

University of Massachusetts and the Town of Amherst

A Safer Community through Partnership

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Edward Davis, LLC

2 Atlantic Avenue
Boston, MA 02110
617 720-6250

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1. Executive Summary

In recent years, the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass Amherst) and the Town of Amherst (town) have experienced repeated instances of large crowd disturbances among students and visitors at celebratory events on and off campus. Such incidents have posed a threat to public safety and have adversely affected the reputation of the University and the Town. These types of disturbances are a national problem and not unique to UMass Amherst. Recent celebrations and demonstrations at the University of California Davis, University of Connecticut and the firing of a football coach at Penn state turned into riots. In response to the Blarney Blowout 2014, UMass Amherst has in a forward thinking manner, initiated this comprehensive review in an effort to inform a logical process for prevention or mitigation of future events. The following report provides a review of the incident, followed by recommendations for best practices in the prevention, management and response efforts for UMass Amherst and Town stakeholders.

Our primary goal is to suggest improved plans for the University and the Town for a holistic community response to large gatherings with a focus on prevention and de-escalation. This is not a classic after-action report or an evaluation of any one entity's role or performance. The examination of the large-scale incidents on and off campus at planned and unplanned occasions, including but not limited to, the 2014 and preceding years' "Blarney Blowout" offers lessons for improved use of information, coordination, anticipation, preparation and response. Further, while a thorough description and historical context of the 2014 event is provided, the heart of this report is found within the recommendations, which provide guidance for several University and Town stakeholders including, administrators, student groups and organizations, residents, business owners and police responders.

The March 2014 Event

On March 8, 2014, the "Blarney Blowout" event took place in the Town of Amherst and resulted in large crowds of students and off-campus visitors engaging in a riot provoked by heavy alcohol consumption and preemptive use of riot gear and force by police. The size of the crowd was unprecedented. Police had not faced a crowd of this magnitude in previous, planned and unplanned events in Amherst. Some students and visitors exhibited serious criminal conduct during the Blarney Blowout including throwing beer bottles and cans at police officers and destroying property. The police confronted overwhelming odds and were being inundated with calls for help. Despite these facts, they managed to quell the disturbances without serious injury. For this they should be thanked. In this report we do list some obvious shortcomings in the police actions in the spirit of learning. Over the course of this event the Amherst Police Department (APD) arrested 55 individuals, 21 of whom were UMass Amherst students. The UMass Amherst Police Department (UMPD) made 3 arrests; none were UMass Amherst students.

A brief timeline of events follows:

- 5:00 AM students began to tweet indicating drinking was about to start for that day. There were clear indications from other social media that drinking had begun on Friday night.
- 8:00 AM twitter continued to show signs of heavy drinking as crowds begin to enter the streets in Amherst
- 8:00 AM UMPD reported crowds heavy in North Amherst, dining hall lines were overcrowded “1000’s of students wearing white and green t shirts” were exiting campus heading towards North Amherst apartment complexes
- 11:00 AM UMPD response team debriefed
- 11:00 AM Teams from both APD and UMPD gathered to respond to the crowds.
- 11:00 AM a large crowd gathered at Puffton Village. APD and UMPD began a dispersal plan after complaint by the property management of large numbers and unruly and violent crowd behavior. Approximately 2500 individuals were directed to walk southbound on North Pleasant St.
- 11:30 AM traffic was congested due to immense crowds walking down the street. Traffic vandalisms began to happen
- 11:30 AM Police gathered at Hobart Lane
- 12:00 PM APD shut down public bus access to the area
- 12:00 PM Brandywine Apartment complex crowd became a disturbance; APD was dispatched to Brandywine and Townehouse Apartments
- 12:15 PM APD reported a steel pole being knocked over; bottles and snowballs being thrown at the police and apartment complex security guards
- 12:30-1:00 PM APD and UMPD officers were authorized to disperse the Brandywine crowd, using chemical munitions.
- 1:15 PM A large crowd gathered at North Pleasant and Fearing St.; APD officers observed several hundred projectiles being thrown at the police; Dispersal orders were given; chemical munitions used to disperse the violent and unruly crowd
- 2:30 PM Crowds dwindled and event ended

In the days and weeks preceding the Blarney Blowout celebration of 2014, the Town of Amherst and UMass Amherst took steps to prepare for the event:

- Several weeks prior, it was clear to UMass Amherst Administration that the event was being heavily promoted on social media. To prepare for the event, Town and UMass Amherst administrators met with APD, UMPD, Amherst Area Chamber, Amherst Business Improvement District and Amherst Select Board to discuss prevention plans.
- A second meeting took place approximately one week prior to the event with key stakeholders.
- Two bars involved in a separate meeting agreed to sell tickets and prevent lines from forming.
- The APD assigned 1 sergeant and 24 patrol officers to the event.

- APD requested assistance from UMPD and State Police to increase the uniform presence in the town. UMPD was asked to provide 1 supervisor along with 4 officers and the State Police were asked to assist at 2:00 PM on March 8th.
- APD also sent officers door to door in problem-areas in the days leading up to the event stating that illegal and inappropriate behavior would not be tolerated.
- Local media were used to disseminate the message that inappropriate behavior would not be tolerated.
- On March 3rd the Dean of Students Office sent out an email stating that the Blarney Blowout was not a school-sanctioned event and warned students of the consequences of violating the Code of Student Conduct. On the same day parents were informed of the event and an email was sent requesting them to discuss the subject with their children.
- UMass Amherst also sent warning letters to students residing in notorious, problematic apartments and students with histories of conduct code violations. These messages warned students that disciplinary action would be taken if students got out of control and that an increased police presence would be at the Blarney Blowout.

With cooperation from the UMass Amherst Administration and UMPD as well as the APD and the Town, we facilitated a series of meetings with multiple stakeholders involved in the March 2014 event and reviewed numerous policies, reports, social media, newspaper articles, videos and other historical documents as the basis for this report.

Key Findings and Recommendations

This evidence-based review process informed findings and recommendations provided below in seven critical areas: community policing, police planning, police response, alcohol-focus, social media, student and UMass Amherst accountability and public perception.

Community Policing: Our primary finding and subsequent recommendation is for the APD and UMPD to more fully adopt a comprehensive model of community policing. During this event, there was a clear lack of coordination, communication and collaboration among and between law enforcement agencies, UMass Amherst and the Town of Amherst. A community policing framework focusing on collaborative partnerships, organizational transformation and problem solving would allow for a more cohesive and strategic response to a large crowd disturbance such as the “Blarney Blowout”.

1. **Police Planning:** After review of all reports provided it is clear there was no advance written plan from APD or UMPD specific to this event, for use of police resources and in predicting the size and behavior of the crowds, despite the many warning signs in the days leading up to the event. UMPD reports that they had a written plan that they use in all events that require providing assistance off campus. They report that this plan was utilized on that day. The APD was the police department with off campus jurisdiction during this event. Their full complement of officers is only 46

sworn officers and not everyone worked the event. The police were significantly overwhelmed during the event, thus unable to disperse the crowd effectively. This presented safety concerns for the community, students and the police. The Town should evaluate the current sworn strength of the APD and increase its size in accordance with national best practices to provide for increased safety and security of the Amherst community.

2. Specific to Police Planning, we recommend the following:

- The UMPD and APD's planning process for events of this magnitude should consistently include:
 - Early, meaningful coordination and communication with external partners, including the UMass Amherst Administration, Town Officials, Fire and Medical personnel and the District Attorney.
 - Planned strategies to monitor crowd volumes including reviewing electronic systems that track the number of residents and guests that can be compared to the acceptable safe occupancy levels of residence halls, effective monitoring of social media, partnering with local business community and property managers to monitor increased volume (in progress).
 - Contingency plans and/or protocols in the event that earlier deployment is necessary.
 - Protocols and contingency plans for multiple locations within the event in addition to exercises to test effectiveness of these plans.
 - Clear expectations regarding lines of authority and decision making processes prior to and during an event.
 - Provision of adequate resources, including staffing available for the event.
 - UMPD and APD, along with other emergency responders should conduct joint, field training exercises for crowd control and response.
- All members of UMPD, APD and Massachusetts State Police working during a major event should be briefed about the operational plan, and contingency plans prior to the event.
- UMPD and APD should develop standard practices for shared operational planning, unified command structure and operation of joint emergency operation centers, joint tactical training and collaborative after action review for any planned or unanticipated large scale event.
- The Town of Amherst should increase police department sworn staffing according to national best practices.
- The Town and APD should utilize the resources of the newly signed Western Massachusetts Mutual Aid Agreement with regional partners that can provide much needed support for large-scale events.
- The Town of Amherst should create a Civilian Advisory Group to enhance community-police relations. This Civilian Advisory Group should include members of the UMass community.

- The Massachusetts Legislature should appropriate funds for joint police training as well as a contingency fund for police staffing during large-scale events for APD and UMPD.
 - Police jurisdiction including policy and practice should be reviewed and amended to facilitate ongoing, joint operations between APD and UMPD, particularly in areas surrounding the campus.
3. **Police Response:** Several factors contributed to the unorganized and traditional police response including the *immense pressure, command confusion* and *premature use of chemical munitions* to manage the behavior of the large crowds. The police response, including the donning of riot helmets and the use of chemical munitions had the effect of creating confusion and perpetuating the unruly behavior of the crowds. Specific to Police Response, we recommend the following:

- Sufficient police resources should be available to conduct large-scale crowd dispersal.
 - A clear leader should be charged with the responsibility of oversight who asserts authority and leadership to direct and deescalate officer actions.
 - Police officials should use communication tools early on to set the tone, inform, engage and direct the crowd.
 - The APD and UMPD both currently train separately in the effective and safe management of crowd control. Going forward, both departments should train jointly in crowd control management.
 - Members of the APD and UMPD should receive joint, urban training in the effective and safe management of crowds and dispersal.
 - APD and UMPD should receive additional, joint training on the safe and appropriate use of force in crowd situations. APD and UMPD currently receive separate training in this area.
 - APD and UMPD should together develop criteria to assess appropriate use of riot control tools and munitions after necessary, joint training.
 - APD and UMPD should review practices and reliance upon chemical agents.
 - APD and UMPD should enhance their utilization of both covert and overt video cameras to assist in the prevention of large-scale disorder.
 - APD should enhance its current complaint process. The Citizen Advisory Board is an appropriate body to discuss enhancements to this process.
 - Both the APD and UMPD should use information as an effective crime prevention and/or mitigation strategy.
 - Both APD and UMPD should adopt evidence-based, preventive policing strategies.
4. **The Role of Social Media:** There were a series of warning signs leading up to the event that the Amherst and UMass Amherst communities failed to act upon. Many of these warnings were very specifically communicated in Twitter feeds. Independent, promotional websites also marketed this event to a broad audience,

increasing awareness of the event and encouraging participation. Specific to the Role of Social Media, we recommend the following:

- APD and UMPD should more effectively monitor information such as size and location of crowds on social media sites in preparation for large-scale events to ensure appropriate planning, prevention and deployment of resources.
- APD and UMPD should expand their use of social media sites to provide information to the public, correct misinformation and deliver latest news around events.
- The information gathered should be consistently shared among appropriate stakeholders for effective intervention if necessary.

5. Alcohol-Focus: High risk drinking and a ‘right to gather’ mentality by young people fueled the chaos during the March 2014 event. Specific to Alcohol-Focus, we recommend the following:

- Officially end the Blarney Blowout.
- Encourage entire campus community to discuss the problem of high risk drinking and solutions. Emphasize class commitments and a balance with social events.
- Increase offering alcohol-free options at on and off campus entertainment venues to provide safer avenues for students who do not wish to drink and/or to reduce the amount of hours students drink.
- Empower the Town-Gown Steering Committee to thoroughly review current and new, on and off campus entertainment venues.
- Increase offerings of late night social activities without alcohol.
- Extend hours of the campus center and recreation center to offer more social space.
- Increase offerings of alcohol-free activities during high-risk times such as during the weeks leading up to large-scale events.
- UMass Amherst administration should evaluate how students are informed of the alcohol policies, how the policies are enforced and if there is consistent enforcement across departments.
- A written policy regarding alcohol marketing and promotion should be implemented.
- Messaging to the students prior to large-scale events by UMass Amherst should include a positive component with a description of pro social events for students followed by the non-sanctioned event and consequences message.

6. Student and UMass Amherst Responsibility: There was a clear lack of enforcement of specific University policies during this event. We believe that policies that mirror other universities will be in accord with student rights and with protecting the rights of others. Specific to Student and UMass Amherst Responsibility, we recommend the following:

- UMass Amherst should implement and fund successful programs such as the Campus Community Partnership Initiative (CCPI) at Boston College and the Georgetown University Program. This funding should include the development and implementation of a Community Liaison Officer program with appropriate staffing levels.
- We recommend UMass Amherst utilize Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). UMass Amherst administration and UMPD should review problem and congested areas on campus through CPTED evaluations in an effort to improve ability to control large crowd events, reduce crime and disorder and improve quality of life for staff, residents and visitors.
- UMass Amherst Administration should conduct a full review and amendment to the Visitor Policy to include detailed enforcement protocols.
- UMass Amherst should reconcile, train and enforce expected behavior that balances student rights, university rights and safety, and continue to hold students accountable for disruptive and malicious behavior.
- UMass Amherst should facilitate a process whereby students are able to acclimate themselves within the larger community and Town of Amherst.
- UMass Amherst Administration and UMPD should align the current functions of the campus based security process to create a continuum of response and responsibility for all UMass Amherst stakeholders. UMass Amherst Administration and UMPD should create a collaborative process for all stakeholders involved in the security process. RA's should alert police when security issues arise and UMPD should respond.
- UMass Amherst Student Government should develop a plan with other stakeholders to avoid large crowd disturbances and violence at school.

7. Public Perception: The “Blarney Blowout” and similar historical events have contributed to a “party school” reputation that UMass Amherst administration and many students work very hard to change. The negative media coverage after this event only reinforced that reputation. A press plan and training is vital. While prevention is the best way to avoid negative press, a strategic and collaborative media plan is imperative to handle the messaging after the event. Specific to Public Perception, we recommend the following:

- Develop and implement a joint communication strategy between town and UMass Amherst for all large-scale events, planned and unplanned. Both Town and UMass Amherst need to fully share information and use it for planning, prevention and implementation.
- UMass Amherst should review their media strategy to more effectively promote the educational and training efforts they are making to reduce high risk drinking and increase student responsibility in the neighborhoods.

2. Our Team

Ed Davis is the Founder and CEO of Edward Davis, LLC, a full-service security and consulting firm. The firm specializes in advising the development of the latest technology for major corporations in the police and security fields. We deliver high quality products and services in the areas of risk management, continuity of business planning, crisis management for corporations, as well as large scale events and best practice consulting in community policing. Davis has over 30 years of law enforcement experience including his roles as Boston Police Commissioner and Superintendent (Chief) of the Lowell Police Department. While Boston Police Commissioner he administered six world sports championship celebrations. Davis also led the highly successful response to the Boston Marathon bombing. He is a recognized expert in crisis management. He brings extensive community policing experience and a broad range of local, state, national and international experience in law enforcement, public safety and community relations to this work. He has been recognized for interagency collaboration across the commonwealth and nationally. Edward Davis, LLC has extensive resources and a personnel pool to draw upon for expertise in specific areas of law enforcement, public safety and management. This combination of experience, education and engagement in the real world public safety practice and research creates a unique think tank that excels in the creation of new knowledge and its translation into state-of-the art policies and services that make a difference. The review team for this project consists of police security and management professionals with extensive expertise in public safety and academia.

Mark Delaney is currently the supervisor of the Executive Protection branch of Edward Davis, LLC. He served as the Colonel of the Massachusetts State Police from 2006 to 2009. As Colonel he commanded over 3,000 employees including over 2500 sworn officers. He was responsible for the highest-level oversight of state police crowd management at major events in the commonwealth, training, command structure and enforcement of rules and regulations throughout his organization. As a Major he served as the State Police Liaison at the Multi-Agency Command Center during the Democratic National Convention in Boston. Previously he commanded the Detectives assigned to the Middlesex District Attorney's Office, the Attorney General's Office, as well as Forensic Services. He is experienced in investigating and resolving critical incidents such as the crash of the State Police helicopter, the 6.5 million dollar theft from the State Treasury, the Administrative investigation into the facts and circumstances surrounding the death of inmate Geoghan. Delaney directed the Massachusetts State Police to collaborate with other organizations during his tenure.

Christine M. Cole is a Public Safety and Management expert. She has executive level management and supervisory experience and has worked as a change agent across and within sectors. She has extensive experience as a collaborator and facilitator with practitioners, community members and academics. She has conducted reviews for the International Association of City and County Managers (ICMA) as a contractor and

works professionally in the safety and justice sector using data and research to drive performance and reform in government agencies. She has instructed in executive education programs on crisis management and response, presents and facilitates at domestic and international conferences and training meetings. She has worked in the US, Europe, Asia, the Pacific and Africa.

