and hazing, demonstrates how to measure a standard drink in our “bartender school,” and teaches students to identify the signs of alcohol overdose using “PUBS.” Students will leave the program motivated to be active bystanders by monitoring impaired peers for signs of overdose, never leaving anyone alone to sleep it off, and intervening when they are concerned about hazing.

### **About the Presenters:**

Susie Bruce, M.Ed., is director of the University of Virginia Gordie Center, which works to end hazing and substance misuse among college and high school students through evidence-informed, student-tested resources. She has 25 years of experience in collegiate health promotion, focusing on social norms and peer education. She directs the NCAA-funded APPLE Training Institute, is a Faculty Affiliate of Youth-Nex, the Center to Promote Effective Youth Development, and serves on the executive board of the Step UP! Bystander Intervention Program.

Jill Maurer is the Gordie Center’s National Development and Program coordinator. She serves as the Gordie Center’s development officer, engaging with donors and stewarding gifts made to the Gordie Center’s various national initiatives. She also manages sales, educational materials, and marketing and communications for the center.





# SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

## National Hazing Prevention Week Presenters

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*Friday, September 24*

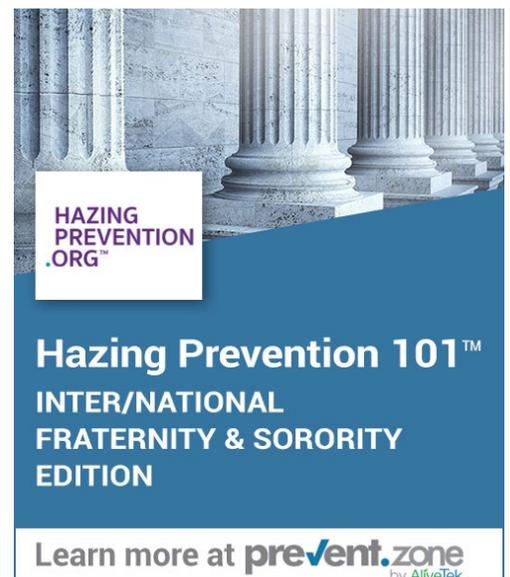
### Hazing Prevention and Intervention Strategies and Early Warning Signs

Pietro Sasso, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Stephen F. Austin University, Piazza Center Research Fellow; and Brian Joyce, Ph.D., Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life, George Washington University, Piazza Center Scholar

This session will explore the relevant research literature about hazing across educational environments. The facilitators will focus special attention to more recent literature that suggests the increasing sub-rosa behaviors and gender differences among participants of hazing activities. The role of alcohol and other tertiary health outcomes will also be explored.

#### About the Presenters:

Dr. Pietro Sasso serves as the faculty research fellow for the Piazza Center, supporting the dissemination of interdisciplinary research projects as scholarly peer-reviewed journals and presentations at national conferences. Sasso has previously worked as a fraternity/sorority professional in both inter/national and campus-based professional capacities. He is currently a faculty member of higher education/student affairs. He has written and edited more than 15 publications related to the fraternity/sorority experience, including two seminal texts. In total, he has co-edited eight textbooks, authored approximately 50 scholarly publications, and facilitated over 50 conference presentations. In addition, Sasso serves as a reviewer for more than five journals, including the Journal of Student Affairs Research & Practice, and serves as senior co-editor for the text series Identity & Practice in Higher Education-Student Affairs by Information Age Publishing. He is the recipient of the AFA Dr. Charles Eberly Research Award and is a past ACPA Men and Masculinities Emerging Scholar-In-Residence. Sasso is currently an assistant professor at Stephen F. Austin University.



# SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

## National Hazing Prevention Week Presenters



### About the Presenters (continued):

Dr. Brian Joyce is director of Fraternity and Sorority Life at George Washington University. He is a student affairs professional with more than 15 years of progressive leadership experience in multiple functional areas including fraternity and sorority life, student activities, and new student orientation and has numerous publications related to identity and hazing in fraternities and sororities. Joyce earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Eastern Kentucky University, a Master of Education degree in College Student Affairs from the University of South Florida, and a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership with a Higher Education emphasis from Clemson University. Joyce most recently served as the Assistant Dean for Student Life and Director of Greek Life at Dartmouth College.

The Piazza Center is a multidisciplinary research center dedicated to uplifting fraternity and sorority life. It's aim is to create actionable data and scholarship for healthy, life-changing, and lifesaving fraternities and sororities, thereby reducing hazardous behaviors.



## A Unifying Experience

**By CJ Gaziano Smith, Greek Life Higher Education Professional**

Thinking back to college a decade or so ago, hazing was to me always a physical or drinking experience of dominance. One person forcing others to take part in an activity that was harmful to earn a place on a team or group. It was the image of a mean spirited person taking out their anger and frustration on others.

Now years later after conducting numerous hazing investigations as a professional in higher education, I have learned that more times than not, it is a person who is trying to create a unifying experience for others to bring them into the fold. There is, of course, a power dynamic in play, the concept of earning your spot. There has to be in order for the newest people to earn the perks of membership, but most of the time it is someone trying to bond a group together and not knowing how to do that.

In bonding a group together, there is the goal of creating a team dynamic, a sense of unified purpose, connections and loyalty to the group. But how does a college student create that for others? How does one person take a group of people and make them a unit? They take from what they know and what they see. They assume military training, which teaches group dynamics and leadership, is effective. It may be, but your group isn't going to fight or have to protect anything. They want loyalty, but how do you get someone to be loyal to the group? They want to make them a better person, but how does one college student do that for another?

It is the inability to create these transformational, bonding experiences that leads a good kid down the wrong path. It transforms someone, who may not be malicious in any way, into someone who leads others to their harm.

Sometimes, there are people who like to harm others and gain pleasure in showing dominance over others. Those traits combined with the lack of safe and healthy activities maximizes the negative impact of these moments. Those individuals would have found a way to hurt others, regardless. They may do it because they experienced it themselves. They use the power dynamics, mixed with the lack of true leadership in that moment, to create horrible experiences of hazing.

Those hazing experiences can cause lasting harm, leaving people physically and emotionally scarred. Both those who experience hazing and those who create the hazing will experience repercussions of the harm caused.

# Perspectives on Hazing

These moments can be avoided. This cycle of trauma can be disrupted for all those involved. It begins with teaching ourselves and our next generation what a healthy bonding experience is. What does it take to create loyal and deep friendships? What does it mean to treat others with respect and kindness? We must teach that respect is earned through compassion to others and self knowledge, not hard physical labor or unsafe or traumatic experiences assigned by others. I know it sounds hard because we think about all the work put into practicing for a combined purpose. But, when that practice crosses into hazing, the experiences we are put through degrade us, disempower us and are unsafe.

Conversations are the cure. Creating a dialogue around power dynamics and what makes for transformational experiences needs to happen at the ground level to make real changes on a college campus. We need to unlearn the traditions, the norm and the unhealthy practices and learn compassion, safety and self knowledge to really make any positive change in the future.

## **About the author:**

Clare “CJ” Graziano Smith is honored to be selected to write this article on her reflection on higher education and hazing prevention. CJ received her BFA in Theatre from Carnegie Mellon and completed her Master’s in Higher Education at Colorado State. Her professional background includes work in casting, project/event management, and Greek Life. In her seven years of fraternity and sorority life experience, she has worked both on campus and traveled for fraternities and sororities. Her passion for crisis and conflict management and reflecting on how we can minimize risk stems from years of crime documentaries and social psychology reading. She hopes to create an open dialogue between students, their families and higher educational entities to remove stigmas and get to the roots of this social issue.



