

# The CAST Line

A newsletter of the Nome Community Alcohol Safety Team (CAST), a community coalition made up of representatives from regional service agencies and concerned community members... working together guiding the Kawerak/Rural Cap alcohol safety project.



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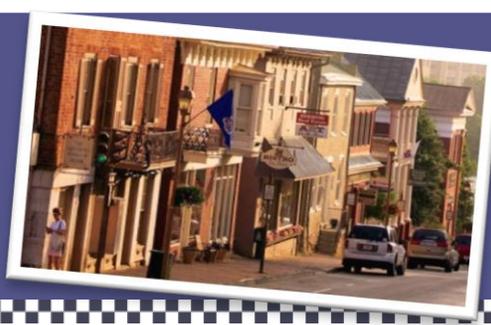
## CAST members attend Green Dot training in Lexington, VA

Members of the Green Dot adaptation committee met with Green Dot co-founder Jennifer Messina in Lexington, Virginia from June 19-21<sup>st</sup>. The goal of the meeting was to experience the Green Dot curriculum and give advice along the way, with adaptations that would make the presentation more relevant to life in the Bering Strait Region of Alaska. We discussed Inupiaq, St. Lawrence Island Yupik and Central Yupik value systems and reviewed wording and phrasing changes during training. We are now in the process of reviewing the curriculum and role playing situations to make them more appropriate to possible situations in Nome. Below is a list of the team members that traveled to Lexington...

Sherry Kulukhon (NSHC BHS)  
Lottie Ferreira (Head Bartender at Mark's Soap and Suds)  
Karla Nayokpuk (Shishmaref Wellness Coalition)  
Katie Miller (Teller Wellness Group)  
Kari Van Delden (UAF Nome Coop Extension Services)  
Lisa Ellanna Strickling of Kawerak Wellness Dept.

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The Green Dot bystander intervention program is going to shakeup previous community norms that spoke to misconceptions like... “It’s none of my business”. It is our business... safety is everyone’s business, and everyone’s responsibility. We can help each other stay safe in many ways...ways that the Green Dot program will help us identify and support. Jennifer gave practical tips on how to deal with very specific yet common situations and behaviors. Besides the amazing educational experience, we also took an

evening to drive in the shadow of the Appalachian Mountain range, through the scenic back roads of Virginia, through the tree draped Hollers and fields of fireflies (Lottie called them fairies)... it was magical. Jennifer and her children were consummate hosts and invited us to their home for a barbeque dinner on our last evening together. The training content, the trainer, the timing, and all individuals involved seem to fit so well. It is as though we are putting the pieces of a puzzle together. The CAST’s guidance on this strategy has been superb, and the

Green Dot program has proven so far, to be a great approach.

The Green Dot adaptation committee will continue to meet via four scheduled teleconferences between now and the October 15-18 Nome training. If you’d like to take part in reviewing the curriculum and contributing to the adaptation, please become a part of the adaptation committee... phone or email either Lisa or Panga at the following contact numbers: 443-4397 (Lisa) or 443-4270 (Panga).

## Request for your participation in TA needs Survey...

Below is a link to a very **short survey** being conducted by the SPF SIG support team to **help identify the training and support we might need** as we begin to implement of our strategies. It should only take about **5 minutes to complete**. Your responses will help shape the development of this year’s training plan. I appreciate your willingness to take the time to complete this. Please try to complete this survey by August 5<sup>th</sup>, and if you can’t, late surveys can be accepted until August 7<sup>th</sup>. Feel free to call me if you have any questions. Also, I can conduct the surveys with you over the phone if you would prefer. Thank you again for your dedication to the wellness of our community and region! [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SPF\\_SIG\\_Training](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SPF_SIG_Training)

We will be summarizing the information from these surveys and will let you know of the results. Please feel free to call Karen Benning or me (907) 222-5424 if you have any questions. Thank-you, in advance, for taking the time to let us know specifically what you need.



