

The Extra Mile

Advocating for evidence-based policies and practices
to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms

GOING THE DISTANCE: Third Whiteclay Leadership Summit Offers Hope

One year later, advocates remain committed to healing

The Whiteclay Leadership Summit took place in Oglala, SD and Whiteclay, NE on September 28-30, 2018, during the one-year anniversary of the Supreme Court decision to close the Whiteclay beer stores permanently. Topics of the Summit included improving the diagnosis and treatment of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD); preventing the illegal resale of Nebraska alcohol on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and; calling for increased efforts to investigate unsolved murders in order to identify those responsible and deliver justice for Lakota families.

Approximately twenty advocates from across the country gathered for the event, primarily from Nebraska and South Dakota but also from states like Oklahoma, Iowa, Colorado and even Alaska. Winnebago activist Frank LaMere summed up the need for this and future summits, saying "Healing begins when the talk of healing begins, when those who can help to heal step up and those in need of healing respond."

The Summit started with a visit to one of the local cemeteries to visit the grave of Mr. Pete Blacksmith, one of the men featured in John Maisch's documentary [Sober Indian | Dangerous Indian](#). Advocates visited Mr. Blacksmith to pay their respects and to reflect on his courage in the face of enormous odds.



Advocates spent the morning learning about the inadequacy of trauma-informed care on the reservation. [Nora Boesem](#), a pediatric nurse and FASD clinician in South Dakota, and Ms. Deb Evensen, an FASD clinician and behavioral specialist in Alaska talked about the urgent need for a trauma center, which could serve as a FASD diagnosis and treatment facility for those families impacted on the reservation. Discussions then focused on the equipment and space needed to make the center fully functional as well as possible locations for its construction.

While FASD is a preventable condition, there is also a deep need to diagnose and treat people living with FASD and assist families affected by the disorder. This is

"Healing begins when the talk of healing begins, when those who can help to heal step up and those in need of healing respond."

- Frank LaMere

especially true for the Pine Ridge Reservation and other [Native American communities disproportionately impacted by that condition](#).

The afternoon session featured a discussion with

Capt. Kurt Von Minden and Lt. Brian Eads of the Nebraska State Patrol (NSP) regarding bootlegging and unsolved murders in and around Whiteclay. While the officers could not answer specific questions about ongoing investigations, they did confirm that they were only assisting the Sherry Wounded Foot investigation. With that said, Lt. Eads committed to reach out to the Federal Bureau of Investigation to determine the status of other cold cases. With regard to bootlegging, NSP indicated that they would contact the Oglala Sioux Tribe law enforcement should they become suspicious of alcohol being purchased in Nebraska to bootleggers who would seek to smuggle it onto the reservation. The sale of alcohol to members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe is not a crime in Nebraska.

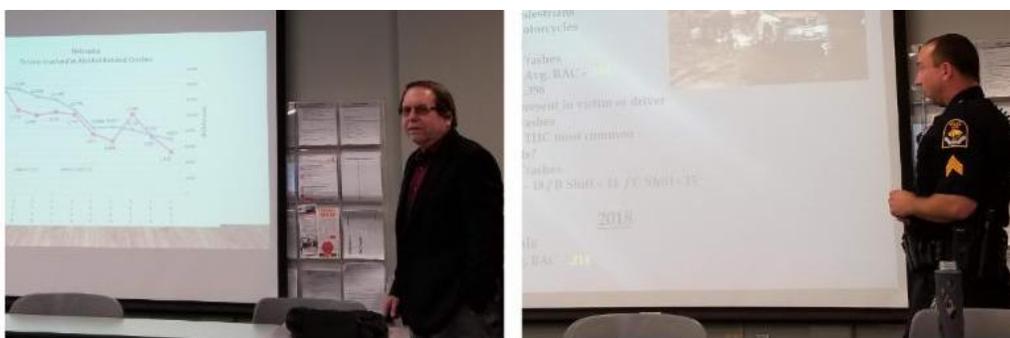


"As Nebraskans, and in my case, former Nebraskan, our efforts aren't done simply because the beer stores in Whiteclay are closed," John Maisch said. "I think that we have a continuing obligation to address the harm that was caused by the beer stores when they were open."

