



Update

The newsletter of the
NU Directions
Campus-Community Coalition

Volume 7, Number 1

September, 2006

NU Directions

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Funded by a grant
from the
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



Meet Dr. Franco

UNL's new Senior Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs brings his interests and energy to the NU Directions coalition



Dr. Juan Franco

Brief Biography

Dr. Juan Franco served as vice president for student services and professor of psychology at Utah State since May 2003. In 2004, he was named USU Administrator of the Year by the university newspaper, the University Statesman, and received the Faculty Service Award from Utah State's student government.

Before going to Logan, he gained wide administrative experience in 28 years at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, where he was a professor of counseling and educational psychology. At NMSU, he served as associate director of the Mental Health Research and Evaluation program (1975-84), interim head and head of the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology (1983-88), associate dean of the College of Education (1987-90), interim

Editor's Note: Along with his appointment as UNL's new Senior Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, Dr. Juan Franco also replaces Dr. James Griesen as the co-chair of the NU Directions coalition. In this issue of Update, we'll help coalition members get to know the new Vice-Chancellor by sharing a brief biography of his academic career and his responses to coalition staff questions. Also in this issue is an appreciation to Dr. Griesen, who retired this past July and will serve on the faculty in Educational Psychology, training and mentoring future Higher Education administrators.

An Interview with Dr. Franco

Q: What are your views about the problem of "college drinking" and the ways institutions across the nation have tried to approach it?

A: College drinking has indeed been a challenge for institutions of higher education for many years. Early on the approach that many institutions took was to try to get students to stop drinking altogether. Many used scare tactics to get students to stop drinking. Over the years, institutions have changed their approach to one that encourages students to drink responsibly if indeed there are going to drink. Another positive factor is that universities are now also including the wider community in addressing high-risk drinking behavior. I think also that communities are recognizing that this is not just a student problem, but that many non-students also engage in alcohol abuse.

Q: As new member of this community, what has struck you about the alcohol environment here in Lincoln?



Franco *(continued from page 1)*

Interview *(continued)*

A: One of the things that has struck me about the alcohol environment here, is that it appears that alcohol is consumed much more “openly” here than at other places I have been. It seems that alcohol consumption in public places is more accepted here. I also know, however, that many individuals are interested in changing the environment such that students and others do not abuse the use of alcohol. And I believe they are making a difference.

Q: I know you’ve read a lot of the materials that the coalition has produced throughout the years. What are your first impressions of the NU Directions coalitions?

A: I am really impressed with what the NU Directions coalition has done. It is clear that this is not a “university” or a “community” problem. Rather, it is something that impacts all of us and needs to be addressed by all interested parties working together. And the results are clear. The amount of binge drinking on campus has decreased from over 60% to 47% in just a few years according to some statistics that have been presented to me. I know this rate is decreasing even more. I think it shows what can be accomplished when all work together for a common cause.

Q: How would you like to see this coalition evolve, especially as we move into our final year of the official RWJF grant?

A: My hope is that the coalition will continue its work even after the RWJF grant runs out. Its work is not completely done. We need to do even more to ensure that if students are going to drink they do

it responsibly. I want to be a part of this coalition. I believe there are many benefits that derive from the University and the Lincoln communities working together that go beyond the alcohol issue. I am hoping the coalition can address other issues of mutual interest as well.

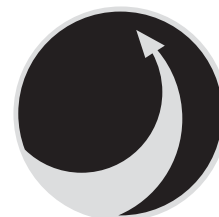
Q: What’s the one thing we should know about you as a new leader and colleague in UNL’s work to change the alcohol environment?

A: I have considerable faith in our young people. I believe that if we set high standards for them they will meet them, whether the standards are in the academic setting or in terms of social behavior. I know that students can have fun without being intoxicated and I hope to work with the students and the Coalition towards that end.

Biography *(continued)*

associate vice president for academic affairs (1989-90), associate vice president for academic affairs (1990-97), vice president of administration (1997-2001), interim vice president for student services and dean of students (2001-02) and Regents’ chief of staff (2001-03).