## Vera Starbard, Media Consultant joins the alcohol safety team!

During our June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, our guest and media consultant Vera Starbard introduced herself to the coalition members. Vera, the owner of Writing Raven Communications, has a colorful background in writing and editing. Vera also held the Public Relations Specialist position with South Central Foundation in Anchorage, where she was recognized by the Public Relations Society of America Alaska for her role in the Youth Suicide Prevention campaign. She has been recognized by many other organizations for her efforts, including the Alaska Federation of Natives. More information about Vera can be found here: [http://writingraven.com/about\\_me\\_8.html](http://writingraven.com/about_me_8.html)

During her latest visit to Nome, Vera presented to the CAST media subcommittee on June 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. She noted with great enthusiasm how well-prepared the CAST had been before consulting her, and thanked the CAST for all of the information provided to her. Vera gave many examples of different media strategies, and educated the subcommittee about these strategies. She led our media subcommittee in wonderful activities which helped us brainstorm our target audience(s),

our message(s) and the different approaches we might take to carry the campaign.

The experience Vera brings to the CAST is invaluable. With her guidance we are sure to carry an effective message to the community of Nome. In the near future, Vera will take the information and light brainstorming we have provided to her, and will present to the CAST her suggested strategies and messages for us to review. If you were unable to make the media strategies sub-committee meeting, or just have some ideas you would like to share, please let us know, and we will forward your ideas on to Vera!

Here's what Vera has to say about our project: "I'm so encouraged to meet so many people passionate about this effort, and have felt so welcome in Nome. Once the communication plan foundation is complete, the efforts will turn toward making the great ideas the coalition team came up with a reality in the community. I can't wait!"

Welcome to the team Vera! We are grateful to have you on board!

**Have time to be even more involved?  
Join a CAST Subcommittee!!!**

On June 12, we broke out into strategy subcommittees. These committees will be guiding the specific activities we have set out in our plan. Some CAST members that couldn't be present at the last meeting signed up for subcommittees via e-mail. Feel free to join one or more of the committees below...

**The media development committee** will work closely with Vera Starbard to develop culturally relevant and home-grown media messages that will speak directly to our communities about underage drinking and adult binge drinking. We had a short discussion June 12 about how successful prevention media focuses on the positive and often times doesn't even mention the alcohol or suicide that they are targeted to prevent... this is a good thing! Research shows that focusing on the protective factors (positive factors) rather than the risk factors (negative factors) makes for the most effective messaging in media. This committee Met on June 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> to learn about media strategies and to brainstorm ideas relevant to our region. Next meeting is TBA.

**The green dot adaptation committee** met with green dot developers to begin adapting the curriculum to the needs of our communities in this area of Alaska. Cultural norms and community norms were discussed. We want this program to be delivered in the most effective words that are respectful of our cultures in the region, and we also want to make sure that we bring a good understanding of our social and community norms to the table... for example, we want to make sure that the old adage "it's none of my business" is challenged and that people begin to do something when witnessing violence. The Green Dot message is that nobody can do everything, but everybody can do something. The green dot adaptation committee will meet on July 30, August 26<sup>th</sup>, September 27<sup>th</sup>, and October 8<sup>th</sup>.

**The cultural mentoring program committee** will provide guidance on the implementation of weekly traditional mentoring activities... activities such as sewing, fishing, picking greens, crocheting, knitting, skin sewing, beading, carving and Native dancing. First meeting will be held at end of August.

**Youth Leaders advisory committee**... This fall, we will work closely with the junior high and high school counselors in recruiting a group of students that are seen as people other youth would turn to when someone needs to talk. These individuals will be selected both by school counselors and the youth of the school to take part in a training session so that they can be taught emotional first aid skills to best be able to help their friends in need. These students will also take part in a retreat and participate in one day of the Nome Green Dot session in October of this year that will address prevention of bullying and violence in the school. Lisa will be going up to the school once per week to eat lunch with the students and check in on how they are doing and provide additional support. First meeting to be held end of Aug.