Daniel Linskey is a Law Enforcement training consultant working with law enforcement and emergency management leaders both nationally and internationally for large-scale event management. He retired after serving 27 years with the Boston Police Department, having served the last 5 years as the Superintendent-in-Chief of the department. In this capacity he was responsible for the day-to-day operations of this 3000 member department. He oversaw the successful planning and execution of high profile large - scale events including New England sport team victory celebrations for the Red Sox, Celtics, Bruins and New England Patriot championship series. Linskey was the Incident Commander for the 2013 Boston Marathon and oversaw the police response to Occupy Boston. All of these events bring thousands of people into the city.

Sharon Hanson is an attorney and the Chief Operating Officer of Edward Davis, LLC. She has executive management experience in law enforcement, most recently as Chief of Staff for the Boston Police Department. She served as the Director of Research and Development for the Lowell Police Department which received acclaim for community policing philosophy and practice. She was a thirteen year prosecutor, working with victims of felonies and misdemeanors and rising through the ranks to become the Deputy First Assistant in charge of Superior Court prosecutions.

3. Review Process

The review process took place over a four-month period from April 2014 through July 2014. To begin a comprehensive review of the March 2014 “Blarney Blowout”, we used the questions below to guide our process:

1. Why did this event cause public disorder and turn violent?
2. What signs existed that the event would be different, bigger, or more disruptive this year?
3. What can be learned from the pre-event indicators that inform policy or practice changes at UMass Amherst and the town to prevent, control and avoid large crowd disturbances?
4. Are there lessons and best practices that can minimize disruption and disorder? Can modifications be made to routine work to incorporate practice in coordination of resources?
5. In what other activities might the town and UMass Amherst engage to stop a recurrence?

Several data sources were used during this process including interviews, meetings, policy and practice reviews, and police reports from APD and UMPD, public document reviews, newspaper articles, social media and other reports.

3.1 Individual and Group Meetings

In-depth meetings and focus groups were essential sources of data for this review. We structured meetings and focus groups as guided conversations rather than structured queries. In other words, while we were pursuing a consistent line of inquiry, the stream of questions was more fluid, creating space for participants to offer different perspectives and express concerns for this community¹. A series of individual and group meetings were facilitated over the course of seven site visits to UMass Amherst between April 2014 and July 2014. Our team met with three leaders within the UMPD; three leaders within the APD; the Town Manager and the Assistant Town Manager; four UMass Amherst Administrators; thirteen UMass Amherst Staff from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Campus Life, Residential Life and Psychological Health (CCPH); ten UMass Amherst staff from the Dean of Students Office and Center for Student Development; four Amherst Property Managers/Owners; and four Amherst and Hadley Liquor Store Owners; five Neighbors from North Amherst; and three Neighbors from Fearing Street Neighborhood. We also met with several individuals including the current and immediate past chairs of the Amherst Select Board, Director of the Student Legal Service Office and the General Counsel at UMass Amherst and with the District Attorney and his assistant.

A series of private meetings with approximately 50 students were conducted in seven separate 45-minute intervals over the course of two days. All student meetings were invitation-only. Student participants represented a variety of class years and majors. Student leaders, including the immediate and past Student Government Association Presidents were interviewed.

Meeting lengths ranged from 45 minutes to 3 hours and were conducted in classrooms or conference rooms at the University, except for meetings with police leaders, which took place at APD and UMPD.

Participants in all meetings were assured that their contributions would remain anonymous. Each participant was asked if they were present during the March 2014 event, and what their thoughts, observations, and concerns were.

During group meetings, attempts were made to engage all participants. There was discussion in these groups concerning official preparation efforts for the event and their thoughts in the aftermath of it. While there was specific information to gather, facilitators also allowed for unstructured time where participants could voice their concerns. Discussions with administrators also included shared successes and challenges with community stakeholders. We asked administrators and town officials about how the town and UMass Amherst coordinate together, specifically in the planning and delivery of large events. Here we attempted to understand to what degree shared planning and

¹ Rubin, H.J. & Rubin, I.S. (1995). *Qualitative Interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

implementation of plans for security, prevention and coordination exist for both routine work and special events. All stakeholders recognized a problem with the current policies and practices. Everyone, including students and police, were willing to work together to best come up with a solution.

3.2 Policy and Practice Reviews

We reviewed policies and practices at the University, the UMPD and APD. Also reviewed was a report from the APD that was prepared after the event and was clearly more a review than a plan. APD and UMPD police reports were reviewed as well as relevant UMass Amherst policies and practices which were provided by the administration and located on the publicly accessible UMass Amherst website. Policies were reviewed and assessed for completeness, clarity and consistency with the enforcement and behavior related to the March 2014 incident. UMass Amherst policies and practices we reviewed included: student code of conduct, alcohol, visitor and discipline policies.

3.3 Reports, Documents & Media

Police reports and related 911 calls from the APD and UMPD were reviewed in addition to after action reports. We also reviewed two previously commissioned UMass Amherst discipline and security reports, a 2007 report from Peter Lake, on the Student Discipline Process and a 2013 report by Business Protections Specialists on the Residence Hall Security Program. A review of mainstream print and electronic media as well as web based and video evidence in the public domain were conducted.

3.4 Historical Events

A critically important part of our work was to learn about other historical events, how they were managed and the student perception of that management. The historical review of student behavior in the neighborhoods and at large scale events at UMass Amherst included the annual Hobart Hoedown, Blarney Blowout, Extravaganja, and a series of championship sporting events.

3.5 Direct Observation

To further understand and assess the March 2014 event, we toured the key areas of the Town of Amherst as well as the University. We took photographs at several locations to capture physical and social characteristics, creating the opportunity for direct observation². We observed the following locations: Townehouse Apartments and Brandywine Apartments; Puffton Village Apartments at 1040 North Pleasant Street; Hobart Lane across from Puffton Village; corner of North Pleasant and Fearing Streets; McGuirk Football Stadium and surrounding fields off of University Drive; and Downtown Amherst. These locations were selected for their historical significance and because they also drew the largest crowds during the March 2014 event.

4. University of Massachusetts Amherst and Town of Amherst

² Yin, R.K. (2009). *Case Study Research Design and Methods*. Vol 5. Sage

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is a large university campus in a residential community of 37,819 according to the 2010 US Census³. The town is 27.8 square miles. The undergraduate student population enrolled at the UMass Amherst is just over 22,000⁴. The total number of students enrolled at UMass Amherst is more than half of the entire town of Amherst. Of those students, approximately half, mostly third and fourth years students live off campus. It was reported to us by the town that UMass Amherst students are counted in the 2010 US Census. Yet, in the mindset of many – students and town residents alike – they are temporary residents only. For many students, the off campus activities of partying and excessive drinking and resulting disorder and poor decision making demonstrate that the boundary between the campus and the town is, for these students, blurred. UMPD has sixty-one officers who police the school.

The town recently implemented regulatory changes related to occupancy permitting by landlords.⁵ This initiative is most impressive and a good example of preventive regulatory practice. It could become a model regulation that may assist countless other municipalities. We are similarly impressed by UMass Amherst's efforts to proactively educate off campus dwellers of their responsibilities. Both the enforcement of the residential property permitting and the outreach to off campus dwellers must happen uniformly and regularly for maximum impact and credibility.

The town has put limits and restrictions on liquor license holders. Landlords have become more engaged with the town to monitor their student tenants. They cooperate with the town and several of the landlords have hired private security.

The school in many ways resembles a town itself with roadways, a hotel and conference center, and high-rise residences. The administrations of both the town and UMass Amherst seem to appreciate the scale of the school and acknowledge the interrelatedness of the two entities. Amherst encompasses two other colleges, and combined the total number of students from those two colleges is less than 15% of UMass Amherst enrolled undergraduates.⁶

By reputation, UMass Amherst has become more selective and is currently ranked #76 (tied) among all public and private National Universities by the US News and World Report.⁷ The flagship campus of the University of Massachusetts system is by many accounts increasingly competitive for admissions. During our interviews, we were told that SAT scores have increased for admitted and accepted students. The current administration and the student leaders with whom we met are frustrated by the activities

³ Amherst Massachusetts, <https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=amherst+Massachusetts&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8> Accessed June 22, 2014.

⁴ University of Massachusetts website, <http://www.umass.edu/gateway/about/umass-glance> Accessed August 17, 2014 undergraduate is 22,000 <http://www.UniversityofMassachusettsAmherst.edu/visitorsctr/faq> Accessed June 22, 2014.

⁵ Town of Amherst (2014). Article 29. Residential Rental Property Bylaw. Retrieved on August 27, 2014 from <https://www.amherstma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/22483>

⁶ Amherst College website, total students 1,785 <https://www.amherst.edu/aboutamherst/facts>. Accessed June 22, 2014. Hampshire College website, enrolled students is 1400 <https://www.hampshire.edu/admissions/12331.htm> Accessed June 22, 2014.

⁷ <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/university-of-massachusetts-amherst-2221> Accessed September 16, 2014.

of the relatively small percentage of students whose behavior besmirches the whole. As the UMass Amherst home page notes⁸, social media and YouTube videos keep the reputation of UMass Amherst as a party school alive in spite of successful efforts to change the culture of the disorderly behavior.

5. The 2014 Event

5.1 Overview

The “Blarney Blowout”, previously called Kegs and Eggs, started as a bar sponsored event prior to St. Patrick’s Day. It is not an UMass Amherst event, nor does the University sanction it. With social media playing a key marketing role, the nature of this event has changed in recent years with increased participation and alcohol consumption. In prior years it was reportedly a marketing strategy created by the private bars in town with the activity centered primarily around the bars. In 2012 there were intoxicated young people creating disturbances in the downtown area early in the day as well as urinating and vomiting in public. In 2013, the unruly crowds were centered at the Townhouse Apartment complex located on Meadow Street in Amherst. The young people in the crowd were heavily intoxicated and engaged in fights and throwing bottles at the police responders. In 2014 there continued to be large groups of heavily intoxicated individuals who resorted to violent and unruly behavior that presented significant safety concerns for the individuals involved, the public and law enforcement. As a result of the last few years, and after intervention by town leaders, the bars are now required to sell tickets to avoid overcrowding. In 2014, the bars agreed not to promote the event on social media.

5.2 Historical Context

In recent years, there have been several events where large groups of students have become intoxicated and engaged in disruptive behavior on and off campus. These events provide a historical context for the most recent event. Details of these events are described below.

UMass Amherst has a history of rowdy, large crowd disturbances around sporting championships. The most recent World Series celebration on October 31, 2013 was a planned event that began with students enjoying organized activities on campus. As the game continued a few hundred students poured out of the residence halls, resulting in a disturbance and numerous arrests. In 2012, there was an unruly crowd in the Southwest area of campus after a New England Patriot Super Bowl loss. This also resulted in multiple student arrests. In 2003, 2004 and 2006, students caused significant property damage, setting fires and throwing bottles, resulting in student arrests after series championships and game losses. The Hobart Hoedown event started approximately twenty-five years ago and ended in the early 2000s. It began as a celebration in the spring, prior to graduation, by students on Hobart Lane, a small dead-end street that primarily houses students. It developed over the years into an event that drew unruly

⁸ See <http://www.University of Massachusetts Amherst.edu/umatter/> Accessed June 28, 2014.

crowds in the thousands resulting in significant property destruction and injury to police officers.

Over a decade or more, some activities have become habituated as annual events. Sports victories and the March 2014 event, for example, are student-organized parties that focus on alcohol consumption. In the majority of these events, the disruption was caused not by the majority attending and not always by the original participants. For example, those in the Southwest mall during the organized celebration of the 2013 World Series game were described as having fun, acting appropriately and engaged. Unfortunately, a few hundred from the towers rushed into the area after the victory creating disorder. A well-planned event that involved student sponsors quickly devolved into an unmanageable situation. Importantly, in the aftermath of these events, many students expressed concern and anxiety about both the actions of their colleagues as well as the police response. Better control of alcohol and drinking in the towers could have reduced the level of violence that resulted during this event.

5.3 Preparation and Planning

In the days preceding the Blarney Blowout celebration of 2014, the Town of Amherst and UMass Amherst took steps to prepare for the event:

- Several weeks prior, it was clear to UMass Amherst Administration that the event was being heavily promoted on social media. They reported social media information that they gathered to the town. The town reports they received minor anecdotal information and no data. They also received one phonecall from UMPD to APD on Friday evening stating the university parking lots were full.
- To prepare for the event, town and UMass Amherst administrators met with APD, UMPD, Amherst Area Chamber, Amherst Business Improvement District and Amherst Select Board to discuss prevention plans.
- A second meeting took place approximately one week prior to the event with key stakeholders.
- Two bars involved in a separate meeting agreed to sell tickets and prevent lines from forming.
- The APD assigned 1 sergeant and 24 patrol officers to the event.
- APD requested assistance from UMPD and State Police to increase the uniform presence in the town. The UMPD was asked to provide 1 supervisor along with 4 officers and the State Police were asked to assist at 2:00 PM.
- APD also sent officers door to door in problem areas in the days leading up to the event stating that illegal and inappropriate behavior would not be tolerated.
- Local media were used to disseminate the message that inappropriate behavior would not be tolerated.
- On March 3rd the Dean of Students Office sent out an email stating that the Blarney Blowout was not a school-sanctioned event and warned students of the consequences of violating the Code of Student Conduct. On the same day parents were informed of the event and an email was sent requesting them to discuss the subject with their children.

- UMass Amherst also sent warning letters to students residing in notorious, problematic apartments and students with histories of conduct code violations. These messages warned students that disciplinary action would be taken if students got out of control and that an increased police presence would be at the Blarney Blowout.

Despite these steps, the 2014 Blarney Blowout was the largest and most out of control Blarney Blowout impacting UMass Amherst and Amherst community. The scale and nature of the crowds provoked a more forceful response by an overwhelmed and unprepared town police force. This combination of scale and nature of the crowd, police use of riot gear, munitions, and force escalated the large crowd disturbance.

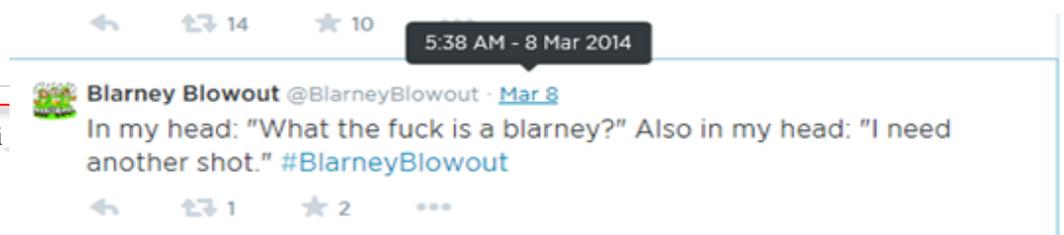
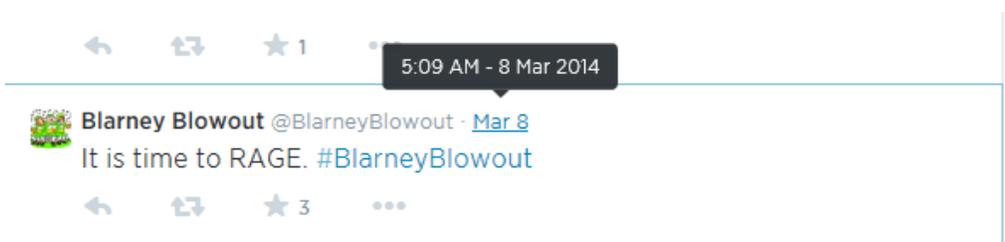
5.4 Facts of the Case

The 2014 “Blarney Blowout” event took place on March 8th. It is difficult to ascertain the percent of students and non-students who participated in event activities. The promotion by students and others through social media drew over 7,000 registered guests to the campus on the evening of March 7th. The lines for guest check-in and registration were 30 minutes long. Many were observed skipping the queue.

Students, residence hall staff, UMPD and others noticed young people on Friday night with bedrolls, sleeping bags, and duffle bags presumably for overnight accommodations to facilitate Saturday’s planned activities. UMass Amherst parking lots were described as “heaving.” Several lots that are typically empty on average weekends were at or over capacity. Residence hall staff noticed young people sleeping in residence hall common areas, which is a violation of the rules and some even slept inside personal vehicles. A residence life staff administrator received a phone call on Saturday morning from a friend who is a restaurant manager in Amherst. He was informed that the manager had already fed hundreds of students by early morning, well over his average of 50 patrons. There were also reports of large crowds at UMass Amherst Dining Commons.

People described long lines to get into liquor stores and the tickets for the bars’ “Blarney Blowout” were long sold out. Indicators were abundant across campus and town that 2014 was measurably different than past years.

This year, in contrast to other years, the APD and UMPD report that people were active and moving very early in the morning. There are conversations available on Twitter as early as 5:00 AM suggesting that the drinking was beginning and the day would include confrontations with police and breaking rules.



