



## OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

Office of the President

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Dear Parents,

Old Dominion University is concerned about student abuse and illegal use of alcohol. Much research demonstrates that alcohol abuse can result in poor academic performance, health problems, and even sexual assault. The illegal use of alcohol may result in criminal prosecution. The secondary effects of alcohol abuse to roommates, friends, and others in our campus community can also be significant. The University has made a significant effort to increase student awareness of these facts.

The University offers programs and services to assist students who might be misusing or abusing alcohol. Enrollment in one of these programs is included as an educational requirement given to students who choose to violate the University alcohol policy. Some of these programs include alcohol education workshops, counseling/or referral to the University's Counseling Center.

Strict enforcement of the University alcohol policy is another important component of our efforts. Our alcohol policy has been described as "among the strictest in the state." Minimum sanctions for those found in violation are disciplinary probation; a mandatory alcohol education workshop; a \$50 fine; and parental notification, if the student offender is not of legal drinking age. Second offenders minimally pay a \$100 fine, attend a different alcohol workshop entitled "last call." Underage students must notify parents of their infraction. If there is a third offense, the student is suspended from the University.

Beginning at Freshman and Transfer Student Orientation, students are reminded of the consequences of alcohol abuse. The topic is highlighted again at Debut (the all-freshman, August orientation), during Welcome Week activities, at literally hundreds of programs presented in residence halls and classrooms, for fraternities, sororities and other student organizations, during Alcohol Awareness Week and via posters throughout the campus.

Another effort is to wish students a happy and safe birthday by sending them a birthday card urging them not to drink before they are of legal age and then, if they choose to drink, to do so responsibly. In an effort to deter the sale of alcohol to underage students and in cooperation with the State Alcohol Beverage Control Board, we have selected several students for training as "mystery shoppers." The ABC agents in the area train these students, who are over 21, to attempt to gain service at local bars, grocery and convenience stores. Mystery shoppers then report whether or not they were "carded" to the ABC for any necessary follow-up.

These deterrents and education efforts have made an impact, but some students continue to choose to drink illegally and abusively. I have been working with college students for over thirty years. The problem is not a new one. What has changed is the earlier age at which students begin to "party." More than half of the students entering college each year admit to

drinking prior to their matriculation. Many high school students have consumed alcohol frequently and in large quantities.

What can you do? Talk with your son or daughter about the choices that they have made about the use of alcohol. Ask them if they or their friends ever drink illegally or to excess. Discuss the importance of making good choices and the importance of confronting friends who have made bad choices. Point out that their decisions may be a matter of life or death.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roseann Runte".

Roseann Runte  
President