Words from the Wise: Alcohol abuse kills

Turn on your television or go to the movies and what do you see? I guarantee that before long you will see some sort of alcohol use on-screen. Whether in the form of a commercial for Budweiser or one of the characters in a show or film casually sipping a beer, the message that is being broadcasted is that drinking is a safe and fun thing to do. This could not be further from the truth. I have seen what alcohol can do and it’s not pretty.

One relative of mine had been an alcoholic his entire life. Eventually, he developed cirrhosis of the liver. In a few weeks, he went from weighing over 200 pounds to less than 100 pounds. He was placed in a hospital and a few weeks later he died.

Another person I know had been an alcoholic throughout high school. Eventually that alcoholism led to drug addiction. He did bizarre things to feed the addiction, such as selling the television in his family's house for drug money. He was in and out of rehab constantly. Recently he attempted to commit suicide twice, but was saved both times. Alcohol played a large part in both of these tragedies. It is incredibly addictive and can lead to many other horrible things. Obviously, the message that alcohol use is safe and fun does not apply.

Alcoholism has even forced one person I know out of residence hall life. He was going to parties when he should have been studying and almost failed out of school. He was put into rehab on campus and did very well the next semester. In this case, alcohol was a cause of his troubles with schoolwork. The lack of alcohol use was one of the only things that changed in his second semester and he achieved excellent marks. However, his problems with alcohol that first semester set him well behind the rest of his class and forced him to transfer to a college closer to home so that he would be able to commute and avoid temptation.

The message is considered to be as much a part of college life as studying and it has had many detrimental effects. College students are stereotyped as drunken idiots who only care about one thing: partying. This angers me because I know many people who do not fit this stereotype, but are criticized because of its existence.

Furthermore, it seems as if television and the movie industry have embraced this way of thinking and are now exploiting it. Movies like Old School market directly to people my age and glamorize the extreme use of alcohol. This does nothing but cause more young college students to give in to this lifestyle.

There is no need for this happens. Alcohol use is not a necessity; it is a privilege. I promise that you can have just as much fun hanging out with friends while sober as you can while drunk. Not only that, but you will be much better off for it in the future.

Do not forget that the reason we are attending this university is to get the knowledge that will help us to succeed in life. Why throw that all away for a good time that could have been had without alcohol? I know that I won't and I hope that the rest of my generation will join me.

Letter to the Editor: A few left behind

Dear Editor,

If you were at Midnight MAACness on Friday, Oct. 17, you noticed an extravagant display capable of leaving all in awe. What you are most likely unaware of, however, is the true scope of this endeavor. First and foremost, please let me emphasize the volunteer hours that went into this project. On Wednesday, Oct. 15, the Emerging Leaders diligently, efficiently and effectively worked from 7 p.m. until roughly 10 p.m. and on Thursday, Oct. 16, from 7 p.m. until 11 p.m. On Friday, Oct. 17, I arrived at the gym where I was met with a crew of Emergent Leaders that had been there for a while before my arrival and many of us did not leave that gym until 2 a.m. Just adding the time that I was there, we come to a total of 19 hours. That means that the Emerging Leaders worked on this breathtaking exhibit for well over 20 hours in three days!

I write this letter to not only acknowledge the hard work done by the Emerging Leaders, but to thank them for teaching me some new lessons in leadership. I thought about the camaraderie. On behalf of the campus community, I would also like to thank the Emerging Leaders for going the extra mile to ensure the success of Midnight MAACness, even in a time of peril. Our campus needed MAACness and it was, in fact, the ultimate display of our community. In addition, it satisfied one of the highest visions of many of the upper echelon leaders on campus as it brought members of the Greek, student and commuter community together to a fantastic event on a colossal scale.

I would also like to acknowledge the unexpected help at the end of the event from various fraternities and sororities (which I will not name in fear of missing one) who helped clean up. I would also like to recognize the hard work and commitment of Associate Director of Athletics Kurtis Tschirka, the Athletics Department as a whole, Assistant Dean of Campus Life and Emerging Leaders Advisor Cassie Iacovelli and all others who played an integral role in the execution of this event.

Without the leadership, commitment, effort and teamwork of the Emerging Leaders, however, this event would not have been possible. I truly respect their leadership ability and would also like to acknowledge their amazing problem solving skills. As we got closer to the event, there were various issues that arose, but their unmistakable powerful leadership ability prevailed as they systematically solved each issue in a timely and efficient manner.

Once again, I would like to wholeheartedly thank the Emerging Leaders for allowing me to take part in such a fantastic project. In addition, I would also like to thank them for teaching me many more lessons in leadership and making the entire project so much fun!

To the Emerging Leaders, I would like to close with a quote. When addressing problem solving in his book The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader, famous expert and author on leadership John C. Maxwell writes, “Leaders must continually see the big picture. They cannot afford to be overwhelmed by emotion. Nor can they allow themselves to get so bogged down in the details that they lose sight of what’s important.” Author Alfred Armand Montapert wrote several decades ago: “The few see the objectives, history records the successes of the latter, while oblivion is the reward of the former.”

Perry Whiteley
ACS Treasurer and SGA Events Coordinator