## #BigFacts with #NoCap About Hazing: Parents & Their Gen-Z Students

**By Dr. Pietro Sasso, Stephen F. Austin State University  
Research Fellow, Piazza Center for Fraternity and Sorority Research & Reform**

I have worked in student affairs and taught higher education as a professional for more than 15 years. I began in higher education as a college student more than 20 years ago and never left after freshman orientation and welcome week. As a professor of higher education, I romanticize our campuses and critique their inequities as well as failures. I continue to also research and teach about student generations and hazing. Researchers Howe and Strauss provided a generational theory that offers a framework for us to better conceptualize how changes in society shape a collective consciousness, shared attitudes, and popular culture over a temporal period with cycles of student generations on college campuses.

Howe and Strauss suggested that each new generation comes with different beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions to college campuses bound by: (1) peer personality and (2) the length of the cohort. Each generation tends to straddle about two decades. I am a member near the tail end of the Generation-X college students, and I have now seen two student generations cycle through: Millennials and Generation-Z. During these more than 20 years on college campuses, we have shifted from Millennials to Generation-Z. Generation-Z is the echo generation to Millennials, and are the children of early Millennials and the last children to Generation-X parents. They sandwiched between larger Millennials and a second forthcoming, larger student generation we have not accurately profiled yet.

Research has suggested Generation-Z is the first student cycle to be completely enmeshed and encapsulated by digital technology, particularly social media. As a college professor, I often label them as the “Tik Tok generation.” They have developed their own nuanced and sophisticated generational vernacular, just in the same ways previous student generations co-authored their own subculture. They also have very different attachment styles than their previous Millennial parents or siblings. Generation-Z students tend to be more independent and slightly less dependent or detached from their parents. Thus, to their parents, they are often confused or bewildered by their communication preferences. This can make discussing or determining issues like hazing challenging and perplexing. I have some suggestions here for parents as partners to consider based on three general trends of hazing.

# Perspectives on Hazing

## Hazing is hidden

My own research suggests that hazing has become more complex and is now increasingly sub-rosa. Our own policies and continued prevention efforts have taught student leaders in chapters to develop new more innovative approaches to hide hazing practices or rites of passage that are opaque or invisible to parents and campus professionals. Hazing is now hidden, and parental intervention is a key factor in preventing and disrupting the cycle of harm, abuse and trauma. Often hazing does not involve chapter leaders to avoid liability or involves other chapters on campus. Hazing is also taking place in more obscure places off-campus, beyond the basement of chapter houses. When not in-person, hazing has significantly taken place in digital spaces through texting or social media, which includes harassment and threats.

## Hazing is gendered

Research, including my own on college men and women, suggests that there are distinctive differences in hazing between men (fraternities) and women (sororities) as single-gendered organizations. Hazing with college men tends to involve forced alcohol consumption and is more physical and aggressive, such as with calisthenics or competitions. Masculine forms of hazing often are about proving worth and college men often perceive them as rites of passage into manhood to belong. Other forms of hazing with women tend to involve notions of conformity and belonging to a collective in which individual identity becomes more nebulous. Such approaches to hazing with women involve more cognitive and emotional forms of hazing to include intimidation, harassment, bullying and gaslighting. Sorority women often claim that they do not believe or are unaware they are hazing because it is not physical. Sorority women will often participate with other fraternities in joint hazing practices in which chapters will believe there is shared responsibility, so liability is equal. They rationalize that no one could possibly be at fault. These co-educational forms of hazing are a more inclusive approach and increasingly more common with Generation-Z students.