Franco earned his bachelor’s degree in mathematics at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas, and his doctorate in counseling and guidance at New Mexico State. He has authored or co-authored more than 50 academic papers, presented at more than 30 academic conferences, and written or co-written grants totalling more than \$3.6 million.



Lincoln College Partnership creates joint effort from UNL, NWU, and SCC to reduce house party problems

In the continuing effort to reduce the number of citizen complaints about disruptive parties in the Lincoln area, the NU Directions coalition has collaborated with two other college campuses in the city -- Nebraska Wesleyan University and Southeast Community College -- to create the Lincoln College Partnership. Student leaders and administrators from the three institutions met through the spring and early summer to discuss the problem of house parties and devise a message that all three institutions could adopt simultaneously.

The Partnership launched its first campaign in late August at the beginning of the academic year when college parties are most prevalent. Titled "We Agree," the campaign includes door hangers for students living in residence halls and posters for off-campus students, and flyers that accompany warning citations issued by Lincoln Police responding to citizen complaints. There is also a web site where students can go to learn about the laws of Lincoln and get advice on how to keep a party from becoming a problem. Links to materials created by coalition member Robert Schroeder of the UNL Alcohol and Other Drug Programs unit, including a house party guide and list of laws and consequences, are also included.

The campaign centers on a message from students at the three institutions: "We, the college students at UNL, NWU, and SCC agree with city officials and residents that



wild parties are hurting city neighborhoods, and even though only 25% of these parties come from college students, we want to do our part in making things better for all of us."

Student leaders from the three institutions joined Police Chief and coalition Co-chair Tom Casady in a media conference to introduce the Partnership and the "We Agree" message. Student representative statements were included in local broadcasts and newspaper articles.

The Lincoln College Partnership follows a set of recommendations created by an ad hoc committee on neighborhood disturbances led by City Council member Patte Newman. Newman, a member of the coalition, has worked with neighborhood association leaders, landlords, the city's police force and administrators at UNL to address the ongoing problems in neighborhoods surrounding the UNL campus, particularly the North Bottoms, a neighborhood located to the immediate North of the city campus. The committee recommended that the colleges of Lincoln work together to educate students about the impact of hosting or attending parties that get out of control.

Jane Reynolds, Project Coordinator for the NU Directions coalition, brought representatives from the three campuses together and worked with Student Involvement Information Strategies to create the campaign. Jane has overseen the coalition's efforts in Lincoln neighborhoods since her arrival at the coalition in 2003.

"College student leaders should be congratulated for working with authorities to tone down disruptive parties in Lincoln."

Lincoln Journal Star Editorial
September 2, 2006

The Lincoln College
Partnership



for more information:
si.unl.edu/weagree



by Linda Major,
Project Director
NU Directions

Every Cause Needs a **CHAMPION**

Every cause needs a champion, and for the last eight years we've had two leaders whose collective wisdom, vision and strategic thinking have helped guide our efforts and reach our goals. They have provided visible and vocal leadership on the campus, in the community and across the nation. They have served as advocates for our strategies. Their response to resistance was to persuade the resistor to join our cause. They modeled creative problem solving, abundance thinking and maintaining a sense of humor as the coalition struggled to find the win-win among diverse stakeholders.

Our campus champion, Dr. Jim Griesen, recently retired from his position as Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, returning to the faculty ranks. His contributions are too many to list and yet are too important to ignore. Our community champion, Chief Tom Casady, will stay the course contributing his time, talent and energy through the end of the project in 2008. Both deserve to be recognized, and both deserve to be thanked for their commitment to realizing an environment that supports the NU Directions vision.

To that end, the NU Directions' staff is pleased to announce that both Tom and Jim will be recognized for their many contributions through a new award to be named "Champions for Change." This award will recognize faculty, staff, students and/or community members whose actions contribute to making a positive change on the campus or in the community. The plaque, recognizing the "Champions of Change" award recipients, will hang on the wall of Scholars and Leaders of Distinction located on the second floor of the Nebraska Union.

Words can not describe the gratitude we owe Dr. Griesen and Chief Casady for their dedication to the NU Directions' initiative. I hope you'll join me in honoring these "Champions for Change."



Dr. James Griesen



Chief Tom Casady



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