Drinking was heavy by 8:00 AM and by 11:00 AM groups from on and off campus congregated in large numbers, at times, chanting derogatory statements towards the police who had begun to respond to separate scenes with large crowds. Some people walked from the campus to the North Amherst area, taking over the streets, engaging in disruptive behaviors and blocking traffic. The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority was shut down by the APD around 12:06 PM to limit access to the North Amherst area. The open areas at various apartments were packed with students. Video review reveals loud music, large crowds, excessive drinking and party atmosphere. Brandywine, Townhouse, Puffton, Crestview and Hobart Lane apartments hired private security in preparation for the event. There are reports of bottle and rock throwing and one anecdotal report of minor head injuries. Video evidence, captured mostly by students, shows the APD responding to the scenes and attempting to disperse the crowd. The police are observed using bullhorns to communicate a dispersal order and then utilizing chemical agents, force, and arrest. Audio recorded the volley of chemical munitions several times as well as unidentified voices of students and police. Approximately 600 pepper balls were used to disperse the crowd (approximately 500 fired by APD; approximately 100 fired by UMPD) over the course of the Blarney Blowout event. After using the excess of chemical agents the crowds began to disperse.

At Brandywine, the dispersal of the crowd was problematic. The crowd numbers were too large to effectively move in the direction specified. There is a small opening in a fence and on that day, an icy mound blocked the opening. This slowed the movement of the crowds that according to some participants and confirmed by the video evidence seemed to invite more aggressive police response. As the crowd left the scene new problem areas developed.

The crowd walked back towards campus again blocking streets and intersections and many joined an ongoing party at a fraternity house at the corner of North Pleasant and Fearing Street. Neighbors and student residents at this house report asking the police for help because the bulk of young people arriving were neither invited nor were they welcome. Videos from this scene show hundreds of young people on a wooden exterior fire escape at the main house as if it were a porch, thousands in a tight area of asphalt and grass surrounded on all sides by structures including two story houses and the UMass Amherst Hillel House. Fearing and North Pleasant Streets, Phillips and Allen Streets surround this relatively tight area. It is dense with mature trees and shrubs and the area between structures is tight making the planned dispersal at this area problematic⁹. Again, police, now both APD and UMPD attempted to move the crowd. The crowd was pushed toward campus on the east side of the Hillel House. There is a slight rise in the terrain to the right of the Hillel House as one heads from the parking area toward North Pleasant

⁹ For an image of the area see

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/University+of+Massachusetts+Amherst/@42.3835603,-72.522047,158m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m2!3m1!1s0x89e6d273e4f0f865:0xa0d6586089148e05?hl=en>

Street that students describe hindered efforts to move quickly. Watching and listening to the videos from this scene the volley of chemical munitions is evident. There appear to be some individuals that were uncooperative and made no effort to disperse. The UMPD initially began to video this scene but abandoned the effort so the officers working as videographers could assist with crowd control. It is also clear from the video that UMPD officers had trouble recording useful images of police use of force. Training that stresses the importance of video evidence is called for.

Over the course of this event APD arrested 55 individuals, 21 of whom were UMass Amherst students. UMPD arrested 3 individuals none of whom were UMass Amherst students. The final major scene was long cleared by the anticipated 2:00 PM response plan.

It is important to note that high risk drinking and acting out among students is not unique to UMass Amherst. Recent celebrations and demonstrations at the University of California Davis, University of Connecticut and the firing of a football coach at Penn state all turned into riots. Some of these communities have tried creative solutions. For example, Penn State paid bars to remain closed during a particular event. The town of Amherst should evaluate whether this is appropriate for future events, however in the case of Blarney Blowout 2014 the bars were not the issue. UMass Amherst has been working for years to address the culture of drinking on campus. Student leaders are actively engaged in organizing events that are not focused around alcohol.

The nature of riots and disorder on college campuses has evolved during the last 50 years. Unlike the 1960's where these events came from displays of civil protest, the disorder we see today, such as in the March 2014 incident, starts off as celebratory in nature. These events involve college age youth who gather in the thousands. These gatherings are facilitated by improvements in communication like social media and frequently occur after a sports victory or loss or other sanctioned or unsanctioned event. In the March 2014 event, participants wandered around town in large numbers and ultimately took over sections of the town. More directly, high risk drinking drove the disruptive behavior associated with the Blarney Blowout and other similar events.

6. Findings and Recommendations

The use of multiple sources of evidence and data collected for this review allowed us to assess a broader range of historical and behavioral issues stemming from the event and those preceding it. Our primary recommendation is for the APD and UMPD to more fully adopt a Community Policing Framework. As such, this recommendation and detailed analysis of findings are provided at the beginning of this section. Additional findings are then provided and organized in the following manner: Broad categories are presented with examples and insights for those issues that presented during the March 2014 incident. Each section is followed by recommendations based on research and best practices.

6.1 Community Policing Framework

We recommend the APD and UMPD more fully adopt and practice a comprehensive system of policing based on a community-policing paradigm. Community oriented policing or COP is a method of policing, which emphasizes strong community ties and partnerships as well as evidence-based problem solving strategies to decrease crime and enhance the safety and wellbeing of its citizens¹⁰. COP is a philosophical change that results in operational changes for police. Community policing embraces a problem solving process focused upon prevention – prevention of crime and disorder – and improved cooperation and partnerships with stakeholders. The community – and in the university context that includes students, staff, administrators and town partners – is engaged by officers in the process of crafting solutions to the myriad problems that confront a neighborhood.

Community policing is proactive and case centered. In contrast, conventional policing is incident driven, reactive and enforcement centered. It is driven by incidents reported through the 911 systems. By making policing case centric, and focused upon preventing the problem activity, officers provide more value to the community and with that, enjoy improved relations. Prevention of aberrant or illegal activity is certainly preferable to successful prosecution in that the prevented behavior produces no victims. Research indicates that traditional approaches to crime fighting have not been as successful as comprehensive and collaborative approaches¹¹. Studies have shown that the use of community policing strategies helps to build relationships between the police and the community, and reduce community perceptions of fear¹². The use of the evidence-based problem solving practices, has proven to be successful at reducing various types of crime and disorder¹³.

To more fully adopt a community policing model, we advise leaders within the departments to focus on enhancing capacity in three key areas: problem-solving, partnerships and organizational transformation. There are several resources available to assist with training and implementation of a comprehensive community policing philosophy offered through the Community Oriented Policing Services Office (COPS Office), the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF).

Problem Solving

The problem-oriented policing approach to dealing with crime and disorder is well documented and increasingly utilized by police agencies¹⁴. Goldstein (1979) noted that police must play a larger role in dealing with social problems, but that to do so would

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Justice (1994). Understanding Community Policing: A Framework for Action.

¹¹ Skogan W, Frydl K. Fairness and effectiveness in policing: the evidence: National Academies Press; 2003.

¹² Ibid, 11

¹³ Ibid, 11, 12 and Weisburd D, Telep CW, Hinkle JC, Eck JE. Is problem- oriented policing effective in reducing crime and disorder? *Criminology & Public Policy*. 2010;**9**(1):139-72.

¹⁴ Braga AA, Weisburd D. Policing problem places: Crime hot spots and effective prevention: Oxford University Press; 2010.

require change in the manner in which they identify and understand the nature of crime problems and identify suitable solutions.

At the core of community policing implementation is training and supervision around problem solving. Among the best-known problem solving methods in policing is the SARA model.¹⁵ SARA is the acronym to remind officers of the steps in the problem solving process: **S** for scanning the environment, **A** for thorough analysis, **R** for response and **A** for assessment. Training to and using the SARA model should remind officers and supervisors about stakeholders, data, and non-traditional responses to calls for service or incidents that happen more than once. Among the most helpful and yet, at times challenging aspects of the SARA model is that fidelity to process ensures scanning and analysis *prior to* designing and attempting a response. Much of traditional policing encourages an immediate response and SARA permits and expects thoughtful, inclusive design.

Collaborative Problem-Solving Approach within the University

To properly handle disorder that leads to large crowd disturbances, residence life monitors, cadets and UMPD all need to be engaged in problem solving around high risk drinking. Staff from these positions currently have a misunderstanding of when police can be helpful or when it is appropriate to engage the police. Individuals sleeping in common areas, use of alcohol by minors, evidence of high risk drinking and evidence of serious overcrowding are all issues that should require a swift response by UMPD. The survey conducted by Business Protections Specialists reports that 40% of Student Desk Monitors report aggressive behavior from students or visitors and 75% of RHS Security Supervisors report aggressive behavior from students or visitors. These are troubling numbers that require a prompt response. There is abundant evidence, including self-reports, to indicate that staff members were aware of the problems developing in the residence halls on the evening of March 7, 2014. However statements from residence hall staff relate a clear hesitancy to call UMPD to assist or deal with these problems.

Violations of this magnitude are clearly within the purview of UMPD. Perhaps clear parameters are needed as guidance for the UMPD response to residence halls. The present perception that police are only called for 911 type emergencies is misguided.

The intermittent nature of UMPD cadets being present at the front desk is also a problem we identified. Regular and consistent cadet staffing at the front desk of all of the residence halls is especially helpful on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. RA's tell us that the presence of cadets has a calming effect on students. They are an unobtrusive solution to disorder and their presence should be standardized on days when high risk drinking is likely. As direct agents of the police, we hope they will be trained to quell disturbances and also to communicate burgeoning issues such as observed on the night of March 7, 2014.

¹⁵ The SARA Model. Retrieved on August 11, 2014 from <http://www.popcenter.org/about/?p=sara>

The job descriptions we reviewed for residential life positions and cadets indicate the need for a comprehensive review and adjustment of job descriptions among personnel charged with monitoring and safety in the residence halls' rooms. We recommend establishing expectations about communication and coordination of information. There also needs to be alignment with community policing and problem solving across these job descriptions. We further suggest that the job descriptions be clear to all students and personnel. We recognize the balance between privacy and individual rights, but the student resident is a tenant of the University. Underage drinking and loud disturbances are the purview of the police. Including the Student Legal Office and the Office of the General Counsel for the University in the overhaul of job descriptions may be helpful. We have observed that residence halls seem to be a form of sanctuary. For example, the RA's stated that students who enter the residence halls with brown bags can be checked for alcohol. However, if the alcohol is transported in a backpack they cannot be checked. Despite hearing glass bottles clanging together inside backpacks, several RA's noted they were prohibited by law from checking student bags. While UMass Amherst has adopted programs and policies that address this to some degree, clarification and balance is needed.

A Community Policing/Problem Solving solution applies equally to the type of disorder described by residents of Fearing St. The Fearing St problem described in detail is more effectively solved with outreach, student engagement and foot patrols. UMass Amherst has implemented some successful programming including Walk this Way, promoting good neighbor philosophy and behavior. UMass Amherst and the town piloted an off campus, joint patrol with APD and UMPD that met with some success and should be re-evaluated for consistent implementation.

National Incident Management System or NIMS

Management of riots such as the March 2014 incident certainly requires problem solving at a sophisticated level. A form of problem solving is inherent in a process known as the National Incident Management System or NIMS¹⁶. In the aftermath of the terrorist strikes against the U.S. in September 2001, it became clear that many incidents are too large for any one agency to handle alone. Created by the federal government in 2004, and administered by FEMA, NIMS is routinely utilized to manage large crowd disturbances and other major public safety emergencies and large-scale events. NIMS and its concurrent Incident Management System (ICS) establish processes and structures for coordination across agencies. As such, we recommend a paradigm shift that embraces best practices of NIMS and community policing and problem solving.

Collaborative Partnerships

Another important aspect of community policing for both the UMPD and APD is collaborative partnerships and effective use and management of stakeholders in promoting safety.

¹⁶ www.FEMA.gov/national-incident-management-system

Effective collaboration results in improved delivery of a number of social services¹⁷, improved quality and efficiency of service delivery¹⁸, enhanced resource sharing across agencies and groups¹⁹, empowerment of community and organizational partners²⁰, learning²¹, and increased social capital²². Particularly important to law enforcement and the larger community is that effectively collaborating can increase the capacity for problem-solving^{23/24}. Moreover, some research shows that collaborative relationships can help communities and organizations cope with unexpected events or changes in community dynamics. In these types of situations, groups or agencies respond to difficult situations by sustaining or strengthening their relationships, thus, improving their shared capacity to respond.

Collaboration is a critical element in the building of relationships between law enforcement and the community. When police agencies work collaboratively with the community to identify needs and generate solutions, it builds mutual understanding and creates opportunities to exhibit legitimacy in problem-solving processes²⁵. Collaboration between law enforcement and community on a regular basis during ongoing problem-solving processes seems particularly important when unexpected or unpredictable public safety events occur, testing the bonds between law enforcement and community. Collaboration is fundamental to building community trust and law enforcement legitimacy as it is the mechanism through which short and long-term relationships are developed and sustained. In order to achieve the goal of prevention over prosecution, police agencies need to rely on large networks of collaborative partners. In our view, there have been missed opportunities by the APD, UMass Amherst and the town for a genuine partnership directed toward prevention of problem behaviors.

One example of this missed opportunity is the general awareness and then sharing of important information on the evening before the event. We are unclear if this is habit, policy or expectation, but the disconnect between the police and the observations and experiences of the student security monitors and resident life staff is troubling. UMPD were not called when overcrowding in the residence halls reached dangerous levels. If this is the custom then a vast amount of information about the condition of the residence halls is lost and this fact deprives them of an opportunity for prevention. On Friday, March 7, 2014, residence life staff noted large groups of visitors and wait lines of 30 minutes for checking into residence halls. Ultimately, 7,000 visitors were registered at the residence halls on campus during that weekend. Changing expectations around

¹⁷ Provan KG, Milward HB. Do networks really work? A framework for evaluating public- sector organizational networks. *Public administration review*. 2001;**61**(4):414-23.

¹⁸ Gittel JH, Fairfield KM, Bierbaum B, et al. Impact of relational coordination on quality of care, postoperative pain and functioning, and length of stay: a nine-hospital study of surgical patients.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 16

²⁰ Bond MA, Keys CB. Empowerment, diversity, and collaboration: Promoting synergy on community boards. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. 1993;**21**(1):37-57.

²¹ Alter C, Hage J. *Organizations working together*: Sage Publications Newbury Park, CA; 1993.

²² *Ibid*, 16, 18

²³ Sridharan S, Gillespie D. SUSTAINING PROBLEM- SOLVING CAPACITY IN COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS. *Criminology & Public Policy*. 2004;**3**(2):221-50.

²⁴ Huxham C. *Creating collaborative advantage*: Sage; 1996.

²⁵ Skogan W, Frydl K. *Fairness and effectiveness in policing: the evidence*: National Academies Press; 2003.

communications and partnerships with the UMPD and the student staff is a first step to better sharing of information and possible increased opportunities for prevention.

Another opportunity for strengthened partnerships is between the APD and UMPD. There was no written operational plan, specific to the Blarney Blowout event, prepared in advance by APD or UMPD. UMPD reported to us that they used a previously written plan that was created for situations where they are asked to assist APD during events that are within APD jurisdiction. APD had requested manpower from the Massachusetts State Police (MSP) planning to stage at 2:00 PM that Saturday. Clearly by 2:00 PM the problem had begun and ended, obviating the need for the MSP. Consistent with NIMS, we would expect a single jointly crafted operational plan and a unified command center for Amherst. On the day of the event APD and UMPD were each operating separate EOC's. Most concerning is the report to us that APD neither invited UMPD to its EOC, nor accepted the offer of UMPD to join its EOC.

Enlist Stakeholders

A broad range of stakeholders must be consulted and engaged in solving problems of the magnitude that confront the Town of Amherst and UMass Amherst. The key stakeholders are the students and they are partly responsible for the culture – both good and bad – that is a part of the town and gown relationship. We found the students that we consulted not only open to helping but also eager to do so. Student leaders acknowledged bad behaviors that needed to stop. They were also self-reflective in managing their competing desire to enjoy college life, but to be good citizens and respect their neighbors as well. Surprisingly, several students were empathetic to the police and the challenge that APD and UMPD faced on the morning of Saturday, March 8, 2014. Students were equally passionate about their civil rights and their desire to be treated fairly by town and UMass Amherst officials. Stakeholders also include fire EMS, hospital neighbors, alcohol providers, UMass Amherst administrators, and business owners, emergency responders, neighbors, UMass Amherst administrators, town administrators, business owners and Amherst community. Everyone listed and more must be engaged in a process that addresses disorder, but also recognizes that for good or bad we are all in this together.

6.2 Police Planning

Resources

We carefully interviewed police leaders at both UMPD and APD regarding the allocation of police resources during the March 2014 event and also examined relevant documents. There were 24 officers from the APD on duty the day of the event. A request had been made to have 4 officers from the UMPD and a supervisor supplement APD officers. Members of the Massachusetts State Police were also requested to respond and assist the APD. All officers assigned to the event were to gather at a 2:00 PM roll call that day.