## Hazing is cultural

Emerging data from one of my studies of hazing identifiers suggests that styles of hazing vary across chapter styles and organizational histories. For example, the early exclusion of diverse populations and constitutional clauses banning their participation gave rise to our proud culturally-based organizations. Their organizations often used rituals and rites of passage to transmit their culture, which can powerfully transmit navigational and social capital to facilitate a sense of belonging and identity development to students with diverse identities. However, chapters may adapt colonized or co-opted versions of these narratives and do not understand their own complex histories. In lieu of seeking understanding, students may turn to hazing to

teach an alternative approach such as hazing to model the oppression or marginalization of their culture or organizational founders. This no “learning without struggle” approach often leads to conflation of the actual intended cultural transmission and values and instead provides students with a deflated or surface version of their organization. Generation-Z is seeking authenticity and depth, and hazing only provides surface truths and trauma.

## Parents as partners

As an undergraduate, I was severely hazed in that I was subjected to forced alcohol consumption, snorting grain alcohol, physical restraints, calisthenics, and even huffing various chemical products, which are common forms of hazing according to research by Elizabeth Allen at the University of Maine. I remained silent and eventually disassociated from the fraternity chapter, and then started my own with some of my student leader peers. Yet, these experiences with hazing impacted my grades and caused some degree of trauma. As a victim of hazing, I did not tell my parents. I felt that they would not understand because my mother did not attend college and my father was a first-generation immigrant, but was in a fraternity. I also felt responsible and like a failure because I let it happen to me and my grades significantly dropped and I put my safety in jeopardy.

If you are a parent, there are often few immediate warning signs that your student (child) is being hazed. Often one might not even know they are affiliating with a sorority or fraternity because they are forced or compelled to remain silent. Other times there are little warning signs beyond changes in mood or other behaviors. However, changes in regular communication or schedule often demonstrate the earliest warning signs about hazing. Late night events, changes in peer networks, spending money habits, course attendance, inconsistent texting or availability, or erratic online behavior are all warning signs that hazing might be occurring based on my research. Parents often do not see these changes because their students (children) often hide parts of their social media accounts from their parents or do not share their lives completely with them. This need for some separation between parents is developmental.

These needs for independence in young adulthood are ubiquitous across student generations and forms of rebellion are common in this age as well in shirking previous familial, cultural, or pre-college identities. However, Generation-Z much like Generation X is more independent than their Millennial or Xer parents, who I have often termed “hovercraft” parents who often exist in the lives of their students on land, sea, and air (in the cloud). Yet, parenting styles continue to evolve into more sophisticated forms.

# Perspectives on Hazing

Others have termed current parenting styles as “bulldozer” parents in response to the ways in which they want to remove any barriers before they are experienced by their students. Parents of college students are more frequently anticipating challenges for their students and attempting to disrupt them or remove them before they become a problem. This often means calling ahead to double check on lofted beds in residence halls or calling the sorority/fraternity office to make sure that their student is pre-registered for formal recruitment. Parental engagement at our college and universities often does extend beyond orientation, residence hall move-ins, parents’ weekend, and eventually graduation. Universities educate their students, but struggle to engage with parents, who often are bewildered by our bureaucracy and they claim college administrators hide behind overreach of the Family Rights and Education Privacy Act (FERPA) when it is convenient. Thus, parents are often left on their own to navigate any concerns they may have about hazing. This means that difficult conversations should be facilitated between their students and themselves about hazing. Parents should assume that there are significant benefits to sorority/fraternity affiliation, but there are some potential inherent risks. However, there are some proactive approaches that parents can take if they know that their student is affiliating with a sorority or fraternity.

1. Know their friends: Generation Z students are often more comfortable discussing private matters through texting and have smaller networks than their more pro-social and image conscious Millennial older siblings or parents. So, parents should determine who their students’ friends might be and ask about them. This may make a parent seem nosy, but it would help if you asked for their contact information in case of an emergency. Their peers may have noticed some early warning signs or changes in their behavior that indicates some form of hazing might be occurring. If you have any concerns, this is going to allow you to intervene. Peers communicate instantaneously and we share the conversations with parents, but I think a well-intentioned outreach with concern will result in an authentic response from one of their peers who may have the same concern, too.
2. Understand the organization: Visiting the organization’s website is a good first step in understanding the history, cost, and other information about the experience your student may have with a sorority or fraternity. However, I would encourage parents to check news stories or browse their social media presence as well. More universities have increased public accountability as well and post chapter sizes and other conduct information. Make sure that the organization is recognized by the university and supported by campus administration. Underground or



# Perspectives on Hazing

unrecognized chapters are not inherently “bad,” but may carry increased risk due to their lack of support and oversight by the university. Overall, parents should feel comfortable with their student affiliating and should take their own efforts to learn and understand that organization.