MILES TO GO: Alcohol-related crime not letting up

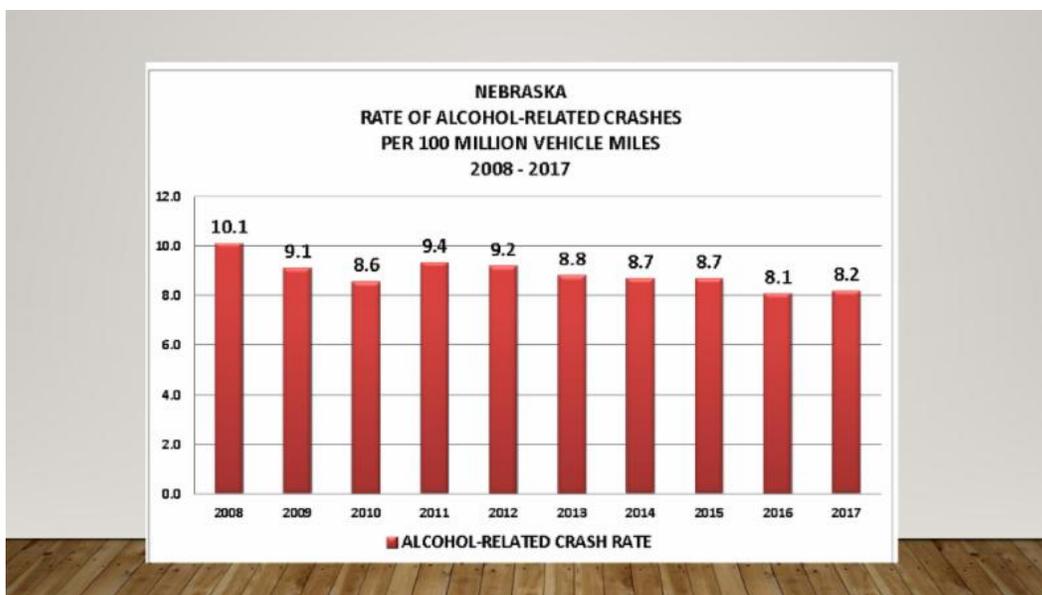
October coalition meeting focuses on solutions to alcohol-related harms

The October meeting of the Project Extra Mile coalition featured Nebraska DOT Highway Safety Administrator Fred Zwonechek and Omaha Police Sergeant Neal Bonacci to talk about statewide safety trends related to excessive alcohol consumption as well as enforcement efforts to address them.



Alcohol-related crime - and particularly alcohol-related DUIs - continue to be a major problem in the Omaha metropolitan area and the rest of the state. This problem reflects both the high overall levels of excessive alcohol consumption in Nebraska ([currently sixth-worst state](#)), and well as weak alcohol policies (e.g., low alcohol taxes, privatization of alcohol sales, lack of adult dram shop liability, etc.)

Zwonechek reported that while the number of impaired driving crashes has trended downward, progress has stalled in recent years.



Furthermore, he noted that one out of every three traffic fatalities in the state is alcohol-related, adding that three of Nebraska's counties (Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy) accounted for 38% of the state's alcohol-related fatal crashes in 2017.

Sgt. Neal Bonacci of the Omaha Police Department presented on Project Night Life, which features both education and enforcement components with the goal of

reducing traffic deaths and serious injuries among 15-19 year-olds. He also addressed other comprehensive alcohol enforcement efforts by the OPD.

An area of concern: alcohol-related traffic fatalities in Omaha have increased from 2017 to 2018, as has the average BAC in those crashes from 0.194 to 0.214.