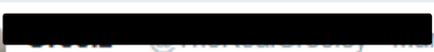
Atypically, long before the planned roll call officers were engaged in trying to address the disorder of the day. Beyond the request of the APD, UMPD had decided to bring in 9

officers and a supervisor to assist if needed. Fortunately those officers were scheduled to start at 11:00 AM and were able to respond to requests for assistance as the events began to get out of order. No request was made of the Massachusetts State Police to respond before their 2:00 PM. scheduled arrival time. APD officers were armed with their service weapons, OC spray as well as some who carried pepper ball launchers containing OC rounds as well as Mark-9 OC crowd foggers, 40mm exact impact launcher containing stingball cartridges. UMPD carried pepper ball launchers but do not carry Mark-9 OC crowd foggers.

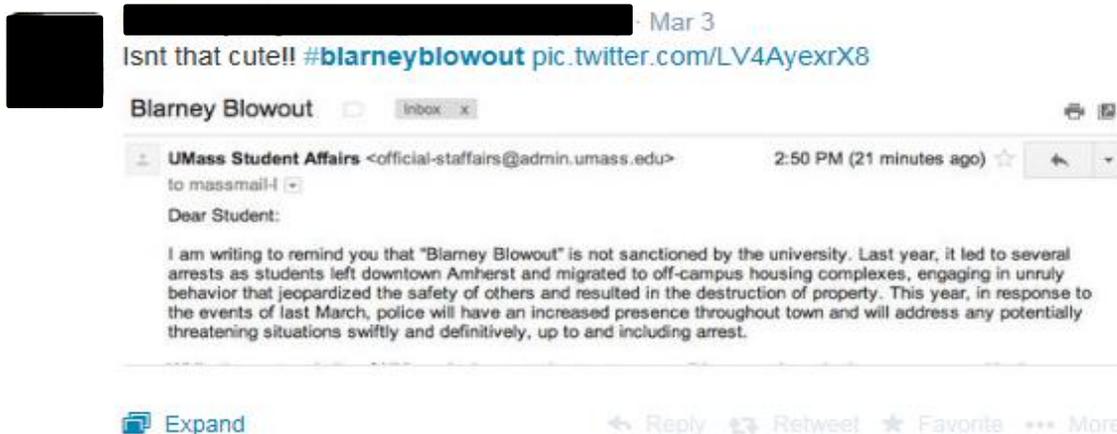
Predicting the Crowd

As we have stated, also evident on Friday night were an unusual number of guests on campus – several sources reported that 7,000 guests were officially registered with the school that night. The vast number of outsiders were visible in several ways – the parking lots were full, the lines for checking into residence halls were unmanageable, visitors were observed sleeping in lounges, common areas and in personal motor vehicles. These observations were offered by a variety of people from different parts of UMass Amherst infrastructure and town though it is unclear to what extent the various actors coordinated their observations and this important information about the number of guests.

All parties seemed to be aware that students would be gathering for the non-sanctioned event. In fact, the Dean of Students office, in an attempt to be proactive, sent a note to all students in advance of the weekend warning them to behave appropriately and emphasized this was not a school-sanctioned event. Students received the message poorly as backlash was apparent on social media. Most first and second year students were unaware of this “tradition” but some became defiant with the official admonition to avoid it. The note unfortunately became a challenge to many students and galvanized their desire to attend.

  3
Bring on #BlarneyBlowout 🍀 Thanks for the email #UMass administration
[instagram.com/p/IF8-4ss9dM/](https://www.instagram.com/p/IF8-4ss9dM/)
Expand Reply Retweet Favorite More

 
Already sending emails out. UMass isn't ready #BlarneyBlowout
[instagram.com/p/IF9FeeiKZC/](https://www.instagram.com/p/IF9FeeiKZC/)
Expand Reply Retweet Favorite More



Exercise Emergency Plans

Joint training on the emergency plan for the event would have identified areas of vulnerability and enhanced the response. This training could be done in two ways. First, training exercises can be accomplished during the year as practice. These practice events can be done in the field or as tabletop exercises. Field exercises involve actual first responders and colleagues from other disciplines including medical personnel who are vital to successful emergency response. Tabletop exercises allow participants to think the unthinkable and plan for events that are unanticipated. Tabletops are relatively inexpensive as the number of personnel engaged is smaller and often limited to those in administrative assignments.

Even more effective is the practicing of these plans during routine events. Standing up an EOC during Fourth of July celebration or a parade allows partners from other agencies to improve coordination and relationships. Thoughtful planning of the next year's events provides opportunities for a good review of various components of the overall plan. Community policing has historically been a philosophical change for police across the nation. Planning in this community policing paradigm takes on added importance and increases the ability to think across silos. The resulting plan has a better foundation and built in stakeholders.

Effective testing occurs when systems are utilized in real life scenarios. Radios will work or not. Policies for emergencies are utilized and can be flagged for change. Equipment that may not be suited to the threat can be changed out. All of these activities add up to improving Amherst's ability to improve preparation for an emergency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We recommend the UMPD's and the APD's planning process for events of this magnitude should include:

- A. *Early, meaningful coordination and communication with external partners, including UMass Amherst Administration, Town Officials, Fire and Medical personnel*

- B. Planned strategies to monitor crowd volumes including: review of electronic systems that track the number of residents and guests that can be compared to the acceptable safe occupancy levels, effective monitoring of social media, partnering with local business community and property managers to monitor increased volume (in progress).*
- C. Contingency plans and/or protocols in the event that earlier deployment is necessary*
- D. Protocols and contingency plans for early deployment to multiple locations within the event in addition to exercises to test effectiveness of these plans.*
- E. Clear expectations regarding lines of authority and decision making processes for an event*
- F. Provision of adequate resources, including staffing, available for the event*
- G. UMPD and APD along with other emergency responders should conduct joint, field training exercises for crowd control and response.*

Ensure that all members of UMPD, the APD and Massachusetts State Police working during a major event are briefed about the operational plan, and contingency plans prior to the event and that incident command is initiated and clearly defined. If it is a town event taking place off campus APD should prepare an operational plan. If it is a University sanctioned event on campus the UMPD should prepare an operational plan. At all times both departments should be collaborating and informing each other of the details. Training should ideally include all agencies. At a minimum, commanders must meet in the days leading up to the event to coordinate and plan. Everyone must be on the same page with clearly identified roles and responsibilities. There needs to be one person who is the incident commander who is tasked with overseeing the deployment of all the resources at the event. Everyone needs to know who the incident commander is and take direction from them. The mission of the day should be explained to everyone. The policies and procedures including the use of force policy need to be reviewed for each incident. Participating officers need to have a chance to review the plan and recommend changes or concerns before it is finalized.

The UMPD and APD must develop standard practices for shared operational planning, unified command structure and operation of joint emergency operation centers, joint tactical training and collaborative after action review for any planned or unanticipated large scale event. There are many opportunities to practice and plan. The city of Cambridge and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) police departments jointly train with regularity. The two departments rely on one another for a number of planned events annually and use their training to both strengthen relationships and improve response. They have grown so close over recent years that without notice or

interruption, Cambridge Police officers operated MIT cruisers for days after the execution of MIT Officer Sean Collier by the Boston Marathon bombers.²⁶ Many years of planning, training and responding jointly made this a seamless transition.

2. We recommend the Town of Amherst increase APD sworn staffing to provide for increased public safety.

The APD currently has 46 sworn officers. Forty-five are budgeted positions and one is funded through external grant funds that are ending in November, 2014. The APD were overwhelmed during the event in March and unable to disperse the crowd effectively. This presented significant safety concerns for the community, students and the police. It is important for the town to allocate appropriate resources for additional hiring that is necessary for the safety and security of the Amherst community. More officers would allow police to proactively address the weekly disorder that occurs in locations such as Fearing Street, which reportedly has up to 1800 young people walking by on Friday and Saturday nights. It would allow the police to be out of their vehicles on foot or bicycles, proactively engaging with the community.

3. We recommend the Town of Amherst utilize the newly signed Western Massachusetts Mutual Aid Agreement to provide much needed support for large-scale events.

The town should evaluate the use of the newly signed Western Massachusetts Mutual Aid Agreement, to provide much needed support during large scale events. Very few law enforcement agencies have the staffing to be able to address large scale planned or spontaneous events on their own. The need for mutual aid agreements and resources that can respond to assist is crucial. When sports teams in Boston were involved in championship series often times there were 500 to 600 officers from surrounding Law Enforcement Councils available to assist. Law Enforcement Councils provide agencies, especially smaller ones, the ability to pool resources and share costs with their neighbors. The town of Amherst is at a geographical disadvantage since the closest major police agency is Springfield. This lack of immediate response capability makes a strong partnership between APD and UMPD critical to the safety of the officers. Both Police Chiefs of APD and UMPD informed us that they recently signed a Western Massachusetts Mutual Aid agreement with their counterparts in the region. All efforts to utilize and maintain this Western Massachusetts agreement should be supported and continued.

4. We recommend the Town of Amherst create a Civilian Advisory Group to enhance community police relations.

The Town should create a Civilian Advisory Group that evaluates processes and recommends best practices for the APD. These review boards can greatly improve community and police relations by promoting transparency and third party evaluation for fairness and legitimacy. This process is used in Boston in the area of Internal Affairs and has been successful. Initially the police resisted the idea but have come to realize its value in helping to improve transparency to the community and better practices.

²⁶ Personal conversation, Cambridge Police Commissioner Robert C Haas, February 7, 2014

5. We recommend the Massachusetts Legislature appropriate funds for joint police training as well as a contingency fund for police staffing during large scale events, for APD and UMPD.

Joint training in crowd control and use of force with APD, UMPD and other law enforcement agencies is critical to effective planning, prevention and enforcement during large-scale events. Pre-deployment for potential events is necessary. The Massachusetts Legislature should recognize that the unique geography, population and scale of the Amherst- UMass Amherst community warrants specifically allocated funds for law enforcement training and response. There is also a need for contingency funding for full staffing and regional mutual aid agreements that can expand the force capacity. Adequate staffing is critical for peaceful dispersal to large scale events. The recommendations here will cost real tax dollars. As such, the Town and UMass Amherst should understand that expended dollars will result in prevention of the next riot. Prevention is difficult to measure. This process and the expenditure of funds to prevent an unruly situation should be viewed as an insurance policy. Our team has experience dealing with tight budgets and the need to reduce costs, however, we are also aware of the continued risk of riots without appropriate resources.

6. We recommend the police partnerships be reviewed and amended, particularly in the areas surrounding the Campus.

It's clear that there are two separate police agencies tasked with policing the town of Amherst. The UMPD has primary jurisdiction on campus and the APD has the primary jurisdiction off campus. Often problems span those jurisdictions. The residents of Amherst are not interested in which agency is in charge, they simply want a solution to their problems. UMPD and APD have conducted joint patrols for some off campus areas with mixed results. The first version had officers from both agencies sharing one vehicle. They would patrol an area together. Officers interviewed stated that often logistical issues resulted in too much down time. This process left the areas that needed to be patrolled understaffed. The Departments later adopted a deployment that had extra officers from each agency in separate vehicles when possible.

There seems to be difficulty with the joint patrol assignments; the APD and UMPD officers are vested with different pension systems, compensation, and injured on duty protections. Since there are disparate benefits there are understandable union issues. Standardizing the compensation and benefit programs might help reduce the tensions between the Departments. There are several legal solutions to the jurisdiction issues. The officers could be assigned as reserve officer status or taskforce assignments for instance. Facing the challenges of this unique town requires new thinking. Managing the disorder issues both on and off campus requires collaboration. Cooperative working arrangements will lessen the threat to officer safety and improve service to Amherst citizens.

6.3 Police Response to Large Crowd Disturbances

Immense Pressure Facing the Police

The caliber and credentials of Police Leadership is exemplary. Chief Livingstone worked his way through the ranks to the position of Chief in Amherst. He runs a CALEA accredited department and has the respect and support of community leaders. Chief Horvath is a veteran of the Hartford Police department working his way up through the ranks. He is well respected by students and administrators alike. UMPD have built an exceptionally positive relationship with the students at UMass Amherst. Many students perceived the officers from UMPD as being there “to help us” and as “understanding students”. Atypically, the UMPD has a larger number of officers than APD. Despite this, both departments faced immense pressure on March 8, 2014.

The APD and UMPD faced crowds of thousands of disorderly people. The crowds were spread across the entire Town of Amherst. There was no one focal point for the small number of officers to come together and unite in an effort to disperse the crowds. The crowd coalesced at three separate locations resulting in serious crowd control issues. Police faced crowds of thousands in different parts of Amherst. Cars were stopped on public roads and were rocked back and forth by the crowds, terrifying the occupants. Strangers accosted one woman while out jogging. Typically, Amherst is an extremely safe and low crime community. However this day was different. The APD received multiple calls of people expressing fear and need of assistance; these calls came from both bystanders, and young people partaking in the party. Notably, the 911 dispatchers fielding and responding to calls during the event were professional, kind, informative and, when appropriate, allayed fears with a sense of humor.

A critical point occurred when the APD Commander determined that the police should move in on the crowd. The decision to move in with insufficient numbers of police set up a series of events that resulted in an overreliance on chemical munitions tools including pepper balls, OC foggers and sting balls. Based on the interviews we conducted and the video reviewed, the immediate response was ill advised. The emergency activation of all officers at both the APD and UMPD would have resulted in a total of about 100 officers available. It is impossible to know how many would have been able to respond immediately but any additional force would have increased the safety of the officers present. Ultimately, pausing and asking for help would have reduced the need to use chemical agents, to the extent observed, thereby increasing the safety of the revelers as well.

Having a sufficient number of officers to conduct large-scale crowd dispersal provides safety to the officers and the members of the crowd. It should be noted that there are always a number of individuals in a crowd, intent on trouble, who utilize the crowd to remain anonymous. They feel anonymous and resist the police officers’ lawful commands and efforts to maintain order. They will try and incite other crowd members to do so as well. It is harder for them to recruit others to join them when there are sufficient numbers of officers visible.

Command

We met with Town Manager John Musante during our visits to Amherst. The manager and his Assistant Town Manager were very helpful in discussing the problem of disorder. He outlined the efforts Amherst has taken to deal with this problem. The town manager is extremely important in the process of managing this problem. His role in managing the police force is rooted in the General Laws of the Commonwealth as well as in case law. His fiscal role determines how many officers the town employs as well as the amount of money available for overtime expenditures. This incident occurred in the Town of Amherst and under the jurisdiction of the APD and thus the ultimate responsibility of the Town Manager. His support of the police is vital to a safe event. The ability to pre-position officers in trouble areas lies in the manager's understanding that prevention of such an event is vital to town safety. Prior planning on the part of the police requires a strong commitment from the head of town government. The police cannot solve the problem alone.

It is vitally important that town and police leadership identify the potential for serious public safety problems with a planned, large scale event like the Blarney Blowout versus the potential in a typical student event. Central command is critical in this situation beginning early in the planning process. After speaking with police involved it was not clear to everyone who the incident commander was. There were a series of squads that were addressing issues as they developed but no one was sure of exactly who was directing the response. The confusion over chain of command was further clouded by the arrival of the Chief of the APD. He was off duty at the time, and responded to the scene in civilian clothes. He observed the clashes between the police and the crowd and left the scene in the control of the assigned APD supervisor.

Intervention by Police

The crowd that gathered for this event was estimated to be the largest crowd that APD had encountered in any prior planned and unplanned large- scale event. After determining that the crowds posed a threat, a dispersal order was given by the APD. The crowd was directed into the Brandywine apartment complex and was then herded back toward UMass Amherst campus. During the course of the crowd movement rocks and bottles flew and numerous rounds of chemical munitions were fired. The officers were outnumbered and concerned that they would be unable to control the crowd, if they didn't get assistance. A request for assistance was sent to UMPD.

Upon receiving the request for assistance UMPD responded to assist the APD in clearing the crowd. As the officers pushed the crowd back toward campus the crowd ran into a bottleneck situation in which they were forced to climb over a large icy snow bank at the back of the parking lot to reach an exit point. Their path was blocked not only by the snow bank but also by a fence that impeded their exit except for a small opening. The crowds seemed to be moving away from the officer's commands trying to avoid the chemical munitions. It appeared that many were trying to comply with the dispersal order. Others were attempting to antagonize the officers and were assaultive and argumentative. As the crowd tried to leave the area the combined obstacles contributed

to a logjam of people. There was a change in the crowd dynamic. People were pushing and shoving each other as they tried to flee the area. This caused disorder and tension to increase both internally amongst the crowd members as well as creating additional danger for the officers tasked with moving them. The officers made several arrests and dispersed large amounts of chemical munitions in order to achieve the goal of clearing the area.