3. Join parents groups: Some sorority chapters have parent groups online and most universities have parents groups on Facebook. These are good opportunities to connect with other parents who may have the same concern. Most universities or parents have set up these groups, which are monitored to some extent. So, if you have concerns and you post about them just be mindful that they are public in some form. Thus, I would encourage parents to network with parents of other sorority or fraternity members and engage in offline communication with shared concerns.
4. Communicate with your student: Generation Z often has language that is difficult to understand and they have their own socially constructed subculture as the first student generation of digital natives. Researchers Stillman and Stillman in the book “Gen Z @ Work” profile seven key traits about Generation Z, but the most relevant to parents with regard to sorority/fraternity experiences is that they have extreme FOMO (the fear of missing out). They are the DIY as the do-it-yourself generation, and private. They have grown up with YouTube being able to teach them how to do anything they desire, have learned what they can curate about themselves through social media, and want access to experiences their peers share on social media. Therefore, communicating with students means initially discussing sororities and fraternities as an experience, rather than through deeper discussion of organizational values or their identities. Those sorts of deeper conversations often can occur developmentally once they have progressed through the new member period and understand how their experience shaped their multiple identities.

These are simple considerations that parents should understand about the sorority/fraternity experience. However, as a college professor and researcher of hazing in the sorority/fraternity experience, I can list significant outcomes of benefit and risk. Yet, I believe in fraternity. Not all sororities and fraternities engage in hazing, but affiliation unfortunately still poses significant risk. Joining any student organization with permanent membership requires some form of increased care and concern. Unfortunately, Generation Z much like Millennials and previous student generations rush into these experiences with the exuberance and infallibility of their youth that

# Perspectives on Hazing

their parents wish they could recapture. However, what parents have is wisdom in which they are powerful partners in support of their students' experiences. It can be contentious and be perceived as over-parenting, but parents gave them life and they simply want to protect it.

## **About the author:**

Pietro Sasso, Ph.D., assistant professor, Stephen F. Austin University, serves as the faculty research fellow for the Piazza Center, supporting the dissemination of interdisciplinary research projects as scholarly peer-reviewed journals and presentations at national conferences. Sasso has previously worked as a fraternity/sorority professional in both inter/national and campus-based professional capacities. He is currently a faculty member of higher education/student affairs. He has written and edited more than 15 publications related to the fraternity/sorority experience, including two seminal texts. In total, he has co-edited eight textbooks, authored approximately 50 scholarly publications, and facilitated over 50 conference presentations. In addition, Sasso serves as a reviewer for more than five journals, including the *Journal of Student Affairs Research & Practice*, and serves as senior co-editor for the text series *Identity & Practice in Higher Education-Student Affairs* by Information Age Publishing. He is the recipient of the AFA Dr. Charles Eberly Research Award and is a past ACPA Men and Masculinities Emerging Scholar-In-Residence.



