

# University remembers honor student, cautions students to drink responsibly

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A New Mexico State University student died four years ago today as a result of alcohol poisoning, and the Wellness Alcohol Violence Education program is encouraging the campus community to honor his memory and to use caution when drinking alcohol. The student, Steven Judd, a junior crimson scholar and president of the Delta Chi fraternity, died of alcohol poisoning in 2005 after celebrating his 21st birthday with friends. Debra Darmata, coordinator of WAVE, said Judd was a great student who had even talked to his parents about the dangers of alcohol before going out, but such situations can happen to anyone.

“To lose a child at 21 is tragic,” Darmata said. “To lose them because of something like [alcohol poisoning] is even more tragic.”

## **The scholarship**

The Steven David Judd Memorial Scholarship, established by Judd’s parents Steven and Karen, is awarded each year in memory of Judd. In the past, the scholarship was awarded to students in the field of computer science, which was Judd’s major, but the Judd’s family wanted to award the scholarship to the NMSU student who has made the greatest contribution toward alcohol prevention and the reduction of high risk drinking at NMSU, according to the scholarship application.

The scholarship is worth \$800, and applications will be accepted from Nov. 30 to Jan. 22.

## **Being educated**

Daramata said it is important for students to know the symptoms of alcohol poisoning and the dangers of participating in risky behaviors.

“We acknowledge the fact that students drink,” Darmata said, adding that the lifestyle survey administered by WAVE showed 71 percent of students polled acknowledged drinking prior to entering college. “If students choose to drink, there are ways to drink safely, [keeping in mind that] the safest way is to not drink at all.”

## **Common problems**

Darmata said some students fail to report signs of alcohol poisoning out of fear that they will get in trouble or will get someone else in trouble, especially if there are minors involved.

“The risk that somebody could die has to be of greater importance [to the person],” Darmata said.

Darmata said the Good Samaritan Act protects students who call 911. Under the act, students who report alcohol poisoning will not be directly punished by the university. Police and first responders are often more concerned about the person who is at risk than checking identification of party-goers, Darmata said.

### **Resources**

WAVE offers many resources to students, including programs such as Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students, a short term intervention, therapy and harm reduction program, Darmata said.

“It helps to [influence] change by using whatever motivates the individual,” Darmata said. “It’s a shot of reality. [It allows students to] realize that for the amount spent on alcohol, they could go on a cruise next summer.”

The WAVE Web site also provides resources, such as the Electronic Check-Up to Go, an interactive web survey that allows students to enter information about their drinking patterns and receive feedback about their use of alcohol compared with the behaviors of other students, Darmata said.

“A lot of students tend to over-estimate the amount of alcohol other students drink,” Darmata said. “Because of this, [the student] tends to normalize their own misuse of alcohol.”

For more information or to apply for the Steven David Judd Memorial Scholarship, visit [www.nmsu.edu/~wave](http://www.nmsu.edu/~wave).