Members of the crowd spilled out onto the streets and were heading back towards the University. Many were heavily intoxicated. The sidewalks contained melting snow and puddles. The crowd participants went two ways. Some went out into the streets and others crammed into other surrounding developments and worked their way back behind the line of officers. The UMass and Amherst officers had to fallback and re-form to again move the crowd members who had flanked them.

The officers again utilized line movements and chemical munitions to clear out the remaining crowd. The crowd retreated from the area returning back to the campus area. The streets were clogged with those returning towards campus. A decision had been made by the APD to shut off bus service to the area. The goal was to prevent even more people from coming in. This also had the effect of impeding exit by some. Several citizens and students reported that some in the crowd were aggressive and rocked cars, screamed, and carried on causing fear and anxiety amongst motorists that were unable to proceed down the street. Others just appeared to have indulged in high risk drinking and were walking back towards campus without causing disorder, however their sheer number was troubling to those observing it.

It should be noted that upon arrival back at UMass Amherst campus property the crowd members continued their disruptive behavior, although no property damage was reported. Both students and law enforcement officers who we interviewed made this observation.

At about 1:30 PM to 2:00 PM. members of APD and UMPD responded to a large crowd gathered at a fraternity house on North Pleasant Street. The crowd was massive and extended out of the house and into the surrounding area. The house was excessively overcrowded with people jammed on every porch, stairway and staircase. It clearly was a hazardous situation that needed to be addressed. A decision was made to declare an unlawful assembly. The crowd was warned and then the officers started to move on the crowd in an effort to clear them. Police used some line formations but did not have a sufficient number of officers to accomplish the task. The officers again utilized a large quantity of chemical munitions to clear out the crowd. The officers had to go hands on and made several arrests. They had to at times defend themselves and prevent others from trying to rescue their prisoners. There were multiple reports of bottles being thrown and hitting officers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. We recommend that the town and police ensure there are sufficient resources available to conduct a large-scale crowd dispersal.**

Few agencies are equipped to respond to large scale events alone. It is essential that the question of adequate resources is dealt with in prior planning; all law enforcement agencies involved are briefed on the plans. Request for assistance is made in advance to other regional resources such as the Western Massachusetts Mutual Aid Agreement and state police. The ultimate goal is to have sufficient resources available to minimize disorder.

2. We recommend there is a clear leader charged with the responsibility of oversight who asserts authority and leadership to direct and to deescalate officer actions.

Clear command is needed for effective crowd management and the clarity of command emerges from sound planning. Once the decision is made that law enforcement needs to act, one person needs to take control of that mission and ensure that it is properly planned and executed. In this case, there were resources from two different police departments tasked with the same mission at the same location without clear coordination and prior planning. Our interviews with police personnel show that it was not clear who was assigned as incident commander. Best practice dictates that one person must be responsible in such instances.

The importance of command in a large-scale event and possible ensuing riot cannot be overstated. After the horrific events of September 11, 2001 Congress mandated a system for improved emergency management and response by creating a common approach. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) has five components that form a comprehensive doctrine for emergency management. The fourth component, command and management, speaks directly to incident command and management.²⁷ Public safety agencies across the nation have been trained on NIMS and on the specific component called the Incident Command System or ICS. ICS establishes a process that places the command of an unfolding situation in the hands of the first responding officers until higher-ranking individuals replace that officer.²⁸ Command is critical to the effective control of officers. Key decisions are made by the incident commander about when to move, when to use force, and when to deescalate force. Fundamental management concepts such as unity of command and span of control are vested in the incident commander.

The incidents in Amherst might have been more effectively managed using the ICS strategies. There must be a clear leader who is charged with the responsibility of oversight who asserts authority and leadership to direct and control officer activity. A police chief's involvement and direction prove critical to officers' ability to successfully manage emotional, potentially volatile crowds. The message received from top-level management greatly influences the behavior and mind-set of frontline officers. Shaping these attitudes begins with a solid understanding that the law informs our actions but police work involves building relationships with members of the public whom officers

²⁷ Department of Homeland Security. (2008). *National Incident Management System*

²⁸FEMA. (2013). *IS-100.b – Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS 100)*. Retrieved 6/29, 2014, from <https://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-100.b>

are sworn to serve and protect – this includes a balance of safety for officers and the public with a sense of appropriateness of response that protects justice and rights²⁹.

Other large-scale events in major cities present this challenge of balance daily. For example, the Occupy Protests in the autumn of 2011 in cities across the US tested police officials to permit the assemblies that often seemed unsafe and unsightly but were an exercise of free speech. Police leaders engaged directly with the participants. One of the more noted police leaders, Philadelphia Commissioner Charles Ramsey, personally walked the “Occupy Philadelphia” area and engaged the protesters in almost daily conversation in order to set the tone for his officers.

3. We recommend police officials use communication tools earlier to set the tone, inform, engage and direct the crowd.

Lessons can be learned from other locales about effective strategies for crowd engagement. In the past, police departments responded to large-scale events that had a potential to grow out of control by donning their riot gear, marching in a formation to the area. The members of the riot squads were ordered to stare straight ahead and not engage anyone in conversation. Their mission was clear and conveyed through their appearance that the officers were prepared, and in a military mode. Our Armed Forces have learned that mingling with the crowd and practicing community policing principles are effective in lessening tensions. This works even in a war zone. Now that the military have learned military style response is only necessary for the safety of their troops if the event is already out of control, police should follow suit.

We must remember that there are different kinds of events. The response to a party or a non-violent civil demonstration is very different than the response to armed criminal activity. Police must modulate their response based upon the threat. Escalation of force by squads of police needs to be consistent with the police use of force continuum familiar to all officers. De-escalation of force is just as important and should be exercised as soon as possible. The arrest of one bottle thrower can allow commanders an opportunity for de-escalation.

Police armed with the proper information should be on scene before the problem starts. Deployed officers then have a chance to set the tone. The instigators and agitators will amass at the police line. They challenge and taunt the officers. Officers need to be trained in this fact. After years of trial and error among our team we have learned that the mere presence of riot police can ramp up the tone and tenor of a situation. In a large crowd, most people do not want to physically engage in a fight with police but they do want to see what will happen. The challenge for the police commander is to maintain calm and allow people to assemble and to exercise their constitutional rights. Only when the assembly turns violent or destructive should officers be ordered to don riot gear. Using strategies like undercover officers in the crowd with arrest teams available to enter

²⁹ Ramsey, Charles H. *The Challenge of Policing in a Democratic Society: A Personal Journey Towards Understanding*. From the series *New Perspectives on Policing* by the National Institute of Justice and Harvard Kennedy School, June, 2014. See http://www.hks.harvard.edu/var/ezp_site/storage/fckeditor/file/pdfs/centers-programs/programs/criminal-justice/ExecSessionPolicing/PolicinginaDemocraticSociety.pdf

and remove only the agitators are effective. The power of video evidence cannot be overstated. The best tactic is waiting it out. As long as the crowd is not violent or destructive, time works to the benefit of police.

In recent years, effective strategies for engaging crowds have changed. Recent national events remind us that police force must be proportional to the actual threat. The IACP recognized the Vancouver BC police for strategies that stress the first engagement with the crowd be non-confrontational, with officers wearing their regular uniforms. For officer safety and to maximize visibility in the crowd, officers should wear high visibility vests or garments, which will make them easily identifiable by the crowd. The garments also allow their colleagues and their commanders to see them and to protect their safety. In the Vancouver BC model, officers should approach crowds in a non-threatening manner explaining that circumstances have presented that require ending the event. The officers should identify influential members of the crowd and enlist their help. The officers thereby inject a humanistic factor into a tense situation. It is not easy to throw a rock at someone you just spoke with.

This strategy was developed with assistance from British police, and the Vancouver BC rolled out their effective meet-and-greet strategy. This was tested during the 2010 Winter Olympics and proved to be a sound strategy based on reports from the police chief and assessments by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Riot gear was stored in trucks nearby. Police shook hands, asked people how they were doing, and told them that officers were there to keep them safe. This bond with the group paid dividends. People in the crowd recognized the role of the police and appreciated that they and the police had a shared interest – safety³⁰.

**QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN A DECISION IS BEING MADE TO
MOVE A LARGE CROWD**

1. After considering all the statutory and constitutional issues, do we have the legal authority to move this crowd?
2. What is the most non-confrontational way to move the crowd?
 - a. Choose the least confrontational means that will accomplish the goal.
 - b. Engage crowd members in a polite, respectful manner explaining that it is time to move on and the reasons why.
3. What is the plan to disperse the crowd?
4. How many officers does it require to disperse the crowd?
5. Which direction will officers direct the crowd towards?
6. How will information be communicated to the crowd?
7. Is there plenty of room for the crowd to disperse away from the area without causing bottlenecking and or herding them into a vulnerable area?
8. What is my plan for those resisting being moved? How do I minimize the number of crowd members actively resisting?
9. What is the acceptable level of force that will minimize crowd resistance

The use of appropriately trained officers on bicycles is another effective strategy for dispersal. The bike officers are often seen as the embodiment of community policing. As learned through meetings and interviews, there is wide support for bike officers with the citizens.

³⁰ The Police Chief: The Professional Voice of Law Enforcement An Olympic Medal for Policing: Lessons and Experiences from the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics August 2014

Bike officers are perceived as less threatening and efficiently work into a crowd. They can also very quickly switch into a tactical response unit using specific actions and their bikes to block or move a crowd.

During one of the Red Sox World series championships in Boston a sergeant and six officers on bikes cleared a street containing over 2,500 people by simply putting their bikes in a line across the street and engaging the members of the crowd. They explained why they needed to disperse and thanked them for their cooperation. The crowd moved peacefully and without incident. As backup, there was a public order platoon in full riot gear out of sight, but nearby and able to respond immediately if necessary.

If officers are unable to get a crowd to disperse through crowd engagement, the incident commander tasked with dispersing the crowd should develop and implement a backup plan to do so. After considering the legal authority justifying the decision to disperse a crowd, it is incumbent upon the person responsible for that decision to do so with due care.

4. We recommend the APD and UMPD receive joint urban training in the effective and safe management of crowds and dispersal.

The following paragraphs set out a preliminary outline that is necessary for effective, safe management of crowds and dispersal. There are more details that can and should be considered in a comprehensive plan, but the list here illustrates the key steps and the critical roles of management and monitoring to provide safety to officers and the crowd.

A. The Warning: Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws the crowd must be warned that a decision has been made to move them and given *ample time* to respond. There should be no rush. There was no official video of the warning given by police. We are unable to determine the nature and extent of the warning and are unable to judge whether the crowd was given a reasonable amount of time to comply. The related videos we found on the web appear to contain very short periods before police intervention. It is imperative to warn the crowd and give as much time as possible for those who seek to comply, to leave the area. Many students we interviewed who were in the crowd being moved told us that they wanted to heed the officer's requests to leave the area but were physically unable to do so. Allowing as many people as possible to voluntarily leave the area helps minimize risk to officers.

B. Divide the crowd: If possible, the plan to disperse a crowd should contain options that divide the crowd into smaller groups. This is particularly important when the crowd significantly outnumbers the number of police officers. Effective crowd control reduces the ratio of officers to participants. For example, dividing the crowd into 4 groups of 250 is more manageable than moving one crowd of 1000. Moving the smaller segmented crowds is more controlled and less prone to disruption. If at all possible, isolating an area with barriers before an event and keeping several groups divided before they can merge is preferred. For example, event barriers were deployed around the historical gathering location of Kenmore Square for several of the World Championship Series long before the events started. Instead of officers trying to disperse 300,000 fans, a smaller number

of officers could stand behind barrier lines and deal with crowds in the thousands scattered about. Pre-deployment of K-9 or mounted units can also help keep an area divided and deny crowds from gathering in well-known trouble spots. Of course, this tactic requires that enough police resources are pre-deployed to an anticipated event.

C. Use of gear: The decision to don helmets should be vested in the incident commander. A front line supervisor who perceives the need to don a protective helmet should state the reason for the request and receive permission from the incident commander. This process is best if accomplished over a recorded radio channel. This will document that officers were attempting to move the crowd in a less confrontational manner. It will give a time stamp to the progression of events and will document the specific facts and circumstances that lead to this important decision... It should be noted that as soon as these conditions subside, the front line supervisor should order the removal of the protective equipment and inform the incident commander. It is more important to deescalate the level of force used by officers and the tension between officers and the crowd than it is to ramp it up. Ratcheting up tactics, in the face of a threat, is easier and more explainable to the community than trying to ratchet them down.

D. Documentation: The incident commander must document decisions and, assign a scribe to document what actions were taken and why they were taken. If no scribe is available, documenting times and circumstances should be documented over a recorded radio system. The commander should realize his or her communications will establish a record that can be retrieved later for review.

E. Monitoring and adhering to plan: The incident commander needs to have an overall view to ensure that he or she is utilizing resources efficiently. They must manage closely and be certain that an overall plan exists and is communicated. It is not effective to have public order officers pushing crowds without such a plan. Deploying officers to where a crowd is moving to assess the new potential to intervene and further divide the crowd, or prevent the crowd from entering a vulnerable area is prudent. The incident commander must ensure that moving the crowd from one location is not creating larger problems at another venue.

5. We recommend that members of the APD and UMPD receive joint training on the safe and appropriate use of force in crowd situations.

Best practice dictates that the use of force should be commensurate with the force being used and the least force necessary should be used to contain the situation, control the crowd and protect the officer(s). Police need to be trained extensively on the use of force. Both UMPD and APD have received separate training on safe and appropriate use of force in crowd situations. Nationally, this type of training utilizes a continuum of force model. The model describes incidents where officers on scene may have to escalate their use of force *in response to* the actions of a subject. The model also describes examples where the officer must reduce the force used when the subject changes his or her level of aggression. This same principle applies to the management of a crowd.³¹

³¹ Police Use of Force in America 2001 IACP

The special weapons that are available to officers and the decision to use these special weapons in a large scale, planned or unplanned event should be vested in the police chief. After the Snelgrove tragedy, Boston instituted a rule that mandates the decision to deploy these weapons during a riot as solely the responsibility of the Police Commissioner. Escalation of force to the level of sting balls, pepper balls or an OC fogger requires constant monitoring and evaluation as to when that level of force is necessary or should be terminated. The monitoring and evaluation of the use of weapons and force should be done by the incident commander designated through the NIMS design. Officers and commanders should continually be aware, that sometimes the presence of the police and the excitement caused by them being present can exacerbate the problem. Stopping the advance of a police line is sometimes necessary to allow the crowd to comply with the lawful orders of police. Some departments have brought in independent observers to shadow the incident commander to help ensure trust and confidence in the police response. This is widely used in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and adopted by the Boston Police in 2008. A neutral party such as a judge, a defense attorney, a well-respected political or media representative, or student leader who is embedded with the command officer and who can attest to the conditions that required using force, is a sound option to create transparency.

Experienced police officers know that large groups who were not happy with an event or interaction with the police will continue to be combative with officers and defiant as long as the officers are engaged – continued officer engagement sometimes becomes the only thing that continues the aggressive behavior. Some of these aggressive encounters could end successfully with the extraction of the officers. It was noted that after dispersing the crowd at the fraternity house on Fearing Street on March 8th, no more major incidents were reported.

6. APD and UMPD should together develop criteria to assess appropriate use of chemical munitions after necessary training.

There are universal rules and conditions upon which the decision to utilize these devices rest. However, each community is different. Boston has developed unique rules that work for that city. We recommend the same process be utilized here. A focus group of police, prosecutors, defense counsel and civil rights representatives as well as students and UMass Amherst administrators can be assembled to discuss the policy. Amherst is a unique jurisdiction. Having stakeholders in on the conversations can improve the plan. Of course the final policy is the purview of the town and its police chief. We offer some standard police practices and facts below.

Use of chemical munitions tools such as pepper balls, sting balls and the MK9 OC fogger devices must be done only with the authority of the incident commander and after careful consideration of a host of factors. The chief or designated incident commander must work with deployed officers to consider all safety factors before deploying the fogger. These factors include but are not limited to:

- Citizens and police officers in the area

- Escape and evacuation routes and/or wind direction
- Travel routes of responding officers
- Crowd mentality and/or age of crowd
- Imminent threat of injury to officer or other citizens.

The inappropriate use of weapons and munitions has many unintended consequences. Across the nation, the use of these tactics has led to further violence and resulted in strong criticism of the police. One case in point is the November 18, 2011 MK 9 pepper spray incident at UC Davis. The resultant images cast a negative perception on the universities and the communities involved. Studies cited a lack of communication between the chancellor and the university police. This example is clear evidence that direct communication between the chief administrator of the town or the university and their police chiefs is vital in the face of such events.