## The Relationship Between Alcohol and Hazing

By Susie Bruce, Gordie Center Director, University of Virginia

Lynn Gordon Bailey Jr. (“Gordie”) died from alcohol-related hazing just three weeks after arriving at the University of Colorado, Boulder for his freshman year. On fraternity bid night, Gordie and 26 other pledges, dressed in coats and ties, were blindfolded and taken to a national forest where they gathered around a bonfire. They were told to consume a large amount of whiskey and wine in 30 minutes. When the group returned to the fraternity house, Gordie was visibly intoxicated and was placed on a couch. His brothers wrote on his body with permanent markers, gave him a bucket to puke in, and then left him—alone—to sleep it off. He was found dead the next morning, face down on the floor with a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) of .328—more than 4 times the legal driving limit. No one had called for help. The University of Virginia Gordie Center is named in Gordie’s memory and is dedicated to ending substance misuse and hazing among high school and college nationwide through evidence-informed, student-tested resources.

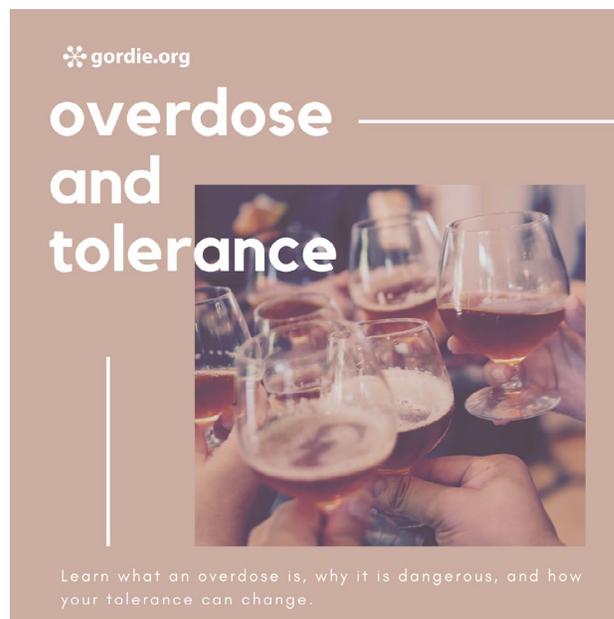
### Alcohol and hazing

The use of alcohol or other drugs in hazing activities increases the risks of physical and emotional harm. Even small amounts of intoxicating substances impair judgment, which increases the likelihood that students will engage in risky behaviors they would never do otherwise. A key component of hazing is secrecy – the hazers know what will happen, while those being hazed are blind to actual risks. Hazing strategies such as kidnapping, blindfolding or other forms of sensory deprivation are used to produce anxiety in a misguided attempt to promote group loyalty and bonding. The use of intoxicants increases the underlying anxiety about the unknown aspects of hazing and increases the power differential between hazers and those being hazed. This increases the odds that hazing victims will comply with increasingly unreasonable or dangerous requests. Current group members may use alcohol to mask their feelings of guilt or shame for engaging in or allowing hazing activities.

Many students fail to intervene when they witness hazing because they believe hazing victims have willingly agreed to the hazing. However, the psychology of hazing makes consent nearly impossible. How can someone consent to an activity when the details are purposefully hidden from them? And of course, an intoxicated person cannot give consent and cannot make informed decisions about potential risk. Considering the COVID-related social restrictions of the past year and a half, both first-year and returning students may feel even greater pressure to endure hazing in order to find a place of belonging on campus.

## Alcohol, hazing and bystanders

- “There wasn’t a single death from alcohol before 1940. Now, it’s one of the most major [causes of hazing-related deaths].” – Hank Nuwer<sup>1</sup>
- Since Gordie died in September 2004, 76 students have died as a result of hazing. 50 (66%) were alcohol-related.<sup>2</sup>
- Participating in drinking games is the most frequently reported hazing behavior among college students. Tied for third is “drinking large amounts of alcohol to the point of getting sick or passing out.”<sup>3</sup>
- 71% of college students who witnessed hazing said alcohol rituals were involved.<sup>4</sup>
- 85% of college students believe students should intervene when students engage in unhealthy alcohol use.<sup>4</sup>



## Citations

1. [As Campus Life Resumes, So Does Concern Over Hazing](#). NPR, 4 May 2021
2. U.S. Hazing Deaths Database. <https://www.hanknuwer.com>, Accessed 20 May 2021.
3. Allan, E.J. and Madden, M. (2008) [Hazing in View: College Students at Risk](#).
4. [National College Student Bystander Intervention Study Data Summary Report](#) (2020). WITH US Center for Bystander Intervention at Cal Poly.