PNL Enforcement

- ▣ 2017-2018 Grant Cycle
 - 75 total selective traffic enforcement operations
 - Target Population:
 - Statistically known high-crash intersections
 - After school, midnight-0600 hrs., school events (sports, homecoming, prom, etc.)
 - MIP Parties
 - Results:
 - 4,795 traffic related citable offenses
 - 66 alcohol arrests (DUI, MIP, open container)
 - 448 restraint offenses (child restraint/seatbelt)
 - 2,566 speeding offenses
 - 520 total arrests

Turning the tide on this problem will require evidence-based policy efforts at the local and state levels in conjunction with consistent liquor law enforcement. Toward that end, Project Extra Mile will continue to assist law enforcement agencies in conducting enhanced enforcement of underage drinking laws (compliance checks, party patrols, source investigations, etc.), in addition to enforcements targeting adults such as sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols. We will also be educating policymakers about the [Community Preventive Services Task Force recommendations](#) to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms in our communities.

Setting the Record Straight on Alcohol Taxes, Part 3

The regressive tax myth

As we continue to push back against faulty arguments advanced by the alcohol industry and their allies to kill alcohol tax increases, we turn our attention to this claim:

Alcohol taxes are regressive, and thus are unfair to poor people.

Calling a tax *regressive* means that it will disproportionately burden people who have lower incomes. The U.S. income tax, for example, is *progressive* in that higher earners are charged higher rates, since they can afford to part with more and still have an adequate amount to maintain their standard of living.

To be clear, almost all taxes on sales and consumption are somewhat regressive - including those on cigarettes and gasoline. (More explanation of progressive vs.

regressive taxes can be found [here](#).)

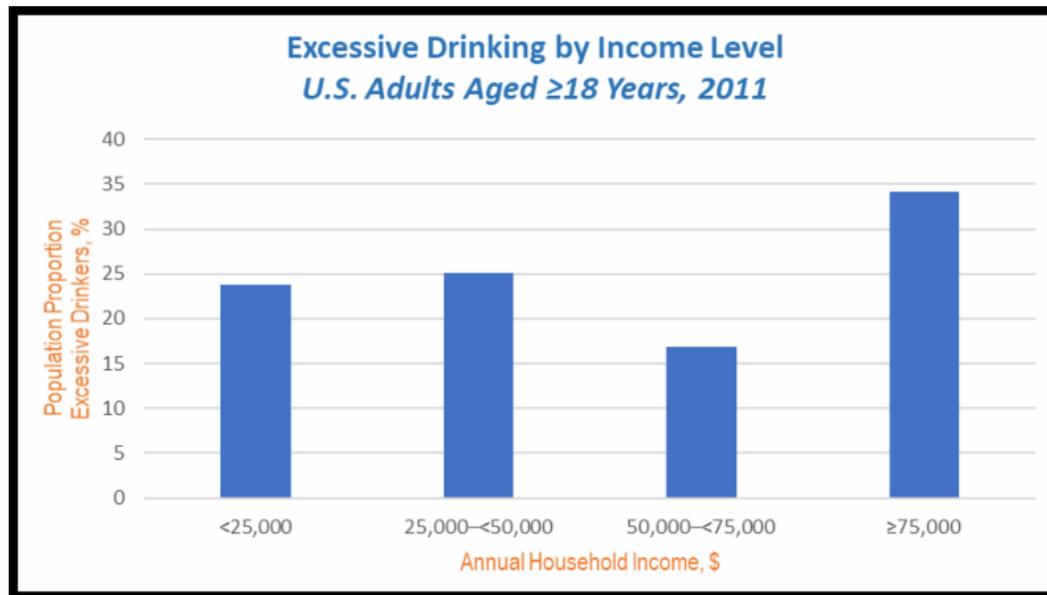
But are alcohol taxes unfairly regressive?

Here are the facts:

1. In the U.S., wealthier people are more likely to drink excessively

In this way, excessive alcohol use is unlike smoking. [Higher rates of smoking tend to skew toward lower income people](#), while higher rates of binge/excessive drinking tend to skew toward wealthier, more educated, white populations.

This fact alone undercuts the idea that higher alcohol taxes are regressive.