Officers using any of munitions including O.C. Foggers and pepper balls must be appropriately trained in the use of the tools and supervisors must closely observe that use. We have some concerns about the appropriate use of the OC fogger based on videos reviewed. In short, the fogger is a powerful device, and if deployed, it should not be directed at a person's face, especially within 3 feet. This warning is due to something called the hydraulic needle effect. The device should be directed at the lower portion of the body or over the head of the crowd, unless there are extreme circumstances. When aiming at the lower portion of the body, the device should not be used at distances of less than three (3) feet. However, in an extreme situation, officers may use their discretion in deploying the O.C. fogger at less than the recommended distances. We saw no such extreme circumstances in our review of this incident. The maximum effective standoff distance of the Fogger is 3-6 feet³². We recommend an internal review of the incident depicted on video of the MK9 fogger sprayed twice by the APD into the face of an arrestee.

There are other specific recommendations for the use of the munitions. We urge the UMPD and APD to train jointly on chemical munitions and prepare, with discussion and exercise, for unified command.

7. We recommend that APD and UMPD review practices and reliance upon chemical agents.

We believe there was an overreliance by the APD and UMPD on chemical agents. We understand that the small numbers of officers present made the use of these weapons an option; however, we believe other options existed. The incident in question was clearly prompted by the inappropriate and dangerous behavior of students who, fueled by excessive drinking, were extremely disruptive. However, in a University setting, these types of poor decisions by young people are not uncommon. Better preparation or a call for immediate mutual aid would likely have reduced the overall threat and the need to fire chemical munition weapons at college students.

³² Sabre Red User Manual

The use of an MK 9 pepper spray fogger sprayed directly in the face is inappropriate use. Further the use of 600 pepper balls (500 and 100 between two police departments) as self-reported is highly unusual. While governments have a responsibility to manage disruptive and violent crowds, they also have a responsibility to prepare as thoroughly as possible. The ability to effectively manage this incident required thorough and inclusive planning, practice, staging, communication, staffing and well-considered plans for use of force – a series of steps that however necessary, in this incidence are not clearly documented and likely did not happen.

Sufficient and appropriate planning requires responders to be sufficiently nimble and have enough officers available to manage the crowd that was amassing over hours. Failure to take these appropriate steps, in a timely manner, put officers unnecessarily at risk, forcing them to take measures that appear excessive based on a simple review of photographic evidence. It is important to note that a full internal investigation may uncover facts not obvious on the video record. Until, however, that occurs the public will develop their own conclusions.

8. We recommend the UMPD and APD expand their utilization of both covert and overt video cameras to assist in the prevention of large scale disorder and subsequent investigation.

Both UMPD and APD currently use video in a number of areas and recognize its evidentiary value as well as its importance for officer safety and transparency with the public. Expanded use of video can be extremely useful in large crowd situations. Pre-event deployment and utilization of video cameras, both covert and overt, can help avoid large-scale disorder. Those who seek to use the anonymity of a crowd to be assaultive and to recruit others to assist them can be identified and exposed by the effective use of video. By overtly videotaping disruptive individuals in the crowd, officers remove their anonymity and encourage them to be more compliant. Experience tells us that individuals likely to fight and argue with the police are muted and will retreat once they know they are on video and their actions are being recorded. Installed in a public place, covert cameras are constitutionally acceptable and can be used to capture the illegal acts of those who believe they are anonymous. Officers can either monitor these activities in real-time and take immediate action or they can do a post-event review to identify individuals and hold them accountable. Videotaping by officers during these situations also provides officers with a valuable tool to justify decisions to use force. Officers should be trained on how to properly videotape large-scale events, so that all engagement is included in the recordings. Officers are often shown in videos taken by crowd members responding to a situation without the viewer seeing what prompted the intervention.

APD should review available video footage from this event and work with University officials to identify the violent offenders in the crowd. Identification of these perpetrators will allow UMass Amherst to take appropriate disciplinary action.

9. We recommend the APD enhance a public complaint process.

Several sources reported that it is unclear how to file a complaint at APD. APD does provide training to its officers on the complaint process and provides a detailed

explanation of their complaint process on the APD website. We recommend that APD enhance their complaint process and utilize the Citizen Advisory Board as a vehicle for ways to improve the process and transparency with the community.

Our conversations with students resulted in many complaints about the conduct of the APD at the March 2014 event. Many of the students complained that they attempted to file “use of force complaints” at the front desk of APD. APD reports to us that they have no complaints received from the community at this time nor are they aware of anyone who was prevented from filing complaints.

This discrepancy likely results from attempts to file a complaint in the heat of the moment. When a police department is overwhelmed with a public disorder situation it is difficult to concentrate on non-emergency responsibilities. However, a police department must maintain the trust of every citizen. We heard a great example of this in the Amherst dispatch center when despite an overwhelming number of calls dispatchers acted professionally and calmly. Police have the responsibility to document every complaint. If it was impossible to take citizen complaints in the moment, it is critical that the department circle back and document those complaints in a timely manner. Additionally, police conduct, that is outside standard police policy, and comes to the attention of the police administration through other means, like social media, must be immediately investigated. This will maintain the critical trust of the community. The police department’s very reputation hangs in the balance in these situations.

The appropriate police response to citizen complaints is to have a transparent and open process. The gathering of complaints and the appropriate follow-through acts as a quality control process in a well-managed police department. It became clear to us during the interviews that after the March 2014 event there are a significant number of Amherst citizens, especially those who are enrolled at UMass Amherst who have a negative opinion of APD. In this situation, a police department should recognize the need to outreach to every strata of the community and respond accordingly. They need a public and well-advertised process of complaint management. CALEA standard 52.1 states, “A written directive requires all complaints against the agency or its employees be investigated, to include anonymous complaints.” CALEA standard 52, 1, 4 states, “The agency makes available information to the public on procedures to be followed in registering complaints against the agency or its employees”. To its credit, APD is a CALEA accredited department.³³ UMPD is CALEA and MPAC accredited.

10. We recommend APD and UMPD enhance their use of information gathering and analysis as an effective crime prevention and/or mitigation strategy.

A town faced with the challenge of a “Blarney Blowout” must understand the threat picture. There are many ways to mine the existing information that is available from sources and from other information streams. Just speaking to students helps. UMPD has received high praise from students for their ability to engage positively with them, get to know them and help them in their daily lives. Importantly, since its advent, social media

³³ <http://www.calea.org/>

has played a significant role in the planning and execution of events such as these. It is critical that a valid understanding of systems available to police be considered when planning a preventive strategy to public disorder.

The Massachusetts State Police provides additional resources within its Fusion Center, located in Maynard MA. This center is available to police across the commonwealth. The State Police information center employs analysts who routinely monitor information streams of all sorts, including social media. A simple call for assistance in the face of a developing threat like the “Blarney Blowout” will provide critical assistance and an analytical information review by professionals who can provide a state-of-the-art threat assessment.

Even without State assistance any police department can monitor social media and utilize it to establish a dialogue with the individuals involved. Also effective is reminding those who are threatening to destabilize the community that there are citizens who live there and who have rights. This is a powerful tool in the arsenal of preventive methods for police.

The use of social media requires a commitment to dialogue, not simply a desire to inform people. As such, a police presence on Twitter or Facebook should not be established during a crisis. Police must be experienced with the process through day-to-day operations.³⁴ Any experienced monitoring of social media in the days before the “Blarney Blowout” should have foretold a potential problem.

The indicators on Twitter alone should have resulted in a sense of urgency and a gathering of all available resources. UMPD regularly monitors social media for every anticipated large-scale event and did so for the Blarney Blowout. APD also monitors social media and should have increased this monitoring leading up to and during the event. With proper monitoring, APD could have instigated an emergency meeting of Town and UMass Amherst leadership, law enforcement, and other partners from public safety to preemptively respond.

Employing the assistance of state resources improves the quality of the threat assessment and, candidly, broadens the awesome responsibility beyond town leadership. Partners can provide the balance necessary to a successful prevention process. The problem then becomes everyone’s responsibility to resolve—with additional resources available and a joint-decision making process that is vital to a successful outcome. Vesting the responsibility for the prevention and response to a public safety emergency solely on the shoulders of a town that does not have the number of officers available to properly control such an event is ill advised.

³⁴ Davis, Edward F.. *Social Media and Police Leadership: Lessons From Boston*: From the series New Perspectives on Policing by the National Institute of Justice and Harvard Kennedy School, June, 2014. See [http://www.hks.harvard.edu/var/ezp_site/storage/fckeditor/file/pdfs/centers-programs/programs/criminal-justice/ExecSessionPolicing/Social Media and Police Leadership: Lessons from Boston.pdf](http://www.hks.harvard.edu/var/ezp_site/storage/fckeditor/file/pdfs/centers-programs/programs/criminal-justice/ExecSessionPolicing/Social%20Media%20and%20Police%20Leadership%20Lessons%20from%20Boston.pdf)

11. We recommend both APD and UMPD Adopt Evidence-Based, Preventive Policing Strategies.

In the days leading up to a large-scale event, it is vital to take enforcement and regulatory action to ensure everyone is helping to avoid a large crowd disturbance. One strategy is to gather all the liquor licensees in the area. We have learned from discussions with police that alcohol sales to students are occurring in adjoining jurisdictions. A meeting can be arranged with licensees from several towns. Honest discussions about the need for vigilance during the run up to this type of event can enlist assistance from the business community. This discussion can also elicit information that can inform enforcement decisions. For instance, failure to attend may indicate a problem proprietor and the need for increased surveillance may be appropriate. Posting officers at “problem” liquor stores can help. Undercover operations that utilize underage purchasers and that are pre-announced puts the sellers on fair notice. The objective is not to make arrests, it is to gain compliance with the law. Other ideas garnered from responsible owners can assist. The simple act of asking for the business community’s help improves the picture.

The fact that over seven thousand visitors descended upon Amherst on March 7, 2014 provides an opportunity for intervention. The location of the school provides an opportunity for increased surveillance by police on the night before the event. State police partners working with APD and UMPD can provide preventive patrols on the roads leading into the area. Prior public notice of speed enforcement by officers who are aware of the potential for minors transporting alcohol will reduce its incidence. Prior enforcement has the added benefit of providing better information so that the response plan can shift with the threat assessment.

6.4 The Role of Social Media

Influencer of Crowd Behavior

There were a series of warning signs leading up to the event that the Amherst and UMass Amherst communities failed to act upon. The size of the crowd and early onset of drinking were very specifically communicated in Twitter feeds. Social media played a significant role in the vastness of the crowds. By the very nature of social media, locations and times of events are spread easily to thousands of people. It is technically a “one blast” invitation to the world. In this case social media drew a large influx of young people from across New England to this event. If the leaders of the Town and UMass Amherst had better incorporated social media into their preparation for the event, and committed to full scale monitoring of Twitter and other social media outlets, it is likely that the scale of the problem could have been anticipated and mitigated.

Social media was also not used as an effective communication tool by either Town or University. This was a missed opportunity to reach those students who may have acted as active bystanders or leaders in helping calm the masses and disperse the crowd. Social media could have assisted the police in directing students back to their residences and out of the crowded hotspot areas, allaying some of the confusion expressed by students.

Twitter and Facebook were used very effectively during the Marathon bombing immediate aftermath to provide information to runners, families, visitors, business owners and citizens on what was happening, what to do, where to go, what roads were closed, where to reclaim property, etc. It continued to be a useful communication tool as the week unfolded particularly during the "shelter in place" time period. It was also used to correct misinformation in real time. When CNN announced that the bomber had been captured, the Boston Police Department tweeted a correction to that immediately. After that, news stations did not release information until the Boston Police released it first via Twitter. Twitter could have been effectively used by the police to break news during the Blarney Blowout event.

Information-Gathering Tool

Social media is an important information-gathering tool. It does not appear that either the Town or UMass Amherst effectively utilized Twitter in its preparation to learn where students planned to gather, how many planned to participate, how many visitors were expected, how and where alcohol was being purchased, among other insights. UMass Amherst monitored social media and provided the information gathered to the Town. The Town administration reports that it only received anecdotal information and no data, along with one phonecall from UMPD to APD on Friday evening stating the parking lots were at capacity.

The Boston Police Department relied heavily on information gathered from social media sites during Occupy Boston in 2011. Police learned from Twitter that efforts were underway by the Occupiers to make the temporary structures more permanent for the winter and police were able to intervene effectively. Police also learned when and where larger gatherings were taking place and were able to take appropriate precautions to provide safety for the Occupiers and other residents, visitors and business owners in the City.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. We recommend APD and UMPD more effectively monitor information such as size and location of crowds on social media sites in preparation for large-scale events to ensure appropriate planning, prevention and deployment of resources.**
- 2. We recommend APD and UMPD enhance their utilization of social media sites to provide information to the public, correct misinformation and deliver latest news around events.**
- 3. We recommend the intelligence gathered should be consistently shared among appropriate stakeholders for effective intervention if necessary.**

Media communications play a critical role in preventing and responding to large-scale events and disruptive behavior. To ensure accuracy and consistency, constant communication should be maintained between APD, UMPD and UMass Amherst Administration. Having a social media presence is also effective in managing large-

scale events. With a focus on Twitter, optimistic messaging to encourage safe celebrations is recommended. A cautious messaging tone should also include information related to closure of streets or routes as well as the presence of police in specific areas.

6.5 Alcohol Focus

Overview

High risk drinking and a ‘right to gather’ mentality by young people combined with an insufficient police response, fueled the chaos during the March 2014 event. Scheduled for the Saturday before spring break and just before St. Patrick’s Day, this event begins early in the morning with “pre-gaming” and “day drinking” and is promoted by Internet party sites and on other college campuses. Some bars in Amherst do sell tickets in advance, to those of legal drinking age for celebration and drinking. There were few reported incidents in the downtown of drunken young people but to our knowledge, there were no massive crowds or problems. In recent years the town has taken steps to minimize the downtown activity and congregating. The ticket sales are restricted to advance sales and are limited in number. Other evidence of the focus on alcohol consumption is the reports of long lines at package stores on the preceding Friday night. It is unclear what the town response was to those lines and the degree to which that intelligence information was shared with UMass Amherst and across the two police departments – APD and UMPD.

Alcohol at large public events

Research supports^{35 36} that students consume more alcohol at large public events than typically consumed. Research collected specific to ‘game day behavior’ shows increases in rates of intoxication, vandalism, riots and harm to self and others. These studies support that providing alcohol-free activities, limiting tailgating hours, and stronger enforcement of policies decrease the amount of heavy drinking and the negative consequences that are often associated with that drinking. As the large public event mentality is similar, parallel strategies should be considered during identified large public events throughout the year.

Alcohol Use and Misuse

Nationally, college drinking is a noted public health concern with studies showing that 44% of college students consume alcohol in high-risk ways. This high-risk drinking, or high risk drinking, is defined as 5+ drinks for men (4+ for women) in a sitting³⁷ While there have been increasing numbers of students who abstain from drinking, many students show that drinking on college campuses has become more polarized with more abstainers and more risky drinkers and fewer students falling in the middle^{38 39} Highest

³⁵ Glassman T, Werch C, Jobli E, Bian H. Alcohol-Related Fan Behavior on College Football Game Day. *J of Amer College Health*. 2007. 56(3): 255-260.

³⁶ Nelson TF, Wechsler H. School spirits: alcohol and collegiate sports fans. *Addict Behav*. 2002;28:1–11.

³⁷ Nelson TF, Wechsler H. School spirits: alcohol and collegiate sports fans. *Addict Behav*. 2002;28:1–11

³⁸ Wechsler H, Lee JE, Kuo M, Seibring M, Nelson TF, Lee H. Trends in college heavy drinking during a period of

drinking rates are often found by male students, although the gender gap has narrowed over the years⁴⁰. At risk groups often include first-year students, athletes, and members of fraternities and sororities⁴¹.

At UMass Amherst, student survey data show a steady decline in high-risk drinking use. In 2003 UMass Amherst reported the heaviest episodic drinking rates at 76.7% of the student body⁴². In 2013, after sustained prevention efforts by the campus and community, the rate met the national norm at approximately 40%⁴³. While nationally, schools still strive to decrease this number, it is commendable that UMass Amherst has seen such a decline due to their comprehensive alcohol prevention program.

Best Practices

In 1999, the National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism or NIAAA created a task force to review literature and “encouraged campus officials to implement evidence-based strategies⁴⁴. In 2002, the NIAAA released a task force report called “A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges,” which outlined four tiers for successful prevention according to the research available. The report challenged colleges to focus most of their prevention efforts on strategies that had “evidence of effectiveness among college students” or “evidence of success with general populations”⁴⁵. Examples of these strategies include initiatives like BASICS (Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students), and several environmental prevention strategies including use of strong policies with consistent enforcement, restrictions on alcohol outlet density, and responsible beverage service trainings⁴⁶

After the release of the report, colleges were encouraged by the NIAAA and the Higher Education Center for the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention (now defunded) to use environmental prevention strategies as a comprehensive population-based prevention tool^{47 48 49 50 51}. These strategies can be organized within six domains:

increased prevention efforts: findings from 4 Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study surveys: 1993–2001. *J Am Coll Health*. 2002;50:203–217.