## Where should we focus prevention efforts?

Many students are unsure of the signs of an alcohol overdose and at what point they should call 911 for help and do not realize that BAC can continue to rise to dangerous levels even after someone has passed out. Bystanders who know the importance of closely monitoring impaired peers for signs of overdose, never leaving anyone alone to sleep it off, and never putting a backpack on someone who has passed out (as the person may roll on their stomach and aspirate vomit) can help save lives.

# Perspectives on Hazing

The PUBS acronym was created by University of Virginia students in collaboration with Gordie Center staff and medical professionals to provide a simple, easy to remember guide to identify a medical emergency. Providing education on the **PUBS signs** and encouraging students to sign the **Pledge to Check** can reinforce the importance of calling 911, even if only one PUBS sign is present. Students can share the Gordie Center's 1-minute **PUBS video** as part of orientation/new member programs, on electronic bulletin boards and social media.

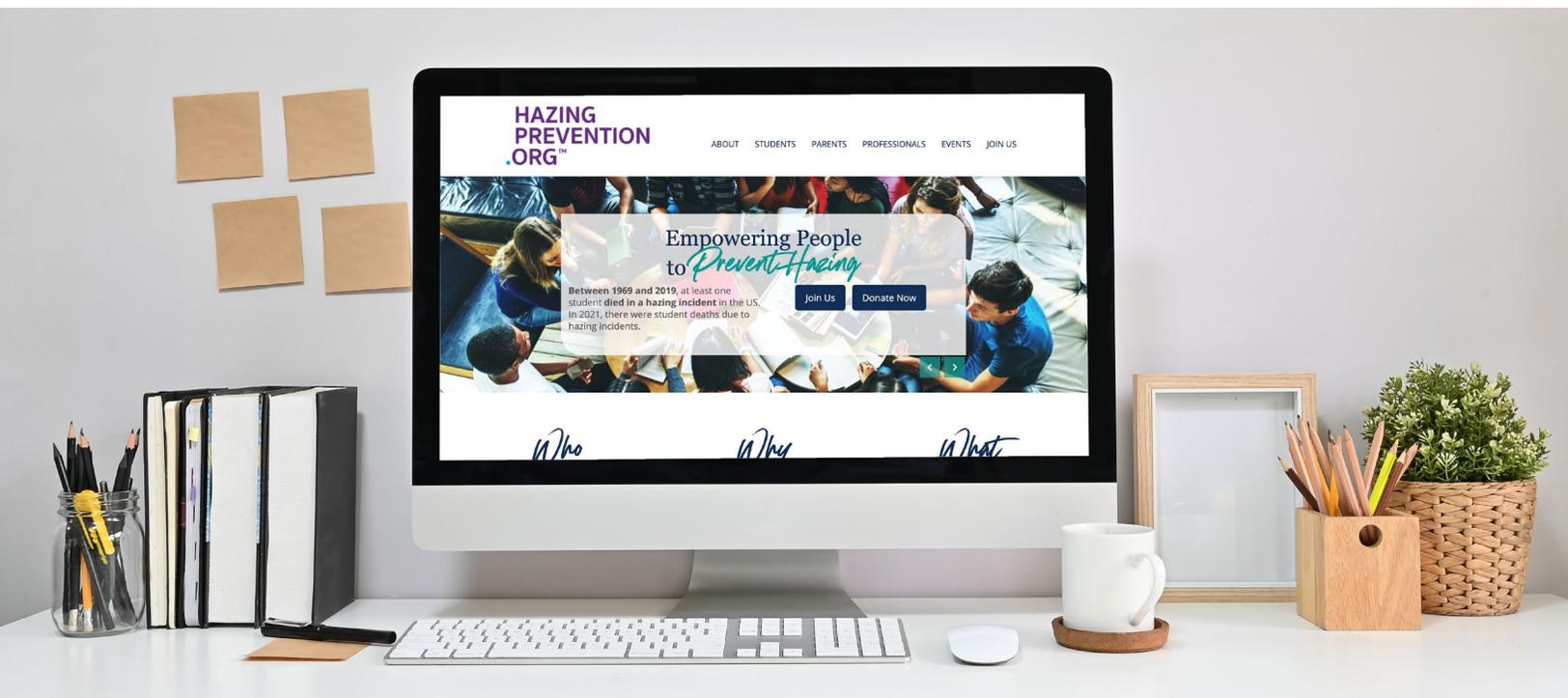
To assist campuses in their hazing and substance misuse prevention efforts, the University of Virginia's **Gordie Center** provides Free, evidence-informed **Instagram** campaigns and animated one-minute videos, all of which were created in partnership with students. In addition to a **PUBS** video, video topics include **hazing bystander intervention**, **positive team building for athletics**, **talking points for parents**, and many more. Schools can post materials on social media, embed in PowerPoint presentations or use in other ways that support their data-driven prevention strategies.

