

University of Connecticut
Office of First Year Programs & Learning Communities

Peer Education Highlights



Fall 2008

<http://www.peered.uconn.edu/>

Peer Education ◊ CUE Info Center ◊ Alpha Lambda Delta

Peer Education

Programs

There are over 33 peer education programs available at the University of Connecticut. Each program functions as its own entity, yet unites in the common goal of providing an opportunity for students to gain experience by reaching out to help their peers. Peer educators are student paraprofessionals who have been selected and trained to offer direct services to their peers. These services are intentionally designed to facilitate academic, social and personal growth. Peer Education strives to enhance the relationship with self, the academic life, and the community and world.

Peer Education Programs:

- Active Minds*
- Alcohol and Other Drug Services
- Asianation Mentoring Program (AMP)
- Career Resource Assistants (CRA)
- Community Outreach Student Program Coordinators
- Female Athlete Peer Education
- First Year Experience (FYE)
- Greek Judicial Board (Greek Jboard)
- Honors Initiatives for Prospective Students (HIPS)
- Honors Seminar Facilitators
- Huskies Away From Home
- Husky Ambassador Program (HAP)
- Husky WOW Leaders
- Individualized Major Program (IMJR)
- METAS
- Neag Peer Mentor Program
- Orientation
- Peer African Americans Sustaining Success PA2SS
- Peer Allies Through Honors (PATH)
- Peer Judicial Board
- Peer Leadership Instructors (PLI)
- Q Center Tutors
- Rainbow Center Speakers' Bureau
- Sexperts
- Student Ambassadors for Human Rights
- Student Educational Technology Assistants (SETA)
- Students In MGMT Peer Learning Exchange (SIMPLE)
- Student Support Services Peer Education Team
- Students Helping to Achieve Positive Esteem (SHAPE)
- Study Abroad Student Ambassadors
- UCAELI
- UConn Connects
- Violence Against Women Prevention Program (VAWPP)

*New Peer Education Program added this year:

Active Minds is a national organization whose mission is to utilize the student voice to change the conversation about mental health on college campuses. The organization works to increase students' awareness of mental health issues, provide information and resources regarding mental health and mental illness, encourage students to seek help as soon as it is needed, and serve as liaison between students and the mental health community.

Peer Education Recognition Ceremony

To celebrate the achievement of the Peer Educators and programs, the Peer Education Recognition Ceremony was held on April 7th in the Student Union Theater. All peer education programs were invited and recognized for their work in continuing to develop Peer Education. Dr. Barry Schreier gave the key note speech and four awards were recognized. Two peer educators, Leah McDermott and Ryan Matthews were the emcees for the evening introducing the award winners, key note speaker and running the program.

Peer Educators of the Year

- ◆ Samantha Grayeck
- ◆ Juan Carmona
- ◆ Vu Tran

These students were chosen for their dedication and passion for peer education and the betterment of their community. Between all of them, they have presented at national conferences, created new programs from research they have conducted, continually taken on additional responsibilities, and been a part of 13 peer education programs.

Peer Education Program of the Year

- ◆ Community Outreach

This year Community Outreach mentors have significantly increased and embraced their role in peer education and sought to improve the educational outcomes related to the Community Outreach program. They have done this by creating new orientation and training programs for their mentors and focusing on structure reflection. To increase their reach into 50 different communities, Community Outreach has increased its student leader population by 41% and its student participation by 13%. All together, these students have invested over 50,000 hours in organizing and delivering community service-learning initiative.

Peer Involvement Classes

This semester we had two sections of INTD 1820 concentrating on Peer Education. This class asks students to spend time outside of class raising money for a cause or raising awareness in their fellow students. Each class selects one to two class leaders who spend the semester working with their classmates to organize their event. The class leaders also present a poster and short synopsis at the Peer Education Recognition Ceremony.

CUE Information Center

The students running the Information Center located in the lobby of the CUE building, continue to build their services for the patrons of the CUE building. A CUE weekly newsletter covering programs updates, current events, deadlines, staff profiles, student services and other note-worthy points is developed by the students working at the desk. This newsletter is posted to the CUE website, with a link from the First Year Programs site; emailed to the CUE listserv every Monday; and copied for distribution to visitors at the Info Desk.

A new mobile white board/bulletin board sign has been added that is regularly updated with event locations, staff directory, important reminders and a welcoming message to visitors. This sign is used on a daily bases for general information and is also available to programs holding events in the CUE to advertise or direct people to their location.

The students have taken on the additional responsibility of communicating with other students by posting to the UConn First Year and UConn Interactive sites on HuskyCT. These posts include information on how to get involved and on upcoming events as well as answering questions other students post and reporting any lost and found items. A few of the students also started blogs on HuskyCT to share their thoughts, opinions and experiences with the general UConn population.

This year we have focused on consistent training sessions for the CUE students and have conducted 4 so far this year. Topics covered included professional etiquette, usage of classroom technology, implementation of the Academic Achievement Center, and any questions, concerns or ideas from the students. At these meetings, with the students, we have developed a structural system to assign projects and track who has made what progress on each project. These trainings have been designed to not only provide training on specific tasks but to build camaraderie between the students and the First Year Program staff.

Alpha Lambda Delta

Alpha Lambda Delta (ALD) will be celebrating its 45th anniversary on the UConn campus and 85th national anniversary in late April. This past year had yielded many changes for ALD as we have inducted 737 new members, a 20% increase from last year, bringing our total chapter to over 2000 members.

A new merit program has been implemented where members earn points for the activities they participate in and are awarded gifts based on their accumulation of points. We have also increased our ties to the National chapter by sponsoring an advisor's and executive board member's trip to the national conference in Anaheim California in late October. This conference allowed our chapter to network with student leaders and advisors from across the country and return with many new ideas to UConn. We will also be forwarding three candidates to the national office to be considered for one of the national Jo Anne J. Trow Undergraduate Scholarships.

To encourage member participation, we have formed committees focused on programming for both academic and social events, increasing outreach, advertising for events, and writing a newsletter for

members. PumpkinFest, held in late October was very successful drawing students from across campus to celebrate the fall season while meeting each other, carving pumpkins and drinking hot apple cider. Our other major event, a dodge ball tournament was held April 4th and also drew a number of teams competing for the top prize. Our last event of the year will be Relay for Life and the ALD team has already raised over \$2500, making them the top-earning team on the UConn campus.