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ O'Malley, P. and L. Johnston, *Epidemiology of alcohol and other drug use among American college students*. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 2002. **14**(1): p. 23-39.

⁴¹ Higher Education Center 2008

⁴² McNally A, Fedorchak D. UMass report: 2005 – 2013 UMass Amherst Alcohol Survey Data. 2013. Presentation.

⁴³ IBID

⁴⁴ DeJong, W., et al., *Niaaa's rapid response to college drinking problems initiative: Reinforcing the use of evidence-based approaches in college alcohol prevention*. *Journal of studies on alcohol and drugs*. Supplement, 2009(Supplement no. 16): p. 5.

⁴⁵ IBID

⁴⁶ IBID

⁴⁷ DeJong, W., et al., *Niaaa's rapid response to college drinking problems initiative: Reinforcing the use of evidence-based approaches in college alcohol prevention*. *Journal of studies on alcohol and drugs*. Supplement, 2009(Supplement no. 16): p. 5.

⁴⁸ NIAAA, A., *call to action: Changing the culture of drinking at US colleges*. Task force report, 2002

⁴⁹ DeJong, W. and L. Langford, *A typology for campus-based alcohol prevention: Moving toward environmental management strategies*. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 2002. **14**: p. 140-147

⁵⁰ Ringwalt, C.L., M.J. Paschall, and A.M. Gitelman, *Alcohol prevention strategies on college campuses and student alcohol abuse and related problems*. *Journal of Drug Education*, 2011. **41**(1): p. 99-118

creating a health-promoting normative environment; use targeted and informational strategies; creating an alcohol-free environment; utilizing policy and enforcement strategies; reducing alcohol availability; and restricting alcohol marketing and promotion. A comprehensive environmental prevention program would fully implement evidence-based strategies that fall within each of these six domains^{52 53}

UMass Amherst Comprehensive Environmental Prevention Program	
1. Creating a health promoting normative environment	
a.	<i>Social norms</i> and social marketing campaigns to challenge misperceptions about alcohol use on campus. Research supports that challenging misperceptions lowers high-risk drinking^{54 55}.
b.	<i>My Student Body</i> is an online alcohol curricula that is mandated for all first-year students to complete before matriculating in the University. Failure to complete the course results in a hold in spring course registration. The curricula outlines dangers of high-risk drinking, allows students to compare their own drinking with campus statistics, offers resources and challenges alcohol expectancies. The completion rate is nearly 100%.
c.	<i>The Campus and Community Coalition</i> offers UMass and the local community opportunities to work together. The group started in 2005 has many noted successes listed on their website: http://www.umass.edu/ccc/strategies.html
2. Use targeted and informational strategies	
a.	Information on alcohol use at college is provided to all parents/caregivers during student orientation, and “The Not Ready for Bedtime Players” perform for all incoming students at orientation addressing many issues including stress, sexual assault, some information on alcohol and other drugs, and being an active bystander. There is also a student performance program called Shaha that addresses social justice issues through performances in the residence halls and could be used to further education on prevention of high risk drinking.
b.	<i>Peer Services</i> provides support and information to various student groups, including information tables throughout the year.
c.	<i>136 Educational Programs</i> offered in the residence halls focused on alcohol and other drugs. Some programs were social media messages and/or bulletin boards.
d.	<i>Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students or BASICS</i> could fall into several categories as it also promotes a healthy normative environment. The BASICS program is designed to assist students to their alcohol and drug use with a goal to reduce risky behavior and the harmful consequences of alcohol abuse. BASICS has been well researched and is considered a tier 1 preventions strategy by the NIAAA^{56 57}. Last year over 1200 students were referred to BASICS.

⁵¹ Saltz, R.F., *Environmental Approaches to Prevention in College Settings*. Alcohol research and health, 2011. **34**(2)

⁵² DeJong, W. and L. Langford, *A typology for campus-based alcohol prevention: Moving toward environmental management strategies*. Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 2002. **14**: p. 140-147

⁵³ Ringwalt, C.L., M.J. Paschall, and A.M. Gitelman, *Alcohol prevention strategies on college campuses and student alcohol abuse and related problems*. Journal of Drug Education, 2011. **41**(1): p. 99-118

⁵⁴ Borsari, B. and K.B. Carey, *Descriptive and injunctive norms in college drinking: A meta-analytic integration*. Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 2003. **64**(3): p. 331.

⁵⁵ Mattern, J.L. and C. Neighbors, *Social norms campaigns: Examining the relationship between changes in perceived norms and changes in drinking levels*. Journal of studies on alcohol and drugs, 2004. **65**(4): p. 489.

⁵⁶ Fachini A, Alian P, Martinez E, Furtado E. Efficacy of brief alcohol screening intervention for college students (BASICS): a meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy 2012 7:40.

e. UMass also offers an active bystander program, *UMatter*, to encourage students to take action early when a peer may be in crisis. Bystander programs have been documented in the research as a strong prevention program for college campuses.⁵⁸

3. Creating an alcohol-free environment

a. Alcohol-free housing is offered in one residence hall, providing a housing option for students who do not wish to drink or live in an environment where others may be drinking, or coming back having consumed alcohol.

b. Last year UMass offered 683 alcohol-free events campus-wide and 6,801 alcohol-free events were offered in the residence halls as a way to provide social outlets to students that do not include alcohol. It was difficult to ascertain how many of these events were offered on weekends and/or late night. Also some of the events seemed to be more educational than social in nature. It is a strong effort by the campus to offer a full range of activities.

4. Utilizing policy and enforcement strategies

a. Alcohol policies may include policies enforced by the campus and by the community. The UMass policy outlines that violation of state laws and local town bylaws will be enforced. They also offer a number of policies specific to their University Housing, though they note that all students are to adhere to the policy.

According to the Campus and Community Coalition website alcohol policies on campus were reviewed and revised by national expert Peter Lake⁵⁹. The policies are fairly standard and similar to most college campuses and are included in *Appendix D*.⁶⁰

b. Policies were widely distributed. For residence hall students, a brochure with the policy was placed in each student's room prior to their arrival. It is also posted on every floor in the halls. Residence Hall staff discuss the policies at their first floor meetings. Additionally, the Code of Conduct (including policies) are emailed to every student at the beginning of the year.

5. Reducing alcohol availability

a. According to the Campus and Community Coalition website, research by this coalition led to stronger implementation of bylaws and regulations, including consistent enforcement by both campus and community authorities.

b. It also notes that they are working with the local retailers to reduce alcohol availability.

6. Restricting alcohol marketing and promotion

a. There was little information available about this strategy except for a note by the Campus and Community Coalition about monitoring promotions.

UMass has outlined a comprehensive prevention program using the six domains mentioned above.

⁵⁷ DiFulvio, G. T., Linowski, S. A., Mazziotti, J. S., & Puleo, E. (2012). Effectiveness of the brief alcohol and screening intervention for college students (BASICS) program with a mandated population. *Journal of American College Health*, 60(4), 269-280.

⁵⁸ Coker, A. L., Cook-Craig, P. G., Williams, C. M., Fisher, B. S., Clear, E. R., Garcia, L. S., & Hegge, L. M. (2011). Evaluation of Green Dot: An active bystander intervention to reduce sexual violence on college campuses. *Violence Against Women*, 1077801211410264.

⁵⁹ Campus and Community Coalition. <http://www.umass.edu/cc/strategies.html>. Accessed August 13, 2014.

⁶⁰ University Alcohol and Drug Policy, UMass Amherst. 2013. http://www.umass.edu/uhs/uploads/basicContentWidget/14210/AOD_policies2013.pdf. Accessed August 13, 2014.

Strengths of the UMass Amherst Alcohol Policy include

- Clear language about acceptable and restricted alcohol use.
- The inclusion of policies defining intoxication, common sources of alcohol, and drinking games. Research supports that these behaviors can become dangerous situations for the drinker and the community^{61 62 63}.
- A statement on possession of containers, whether empty or full allow residence staff to enforce the law even if the containers are found after the fact.

Sanctioning:

The alcohol policy also outlines how students are sanctioned when they violate the alcohol policy.

- The first violation includes housing probation, BASICS 1 (which includes 2 – 50 minute sessions), a fee of \$100 for BASICS, and parental notification.
- The second violation includes deferred eviction from housing, BASIC 2 (2- 50 minutes sessions) a fee of \$175 for BASICS, and parental notification.
- The third violation includes eviction from all UMass Amherst housing, BASICS 3 (4 50-minute sessions) and a \$175 fee for BASICS, and parental notification.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. We recommend the town officially end the Blarney Blowout. The Town of Amherst needs to end the commercialization and promotion of the Blarney Blowout by bars and liquor stores. The potential cost far exceeds any perceived benefit.**
- 2. We recommend UMass Amherst encourage the entire campus community to participate in discussion and problem solving around the issue of high risk drinking, emphasizing class commitments and a balance with social events.**
- 3. We recommend UMass Amherst increase offering alcohol-free options at on and off campus entertainment venues to provide safer avenues for students who do not wish to drink, and/or to reduce the amount of hours students drink.**
- 4. We recommend the town and UMass Amherst empower the Town-Gown Steering Committee to thoroughly review current and new, on and off campus entertainment venues. There is an urgent need for entertainment venues that will attract students and provide pro social activities within the Town. The Town-Gown Steering Committee is perfectly situated to think outside the box and provide short and long term alternatives to using the Amherst streets as a gathering location. The UMass Amherst student union**

⁶¹ Borsari, B. (2004). Drinking games in the college environment: A review. *Journal of Alcohol and Drug Education*.

⁶² Gruenewald, P. J. (2011). Regulating availability: how access to alcohol affects drinking and problems in youth and adults. *Alcohol research and health*, 34(2), 248.

⁶³ Hingson, R. W. (2010). Magnitude and prevention of college drinking and related problems. *Alcohol Research & Health*, 33(1-2), 45.

building should be studied with an eye towards rebuilding from a facility that was originally intended to service a student body of 8,000 to one that will service the current student population of 22,000. The Mullin Center should evaluate their programs and diversify their entertainment offerings. Vacant buildings in Amherst should be evaluated and considered for possible use as student venues. This evaluation should also include potential venues for mixed use housing and commercial properties.

Considerations

Increase offerings of late night social activities without alcohol.

Extend hours of the campus center and recreation center to offer more social space.

Increase offerings of alcohol-free activities during the first six weeks of the semester, which is the highest risk time for transitioning students.

Policies are only as strong as the enforcement and the marketing of the policies. UMass Amherst administration should evaluate how students are informed of the policies, how the policies are enforced, and if there is consistent enforcement across departments.

Referring to the Annual Security Report for 2012, the number of liquor law referrals decreased from 1588 in 2010 to 609 in 2012. A noted decline could be attributed to fewer violations but often reflect a change in priorities in enforcement of policies.⁶⁴

Are students being referred to the judicial system uniformly?

Are some violations more severe than others, requiring a different sanctioning?

If students take advantage of “medical amnesty” and are then involved in another violation, do they still start with the first offense?

Is a three chance system enough of a deterrent to offer significant impact on student drinking?

A written policy regarding alcohol marketing and promotion could be beneficial. Most schools state that they do not allow alcohol promotions but only 40 – 50% of schools have written, enforceable policies⁶⁵. Such a policy at UMass Amherst was not found, however may exist.

A policy should be developed regarding social media and what actions the UMass Amherst will take if an event with alcohol is promoted using social media.

⁶⁴ University of Massachusetts Amherst, Annual Security Report, 2012. <http://www.umass.edu/umpd/pdf/files/ASR.pdf>

⁶⁵ Lenk, K. M., Erickson, D. J., Nelson, T. F., Winters, K. C., & Toomey, T. L. (2012). Alcohol policies and practices among four-year colleges in the United States: Prevalence and patterns. *Journal of studies on alcohol and drugs*, 73(3), 361.

6.6 UMass Amherst and Student Responsibility

Student Behavior

Historically, there have also been significant issues with how some students behave in the residential neighborhoods that abut the campus. Despite student and UMass Amherst efforts to encourage more respectful and less disruptive behavior in the neighborhoods, residents who live near campus describe a range of inappropriate and disorderly behavior throughout the academic year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We recommend that UMass Amherst implement and fund successful programs such as the CCPI at Boston College and the Georgetown University Program. This funding should include the funding for a Community Liaison Officer program.

Boston College (BC) has been recognized by their neighbors for successful outreach to the community. BC's program is called the Community Campus Partnership Initiative (CCPI). CCPI is led by William Mills, Director of Community Affairs. Mr. Mills is a constant presence at community meetings where he listens to the concerns of community members and establishes a dialogue between the university and the community. "Community Assistance Patrols" are considered part of that outreach and are run by Mr. Steve Montgomery. Mr. Montgomery teams up with police from District 14 in Brighton and patrols the neighborhood for disorderly houses and persons. His focus is on the popular party nights of Thursday through Sunday and from the hours of 9:00 PM to 3:00 AM. He also walks the area himself. A new Community Liaison Officer program at UMass Amherst with appropriate staffing could serve this function in addition to other community related responsibilities. At BC, individuals who are identified as problematic are dealt with through BC's internal discipline process. UMass Amherst already has in place and implements the discipline components of this recommended program. The process starts with a letter that immediately notifies parents of the problem behavior. The school is not deterred by concerns around confidentiality. The notification to parents is determined to be a greater good. The discipline process has real teeth especially with repeat offenders and those who damage property or commit acts of violence. Infrequently, conduct is so egregious that criminal charges are sought, but this is considered only after lesser solutions are exhausted.

While UMass Amherst does offer an off-campus student center with effective programs, and notifies parents when students engage in high-risk behavior, there should be a concerted effort made towards more fully engaging in community outreach. Part of this should involve the funding of a community liaison officer program with appropriate staffing. The disorder reported as a routine event on Fearing St. is a perfect location for an outreach program such as this. A joint operation with UMPD and UMass Amherst officials in the same manner as the BC program would greatly benefit the community.

APD is clearly in charge of public streets but do not have sufficient resources to solve the problem. As mentioned above, the APD should hire adequate staffing that meets

national best practices and public safety needs of the Amherst community and allows the police to be on foot engaging with this community.

The main components of the CCPI are, a perception of omnipresence of university officials in the community, dialogue, and real sanctions for anyone who adversely effects the rights of their neighbors. The neighbors perceive the University as concerned and immediately engaged in a problem solving process to mitigate the objectionable behavior.

Georgetown University lies in the middle of a highly residential neighborhood filled with influential residents. Georgetown has a similar program that goes a step further than BC and is run by Mr. Cory Peterson of their Office of Neighborhood Life. Its mission statement is, “The Office of Neighborhood Life supports all students, non-students, and permanent residents in the communities surrounding Georgetown University. Our office will educate students about university policies and local ordinances; continue to build and strengthen neighborhood relations by facilitating dialogue; and promote civic citizenship to create a positive quality of life for everyone living in the neighborhood.” Georgetown hires two community liaisons and provides them separate apartments in hotspot areas. Their main responsibility is to monitor disorder and problems involving Georgetown Students. They patrol with hired security personnel. They follow the same guidelines as BC.

2. We recommend UMass Amherst utilize Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED⁶⁶)

UMass Amherst administration and UMPD should review problem and congested areas on campus through CPTED evaluations in an effort to improve ability to control large crowd events, reduce crime and disorder and improve quality of life for staff, residents and visitors.

3. We recommend UMass Amherst Administration conduct a full review and amendment to the Visitor Policy to include detailed enforcement protocols.

After review of the UMass Amherst’s Visitor Policy in place at the time of the March 2014 event, we recommend UMass Amherst conduct a full review and amendment to this policy. The Visitor Policy provides different rules or expectations for standard weekends and exceptional weeks. This has the unintended consequence of sending mixed messages to students. For example, if the weekends known historically as “Blarney Blowout” and “Hobart Hoedown” have a different policy, is the Administration signaling that these are party weekends or otherwise different? In general, we recommend UMass Amherst to consider limiting, at a minimum, the number of registered guests to a number set by the building capacity based on occupancy numbers and fire regulations.

Any visitor policy must keep in mind that the number of occupants of a building is strictly controlled by fire department policy that predicates those numbers upon square footage as well as stairway space and the number of exits is absolutely necessary to

⁶⁶ International CPTED Association. www.cpted.net. Accessed September 17, 2014.

assure the safety of students and guests. In the occurrence of a fire, a tragedy could have occurred with the numbers of visitors in the building on March 8, 2014. The State Fire Marshal may be a good resource who can provide numbers per building. The Fire Marshal could also help enforce adherence to the policy. The number of visitors therefore is based on safety per building and not convenience of students.

There is likely to be a lack of parity across buildings that might encourage early registration and present opportunities for UMass Amherst to vet and approve visitors. There should be clear guidance within the policy establishing a protocol for the Resident Life advisors to notify UMPD as well as the Amherst Fire Department in real time when capacity is reached. This is an emergency situation that carries real safety as well as liability exposure for UMass Amherst and the Commonwealth. UMass Amherst must establish a protocol that creates a sense of urgency around monitoring and following this revised policy.