## About the author:

Susie Bruce, M.Ed., is the director of the University of Virginia's Gordie Center, which works to end hazing and substance misuse among college and high school students nationwide through evidence-informed, student-tested resources. She also directs the NCAA-funded APPLE Training Institutes, a strategic training program for substance misuse prevention and health promotion within college athletics. She is a Faculty Affiliate of Youth-Nex: The Center to Promote Effective Youth Development and serves on the Executive Board of the Step UP! Bystander Intervention Program.



# Visit HazingPrevention.org for a wealth of resources for students, parents, and professionals



HPO.org encourages students and others to  
*Take the Hazing Prevention Pledge*

HazingPrevention.org has resources for professionals that include online education from AliveTek, hazing prevention activities and links to academic studies.

# Congratulations to HPO's Essay Contest Winners!

— september 20-24 —  
National Hazing  
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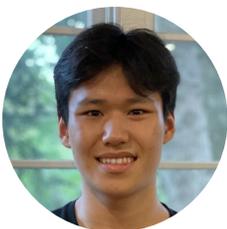
## When asked to share their thoughts

about hazing and how to prevent it, high school students from around the country responded with powerful essays tackling the issue. Students from California, New Jersey and Pennsylvania are receiving national recognition for their essays as winners of the HazingPrevention.org 2021 National Hazing Prevention Week High School Essay Contest.



**Ariana Perez**, Troy High School in Fullerton, CA, was the national, first-place winner with her essay, "On the Same Team." She captured this year's theme of "stronger together" in her recounting of a hazing of a golf teammate, who also had to overcome a language barrier. "I have always liked the metaphor, 'A single twig is weak, but if you get a bunch of twigs, they are tougher to break.' The message is the team is stronger together."

Second-place winner **Faith Adedokun**, from Valley Forge Baptist Academy, Collegeville, PA, recounted the hazing death of Stone Foltz and his family's efforts to establish anti-hazing laws in Ohio in her essay, "Stronger for Stone."



**Christopher Chang**, Ridgewood High School, Ridgewood, NJ was the third-place winner with his essay, "New Traditions." He recounted his experiences with hazing as a freshman member of a swim team and how four years later he and his senior teammates stopped the cycle of hazing freshmen.

Thank you to our sponsor National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)!



# Congratulations to HPO's Poster Contest Winner!

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**Payton Schnall**, a junior at the University of Central Florida's College of Sciences, has been selected as the winner of the 2021 HPO Poster Contest.

HPO thanks sponsors Prevent.zone and Order of Omega for their support of the poster contest.



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