**Media Development:** Panga Pungowiyi, Sue Steinacher, Tara Schmidt, Lucus Keppel, Barb Nickels, Lisa Ellanna Strickling, Bridie Trainor, Keith Morrison, Darlene Trigg, Vera Starbard, Anda Saylor, Brian Saylor, Marjorie Tahbone, Kendra Takak, Loretta Bullard, and Joie Brown

**Green Dot Adaptation:** Bridie Trainor, Panga Pungowiyi, Kari van Delden, Sherry Kulukhon, Katie Miller of Teller, Karla Nayokpuk of Shishmaref, Lottie Ferreira, Lisa Ellanna Strickling, Josie Garnie, Donna Barr of Shishmaref, Colleen Reynolds, and Jennifer Messina

**Cultural Mentoring:** James Ventress, Bridie Trainor, Marjorie Tahbone, Panga Pungowiyi, and Lisa Ellanna Strickling.

**Youth Leaders:** Lisa Ellanna Strickling, Marjorie Tahbone, Bridie Trainor, Panga Pungowiyi, Carl White, Jacob Martin and Meghan Topkok

## Wellness Team Gains New Members!!!



Panganga Pungowiyi

The Wellness Department has a new staff person! Panganga “Panga” Pungowiyi has been hired as the new Wellness Coordinator. Panganga has been a member of the SPF team since inception... as an active member of the Community Alcohol Safety Team for the past two years. Her background knowledge of the SPFSIG grant has allowed her to hit the ground running! Panganga is originally from Savoonga, Alaska, and is St. Lawrence Island Yupik.

Panganga was previously employed as Kawerak’s Employment Worksite Coordinator, and now takes the position of Wellness Coordinator with our department ☺ Panganga is dedicated to wellness both on the job and off the job... she sits on the Bering Sea Women’s Group Board of Directors, The Alaska Brain Injury Network Advocacy Committee, and the Nome Methodist Church Parish Council. Panga also recently started up the facebook page entitled *Positively Nome*.

Her dedication to wellness is evident on every level of her life. She is a welcome addition to the Wellness team, and we are so grateful to have her!!!

Congratulations to Meghan Topkok, the newly awarded Lewin Postgraduate Fellow from Dartmouth College. Meghan has a degree in Alaska Native Studies with a minor in Linguistics from Dartmouth College. She feels strongly that there is a link between cultural continuity and wellness. Meghan has heritage ties to this region, and we are fortunate to be matched up as a Fellowship site for Meghan.

Meghan will be dividing her time here at Kawerak between the Beringia Center for Culture and Science, Wellness, Social Sciences and General Counsel. Her fellowship lasts from 7/1/13 to 7/1/14. Congratulations and welcome Meghan!!!



Meghan Topkok

**Thank you to the CAST for taking the recent coalition survey** administered by the State... it was a huge success, garnering 19 total responses. It provided us with great information that will help to guide us along the way. Below you will find a summary of some key highlights from the free and open response questions. The full report will be handed out to everyone at the next meeting. Thanks again!

**Question:** How could the coalition improve its Vision, Mission and Goals?

**Answers:** \* They are doing a fine job now and we should wait and see where they are going, then if needed help them on the way. \* I think we are currently on track. We just need more of the community to understand what is taking place. \*We need to communicate more with the community.

**Question:** How could the coalition improve its structure and membership?

**Answers:** \*Include more youth. \*Need more parents participating. \*I think the coalition is doing well as could be expected in our highly transient town. \*More liquor store and bar owners could be involved. \*City council members could be involved. \*Defining member roles and providing new member orientation could be helpful.

**Question:** How could the coalition improve its outreach to the community?

**Answers:** \*Get rid of the acronyms! \*Connect more through media. \*They are doing a fine job. \*More community outreach surrounding purpose, prevention and vision.

**Question:** How could the coalition improve its relationship with local government and community leaders? **Answers:** \*We need to keep them informed of what we are doing. \*Local and tribal governments are both represented, but mainly staff. \*City council needs to be more involved. \*There isn't a strong relationship with the city government. There have been efforts, but the city seems to be reluctant. \*I don't see the city's support.

**Question:** What do you see as a lasting impact/benefit of the SPFSIG project in your community?

**Answers:** \*General Awareness of the problem and the need for change. \* People are ready and willing to address the issue. \* I do think it will help the community to become more self-aware of alcohol usage...the perception of Nome as the place to go and drink, is one way of thinking that I am glad to see changing.

## Your Kawerak Wellness Team:

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