We also strongly recommend that the UMPD Chief utilize his ability as a point person to recommend a suspension of visitors to the residence halls under extraordinary circumstances. A logical policy that is appropriately enforced will, itself, reduce the propensity for a repeat of last year's problems.

4. We recommend that UMass Amherst Administration continue to hold students accountable for disruptive and malicious behavior.

UMass Amherst has historically dealt sternly with students who act with violence – and those who commit acts of malicious damage, rock throwing, and bottle throwing both on and off campus. When the alcohol-driven celebrating turns violent and destructive, a strict policy of accountability by UMass Amherst is appropriate. There is a necessary lack of sharing of this information with the Amherst community due to privacy restrictions in the law. However, UMass Amherst has released annual data regarding discipline trends. In 2014 UMass Amherst showed an improving trend in its discipline cases. The number of cases off campus decreased by 21% from 2013. The number of students facing disciplinary action decreased by 31%. The activity that occurs on the part of some students is intolerable. Bottle throwing in a crowd has led to fatalities across the nation. Students must appreciate and recognize there are serious consequences to uncivilized behavior. Other behavior that was recorded in the “Blarney Blowout”, included attempts to flip cars over with innocent people inside and lesser criminal conduct such as damage to homes, and real property that is criminal in nature and should not be tolerated. UMass Amherst currently has a range of graduated sanctions for the behavior of miscreants. There are some behaviors that may be sufficiently alarming for imposition of removal from UMass Amherst but this should not be occurring in the majority of cases where lesser sanctions are appropriate.

5. We recommend that UMass Amherst facilitate a process whereby students are able to acclimate themselves within the larger community and Town of Amherst.

UMass Amherst and the town have made great strides to acclimate students in the Amherst Community through the Campus Community Coalition (CCC). It was established in 2005 with support from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and

Alcoholism. For 9 years, they have worked to reduce High-Risk Drinking among students. They are comprised of an impressive group of University and Town stakeholders who establish a framework for plans that impact alcohol abuse at UMass Amherst and ultimately the town of Amherst.

The CCC has met with success and established several key programs in the areas of education, enforcement and the retail partner's campaign. It seems logical that this group can expand their role to provide a process for preventive action among the partners. This is logical because high risk drinking is at the root of all the large crowd disturbances that have been reviewed.

Either the CCC or a new program that follows a strict process for change is necessary. This process should coordinate its efforts with the Town-Gown Steering Committee. The process is difficult and requires a commitment to shared authority and responsibility. The process should be run by a "Powerful Neutral Convener," someone who can invite the leaders of the institutions involved, starting with the town of Amherst and the chancellor's office. It should be someone who has the ability to ask hard questions. In other places, a newspaper editor or a congressman have been tapped to run the group. The development of a plan to prevent disorder requires data. A research component should be developed in the group. This will allow the plans to be evidence based. The meeting must start with the leaders of the organizations but the work can be delegated to their designees. However at least twice annually, the leaders must reconvene to review progress and make sure the group is on task. It is important that students and the public are engaged in this process.

Such a group can be a driving force for implementation of these suggestions and others that will naturally develop as a part of the process. Changes can be discussed by the stakeholders and modified to suit the group. Trial and error will be the best indicator of success. This is an iterative process and we believe the best solution for the long term.

There are many positive efforts that continue to be made to improve community student relationships. In particular the UMass at UMass Amherst, is an umbrella for pro-social programming, promoting an overriding philosophy of community building and caring, reinforcing the UMass Amherst values of care, compassion and active engagement. Through the off-campus student center, the school promotes Walk This Way, encouraging respectful and friendly behavior when walking through the neighborhoods; Active Bystander Program (similar to the designated driver philosophy that one stands up and speaks up to protect the safety and dignity of others); and studies and training on responsible drinking. UMass Amherst should look for additional opportunities to integrate students within the greater Amherst community.

6. We recommend that UMass Amherst Administration and UMPD align the current functions of the campus based security process to create a continuum of response responsibility for all UMass Amherst Stakeholders.

A lesson can be learned here from the auto industry. Among the best quality car manufacturers, like Toyota, even low level line workers have the authority to stop

production if they see a fault in the assembly process. Similarly, every RA should be empowered to raise the alarm in the face of potential trouble to a supervisor or directly to the police. There are many opportunities across the range of employees – students and professionals – to better coordinate a public safety response. This includes a more responsive and proactive response from the police. There is presently more of a sense of security when cadets are monitoring the desk; versus students alone. Part of an improved public safety response should include a direct line of communication between the UMPD Chief and UMass Amherst Vice Chancellors. Specifically, we recommend:

- Reviewing job descriptions of student security staff, cadets, resident life staff and separate required job skills from expected behavior and responsibilities.
- Creating an expectation that each of these roles contributes to a continuum of safety and establish a clear communication strategy across these providers.
- Addressing the culture that discourages residence life staff from calling UMPD for “disorder” and limits calls solely for emergencies.
- Developing strategies for students – both those with paid and unpaid positions – to be responsible residents. Their responsibility is not only about personal behavior but also as part of a community. Are they expected and trained to communicate concerns and intelligence to UMPD with confidence? Have they been trained in strategies such as “citizen police academies”, the SARA model, a problem solving process in which police routinely engage, and other expectations of community members?
- Ensuring all actors in the University’s response chain have shared goals and stated expectations as providers, keepers, and monitors of safety.
- UMPD Chief should be the point person who determines whether extraordinary security measures need to be taken on campus and in the residence halls. These measures may include limitations or a prohibition of overnight guests in certain extreme conditions.
- Chief John Horvath of the UMPD needs to have a direct line of communication to the Vice Chancellors for University Relations and Student Affairs

7. We recommend UMass Amherst student government develop a plan in collaboration with other stakeholders to avoid large crowd disturbances and violence at school.

Students must take responsibility for the damage done by the Blarney Blowout. Students did not take the University’s Visitors Policy into consideration. The loophole in policies in residence halls was taken advantage of. Frank discussions about the effect of social media can be a major factor. Students must realize that crowds of hundreds in their home will become out of control and dangerous. They should work with police and call for help when a party gets out of hand. One resident of the town stated that ‘she had called the police when she noticed hundreds of young people at a party at her student neighbors’ home. The students were arrested, but later thanked the resident because they realized things were out of control’. Students should realize their actions affect the community surrounding them. Training around this component of student life should be expanded.

6.7 Public Perception and Role of Media

Overview

The “Blarney Blowout” and similar historical events have contributed to a party school reputation that UMass Amherst administration and a large percentage of students work very hard to change. It was reported to us by neighbors during meetings that UMass Amherst is improving its image as an excellent and selective academic institution with highly sought after faculty, and courses that prepare students for successful careers. They also reported that UMass Amherst was increasing its efforts to train students to be good neighbors. Despite improvements, neighbors also expressed frustration at the lack of respect for the community shown by students and bad behavior in the neighborhoods.

WHAT YOU TOLD US

“There is a difference between having a party and taking over the Town.”

Abutting neighbor

“The students have no real destination. The streets are the party.”

Abutting neighbor

“I have worked here for 20 years and normally feel very safe. I felt unsafe during Blarney Blowout day because of the number of students, the nature of the crowd and their behavior.”

Administrator

Occurrences like the “Blarney Blowout” and the media attention that follows negatively affects advances UMass Amherst has achieved. The media coverage after this event, which included YouTube, was very negative and visual. Photos were shown all over social media sites, videos were prominently displayed on YouTube and newspapers heralded a series of negative headlines. It was impossible to balance public perception once these events took place. However a joint, and more strategic media plan could have improved the messaging after the event.

MEDIA COVERAGE

“This year’s Blarney Blowout should be the last for University of Massachusetts. Already carrying a reputation for over-the-top partying, University of Massachusetts Amherst now risks becoming the poster university for out-of-control student behavior.” (Boston Globe 3/10/14)

“Students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst rallied in protest Tuesday against the police response to an unruly outdoor party last weekend, alleging that town officers used overly aggressive tactics to break up the large crowds.” (Boston Globe 3/11/14)

“I want to make it unequivocally clear that the University of Massachusetts Amherst condemns the outrageous behavior of those students who acted out without any regard for public safety and the community in which they live’ said Chancellor Kumble Subbaswamy, in a strongly worded letter shared with the public and students.” (Boston Daily 3/10/14).

“The events of this past Saturday were extremely upsetting and hazardous,’ Scott Livingstone, Chief of police in Amherst said in a statement.’ The behavior of many participants of this melee caused the public and first responders to be placed in a very dangerous situation.” (Boston Globe 3/10/14)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We recommend that the town and UMass Amherst develop and implement a joint communication strategy.

The review of press coverage of the March 2014 event reveals that the town and UMass Amherst would benefit from a joint communication strategy during large scale planned and unplanned events. A strong mutual partnership should exist to prevent these occurrences and mitigate damages from such events. Such a partnership requires a press plan. All parties should agree to a plan for prevention that recognizes problems may arise. Finger pointing and sensational statements often result in these situations. No one wants to own the issue. However, this is counter-productive to an ongoing and effective relationship that is in the public interest. Blaming is corrosive to the responsibility each

partner has to each other and to the community. A media strategy that recognizes the responsibility of the press to report to the community is vital.

A process that calmly reports the facts of a developing crisis is the goal. Transparency for the unfolding events must be combined with a calm review of the work done prior to the crisis to prevent the problem. The ultimate goal is to provide valid information on the event and to reduce public concern. A joint press conference of the main parties is preferable to various spokespeople each offering their off the cuff assessments.

Part of this press strategy is that each organization should only have one information spokesperson. There should not be several parties from one organization providing commentary about ongoing events. The comments should be strategic and from one assigned individual. This will eliminate inflammatory remarks that may actually impede the best outcome.

2. We recommend UMass Amherst should review their media strategy to more effectively promote the educational and training efforts they are making to reduce high risk drinking and increase student responsibility in the neighborhoods.

UMass Amherst administration should better inform the community about the steps they are taking from an educational and training approach to reduce high risk drinking and provide opportunities for students to be better neighbors. The development of this strategy should be coordinated with the development of a joint communication strategy between UMass Amherst and the town.

7. Conclusions

UMass Amherst has made strong progress in marketing the school as the Flagship of the University system. The improved academic standards achieved over the past decade are notable and accomplished only after hard work. The students who graduate from such a university will benefit from the efforts of those who have accomplished the task. At the same time these gains have assisted UMass Amherst in changing a persistent and negative perception as a party school. The students now attending UMass Amherst must understand that benefit and that there is much at stake here. Clearly, the repetitive alcohol driven disorder that manifested itself in the latest large crowd disturbance adversely impacts the school's reputation, its enrollment numbers and the overall standing of UMass Amherst among employers.

Chancellor Subbaswamy has made strong statements that decry violent and destructive behavior. We are also impressed by his concern for his students' safety and their right to live in the community of Amherst. We applaud his balance and commitment to solving this vexing problem. This manner of strong leadership from the Chancellor and from the Town Manager is necessary to achieve everyone's goal of community safety.

This document contains some hard observations. The observations must be viewed through the lens of the event. Police were faced with serious criminal behavior during the Blarney Blowout. They confronted overwhelming odds and were being inundated with calls for help. Despite these facts, they managed to quell the disturbance without serious injury. For this they should be thanked. We do list some obvious shortcomings in the police actions in the spirit of learning. We implore the readers to look forward and base prevention plans on a collaborative process based in principles of Community Policing and facilitated through a renewed Campus, Community Coalition or The Town Gown Steering Committee.

We recommend a series of actions that can be quickly implemented. For longer term topics the CCC and The Town Gown Steering Committee seem to be good vehicles for collaboration. Each community must tailor these processes and solutions to suit their own needs. If the recommendations are followed we have high hopes that the problem activity will be greatly curtailed.

Students can and should enjoy themselves during their college experience. This fact should not impinge on the rights of the community at large. While we can never guarantee the end of these events, we offer here a process that is focused upon prevention and mitigation, if the former fails. Prior preparation is needed and must be supported by all those in positions of leadership. A sense of urgency must prevail in the face of this type of challenge. The police cannot and should not be left to handle this serious situation alone. Everyone has a stake and must be at the table. We met with very responsible students during our study. They should be an integral part of the team and the solution. The plan will be stronger with student input. There was general agreement from all stakeholders that the Blarney Blowout 2014 was a collective failure by the Town, the University and the students. They expressed a desire to move forward together with a collective responsibility to provide improved safety and a better quality of life for everyone in Amherst.

8. Suggested Resources

1. Training and Professional Associations

Center for Problem Oriented Policing (POP Center): this organization provides resources related to problem solving and also houses the SARA Model/Process
<http://www.popcenter.org/>

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS): this is the Office within the U.S. Department of Justice that advances the practice of community policing
<http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=34>

2. Academic Resources

Center for Evidence Based Crime Policy (CEBCP) at George Mason University

<http://cebcop.org/>

Searchable Matrix of Research-Based Policing Practices by CEBCP Faculty

<http://cebcop.org/evidence-based-policing/the-matrix/>

National Institute of Justice

<http://nij.gov/publications/Pages/all-publications.aspx>

National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA): Institute situated within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with evidence-based guidelines on addressing college drinking

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/special-populations-co-occurring-disorders/college-drinking>

1. Appendices

Appendix A

The team conducted a series of focus groups and individual interviews on campus and in the town of Amherst. These groups included:

U Mass Amherst Groups

- UMass Amherst Campus Leadership Council
- UMass Amherst Community Relations
- UMass Amherst Center for Counseling and Psychological Health
- UMass Amherst Center for Student Development
- UMass Amherst Chancellor
- UMass Amherst External Relations and University Events
- UMass Deans
- UMass Amherst Dean of Students Office
- UMass Amherst Faculty Senate Rules Committee
- UMass Amherst Faculty Subject Matter Expert Active Bystandership
- UMass Amherst General Counsel
- UMass Amherst News and Media Relations
- UMass Amherst Police
- UMass Amherst Staff from Residential Life
- UMass Amherst Students
- UMass Amherst Student Legal Services
- UMass Amherst Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Campus Life
- UMass Amherst Vice Chancellor for University Relations

Town of Amherst and Other Agencies

- Amherst Police Chief and Command Staff Members
- Amherst Property Managers and Owners
- Amherst Select Board Members and Former Members

- Amherst and Hadley liquor store owners
- Amherst property managers and owners
- Hampshire County District Attorney and Staff
- Massachusetts State Police
- Fearing Street/Lincoln Avenue neighborhood members
- North Amherst neighborhood members
- Former Police Official

Appendix B

Tours of Venues

- Townhouse Apartments
- Brandywine Apartments
- Puffton Village Apartments
- Hobart Lane
- Fraternity Row (300 block North Pleasant Street)
- Downtown Amherst
- McGuirk Football Stadium & surrounding fields
- Fearing Street

Appendix C:

University of Massachusetts Alcohol Policies

CS-2: Alcohol

Residential Life encourages residents to make responsible and informed choices related to alcohol and its consumption. Residents are subject to the following Residential Life and University regulations related to alcohol.

- No person under 21 years of age may possess, use, be under the influence, or be in the presence of alcohol. When any student assigned to a shared room (double, triple, quad, double within a suite apartment) is under 21 years of age, no student (including 21+ year old resident(s) assigned to that space) may possess, use, or store alcohol within that student room
- Providing alcohol beverages to a person under age 21, whether gratuitously or for sale is not allowed.
- A resident of legal age living in a University residence hall or floor where alcohol is permitted may possess or store a maximum of twelve (12oz) bottles/cans of beer, or two (750ml) bottles of wine, or one (750ml) bottle of hard liquor.
- No guest is allowed to transport alcohol into any residence hall buildings regardless of his/her age. Only a resident, at least 21 years old, may bring alcohol into a hall in which alcohol is permitted.
- No more than 10 people are allowed in a residence hall room in which alcohol is present. In suites and apartments (North Apartments, Elm, Linden, Birch, Maple, Cashin, McNamara, Brown) no more than 14 people are allowed in spaces within these halls.
- Quantity-dispensing containers including, but not limited to, kegs, beer balls, punch bowls, drinking funnels, taps, and ice luges are not permitted in residence halls.
- Drinking games (including the simulation of drinking games) or other activities involving rapid and/or excessive alcohol consumption are not allowed.
- Open alcoholic beverage containers (including cups, bottles, or cans) are not allowed in any common space, including common corridors, stairwells, bathrooms, kitchens, balconies and lounges.
- Possession of alcoholic containers for decorative purposes is not allowed.
- Alcohol is not allowed in alcohol-free halls or floors, such as wellness floors, regardless of one's age. Residential Life will determine areas designated as alcohol-free.

Appendix D:

Authors/Contributors:

Christine Cole

Edward Davis

Kaitlyn Davis

Mark Delaney

Lauren Hajjar

Sharon Hanson

Daniel Linskey