



New Funds Directed at Curbing Alcohol Abuse

Grant Money From State Agency to Support Campus and City Police Enforcement Operations

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Campus and city police are planning to significantly ramp up efforts to fight underage drinking with new grants received from the state government.

The grant from the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control will expand the campus police force's ability to combat underage drinking by providing funds for extended alcohol-related operations and improved training and equipment, said UCPD Lt. Doug Wing.

The \$40,000 grant will be used to run up to four operations per week. Wing said that operations in the coming year would significantly outnumber those in previous years.

The operations will include patrolling for people drinking in public, planting decoys to catch people willing to provide alcohol to minors, launching undercover operations to uncover fake IDs, and patrolling parties.

Wing said that the first weeks of the semester and weeks with special campus events would have the most operations.

Although this year marks the first time UC Police have received funding to fight underage drinking from the state agency, city police have been awarded the money for previous four years. This year, the city police were given more than \$84,300.

Berkeley city police Officer Ed Galvan said the grant program has been a success, pointing to one officer who has made more than 1,600 alcohol-related arrests in the three years since the city began receiving state funding.

"Every time (the officers) go out, they never come back empty-handed," Galvan said. "Normally, we might not have an opportunity to do bar checks or directed enforcement at places that sell alcohol."

The Alcoholic Beverage Control grant has allowed city police to send officers out to deal specifically with issues regarding the sale of alcohol, according to Galvan.

However, many students have criticized the grant as misguided, and some say increased enforcement by UC police may strain the campus relationship with the Greek

community.

"The reason that we're here is to get a good education," sophomore Eric Ritter said. "The university should be more concerned with our education than combating an issue that's not even a problem."



Sophomore Natalie Maples, a member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority, said the grant is not necessary.

"While I can understand the need for extra resources during Welcome Week when hundreds of freshmen are swarming the Greek institutions, UC Berkeley is not known as a 'party school,'" Maples said in an e-mail.

But many officials said that enforcement plays a critical role in reducing underage drinking.

"The education end of it goes so far, but without enforcement it generally isn't as effective. If the consequences aren't real, it's just words on paper," Wing said.

Cathy Kodama, director of health promotions at University Health Services, said stronger enforcement is needed to control underage drinking.

"We've been involved in research that shows that a large percentage of students drink underage and that the greatest number of negative consequences from drinking happen to underage drinkers," Kodama said.

Last year, there were a total of 107 alcohol-related arrests on campus property reported to either the campus or Berkeley city police. In the previous year, there were 43, and in the year before that, 91.

Wing said that he hopes to see a reduction in incidents as a result of increased enforcement allowed by the grant.

However, Wanda Thrower, a campus drug and alcohol counselor said that enforcement is just part of the solution.

"I know that there are consequences that students suffer because of drinking in general, and ... individuals (who) have gotten into trouble, they do really try to change," Thrower said. "I believe that enforcement along with education, responsible party planning, and many (other) things are needed."

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