Source: 2011 CDC BRFSS, via Naimi, et al., 2016

2. Alcoholic beverages are a luxury item.

Of course, no one *needs* to drink alcohol. About 35% of our state doesn't drink at all. An additional group drinks only occasionally. Others drink regularly, but in ways that are defined as nonexcessive or lower-risk. That means that the only people (rich or poor) who would be burdened by alcohol taxes are those who are drinking excessive amounts. That drinking causes great costs to our state - both in public costs (health care, human services, child welfare services, law enforcement and justice system, etc.) and private costs (reduced productivity for Nebraska businesses). As we've noted before, excessive alcohol use (mostly binge drinking among non-dependent drinkers) costs us a staggering [\\$1.17 billion per year](#), or about \$610 per capita.

It should be noted, also, that people in **all** income brackets would benefit from cutting back on their excessive drinking in terms of their health and their household budgets.

3. Peer-reviewed research studies have debunked the regressivity claim

[Naimi and colleagues calculated the costs of state alcohol tax increases](#) to excessive and nonexcessive drinkers across income levels. The results?

*Among states, excessive drinkers would pay 4.8 to 6.8 times as much as nonexcessive drinkers on a per capita basis and would pay at least 72% of aggregate costs. For nonexcessive drinkers, the annual cost from even the largest hypothetical tax increase (\$0.25 per drink) would average less than \$10.00. **Drinkers with higher household incomes and non-Hispanic***

white drinkers would pay higher per capita costs than people with lower incomes and racial/ethnic minorities. [emphasis added]

Other studies have come to similar conclusions.

Put simply: alcohol taxes are not regressive in any meaningful way.

NEWS BRIEFS

Bikini Bar Liquor License Rejected

Community members come out in force to oppose granting of license

The [Nebraska Liquor Control Commission voted 3-0 to reject the liquor license application for Kandi's bikini bar](#). The commission received 463 written complaints from citizens about the license, said to be a record. Furthermore, the hearing itself had to be moved to a larger venue due to the number of people who showed up to express opposition. The outcome of this effort demonstrates yet again the importance of neighborhood involvement in the licensing process.

Neighborhood opponents of the license pointed to parking and traffic concerns, the presence of nearby schools, and negative economic impacts on nearby businesses.

Sen. Theresa Thibodeau also presented the commission with over 100 emails from constituents opposed to issuing the license.



Liquor Commission denies license for Omaha bikini bar

The Omaha City Council had previously [voted unanimously to recommend denial of the license](#).

In the interest of informing and engaging Nebraskans in the liquor licensing process, Project Extra Mile has created a **Citizen's Protest Guide**, available by [clicking here](#).

Ireland Leads the Way on Alcohol Policy

Groundbreaking laws will include cancer warnings on alcohol containers

The government of Ireland has passed a bill featuring comprehensive, evidence-based alcohol policies, as [reported by CNN](#). Its measures include introduction of a minimum price per unit of alcohol, restrictions on advertising, separation of alcoholic products from retail areas inside shops, and the introduction of cancer warning labels on containers.



Members of the Oireachtas (Irish parliament) celebrate the passing of the Public Health Alcohol Bill

The battle for the bill was [long and contentious](#), with alcohol industry interests and its allies insisting that the bill would decimate the island's alcohol trade. The [Irish Cancer Society](#) praised the cancer warning label provision, which was [almost negotiated out of the final bill](#).

Some elements of the bill may still be challenged by the European Commission, including the cancer warning labels, which may be deemed to be a "barrier to trade."

Nonetheless, this victory was another demonstration of the public health leadership of the Celtic nations, with [Scotland instituting minimum unit pricing of alcohol](#) this past May, overcoming legal action led by the Scotch Whisky Association.





Omaha Metro Coalition Meeting

Wednesday
November 7, 2018
9:00 a.m.

For more information:
(402) 963-9047
www.projectextramile.org
info@projectextramile.org



We invite you to join us for
coffee and conversation as we welcome



Dr. Omar Abdul-Rahman
of the **UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute**

to discuss UNMC's work to address
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

Thank you for your involvement!

Jennifer Pollock

Jennifer Pollock, Coalition Chair



MEETING LOCATION:
National Safety Council
Lower Level
11620 M Circle, Omaha NE
Use Lower Level, West Entrance

