



March 2018

# The Extra Mile

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

## GOING THE DISTANCE: Public Health Day at the Capitol

Speaking out about the biggest threats to the health of Nebraskans

Recent headlines have drawn attention to the fact that U.S. deaths due to [alcohol, other drugs, and suicide are on the increase](#). After years of decline, [alcohol-impaired driving fatality rates](#) plateaued and have recently been on the rise. Tobacco use continues to be the [leading preventable cause of death](#) in the United States.

Clearly, countering these threats to public health will require positive policy change. Toward that end, Project Extra Mile is convening a number of experts in the areas of the harmful use of substances, mental health, and related public policies to discuss public health trends and policy solutions. Participants will learn evidence-based strategies from expert presenters and have an opportunity to educate elected officials and other policymakers about the public health challenges their communities are facing as well as informing lawmakers how evidence-based strategies can reduce the socio-economic burdens all Nebraskans are experiencing as a result.

Speakers listed below will provide an update on emerging challenges in their field as well as potential solutions:

**Robert Pezzolesi, MPH**  
Chair, [U.S. Alcohol Policy Alliance](#)

*The U.S. Alcohol Policy Alliance (USAPA) is a coalition of state and local alliances working to translate alcohol policy research into public health practice to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm. Project Extra Mile is a founding member organization of USAPA.*

**Erin Bramhall, J.D.**  
Program Coordinator, [Coalition Rx](#)

*The mission of Coalition Rx is to reduce the misuse of prescription and non-prescription medicines by partnering with communities to raise awareness, provide community and professional education, prevention and treatment resources and public policy advocacy.*

**Nick Faustman**  
Nebraska Government Relations Director, [American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network \(ACS CAN\)](#)

*ACS CAN is the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, supporting evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN works to encourage*

*elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices heard.*

**Maggie Ballard**

Prevention Specialist, [Prevention Means Progress \(PMP\)](#), Heartland Family Service

*PMP is a community coalition committed to providing education and increasing awareness to help individuals and communities stay ahead of substance abuse.*

**Julia Hebenstreit, J.D.**

Executive Director, [The Kim Foundation](#)

*The Kim Foundation's mission is to serve as a supportive resource and compassionate voice for lives touched by mental illness and suicide. Julia also chairs the Metro Area Suicide Prevention Coalition with the mission to inspire our community in preventing suicide and promoting resilience through conversation, education, support, and advocacy.*

Registration information and other event details are below.

**Please join us** to make a difference in your community and throughout our state!

**◆ Public Health Day at the Capitol ◆**  
**Monday, March 26, 2018**  
*Deadline to register is Monday, March 12*

Registration is [Free](#) and lunch will be provided for attendees.  
 To register, please complete the [registration form](#).

# Public Health Day at the Capitol 2018



## Monday, March 26, 2018

### Nebraska State Capitol

Join with us as we partner together with other Nebraska advocates to discuss preventing and reducing harms related to underage and excessive drinking within the state, as well as other public health related issues with Nebraska lawmakers.

**Deadline to register is**  
**Monday, March 12**

A great way to be civically engaged!

We encourage anyone interested to attend as well as to share this opportunity with others.

**To Register Visit:**  
[www.projectextramile.org](http://www.projectextramile.org)



## Compliance Check Results

As [WOWT reported](#), a compliance check effort over the weekend of 2/16-17 in Douglas and Sarpy counties resulted in 13 businesses (of 204 checked) being cited for selling alcohol to minors. These included three repeat violators.

Thirty eight officers from the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, La Vista Police Department, Nebraska State Patrol, Omaha Police Department, and Sarpy County Sheriff's Office participated in the two-day enforcement effort.

The enhanced enforcement of laws prohibiting sales to minors is a [highly evidence-based strategy](#) to reduce underage drinking and its consequences.

To view both compliant and non-compliant businesses, [click here](#).

## Join Project Extra Mile at the Alcohol Policy 18 Conference

[Alcohol Policy 18 \(AP18\)](#) - the only national conference focused on evidence-based alcohol policy - will take place on **April 11-13, 2018** at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel, just outside of Washington, D.C.

In addition to being a primary sponsor of the event, Project Extra Mile will be presenting on ***Social Media's Impact on Alcohol Compliance Checks***, which will examine strategic challenges in the digital age to undertaking the evidence-based practice of retail alcohol compliance checks. Topics explored will include ensuring the safety of minor cooperating individuals, and the role of advocacy organizations in law enforcement operations.

AP18 will also feature a pre-conference [Advocate Institute](#) (on April 10) where local-level and state-level advocates from nonprofits and public health agencies can learn strategies for translating alcohol policy research in to public health practice.

Be sure to register by **March 23** to avoid paying the late registration rate.



We'll see you in D.C. next month!

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Who's afraid of honest labeling?

#### Alcohol industry working to keep information about cancer from consumers

Research from the highest-level expert bodies in cancer research - including the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR), the American Cancer Society, and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) - has confirmed that [alcohol use is a major risk factor for several cancers](#). These include those of the head and neck, female breast, stomach, liver, and colorectum. Despite this serious risk, most Americans are unaware of the cancer-causing potential of alcohol consumption. In fact, the [2017 Cancer Awareness Survey](#) from AICR

found that only 39% were aware of the alcohol-cancer link, while a [survey study undertaken by the American Society of Clinical Oncologists](#) (ASCO) found only a 30% awareness rate.

Sadly, these low rates are not unique to the U.S. Surveys in the [U.K.](#), [Ireland](#), and [Canada](#) have found similarly low rates of knowledge about alcohol-related cancers.



*The Yukon study labels in question*

In order to raise awareness of this and other alcohol-related harms, the Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research (CISUR) at the University of Victoria had an agreement with the Yukon Liquor Corporation (a government agency) to place labels on alcohol containers and study their impact on consumers. One of the labels in that study featured the phrase "Alcohol can cause cancer, including breast and colon cancer." Although the accuracy of this statement is scientifically solid, [the alcohol](#)

[industry reportedly threatened Yukon officials](#) with legal action were they to proceed with the study. The study is now proceeding - [but without the cancer labels](#).

Related industry interference on public health labeling was reported in Ireland, where an ambitious - and thoroughly evidence-based - Public Health (Alcohol) Bill is currently being considered by the Oireachtas, the Irish parliament. In opposition to mandatory cancer warning labels on alcohol products required by the bill, a [spokesperson for the Alcohol Beverage Federation of Ireland](#) [complained](#) that such labels would place a "stigma" on Irish drinks. (It should be noted that this same spokesperson claimed on [Irish national television](#) that alcohol was not a carcinogen.)

Some members of the alcohol industry have decried attempts to treat alcoholic beverages like tobacco products. But if their product is so different, why are they using tobacco-industry style tactics to obscure the alcohol-cancer link?

## A simple and logical way to fund higher education

A recent [letter to the editor in the Lincoln Journal-Star](#) made an eminently logical and simple suggestion: increase alcohol taxes in order to fund higher education in Nebraska. As the writer notes, "Raise the taxes on alcohol, and then the Legislature wouldn't have to spend so much of its time on putting the hurt on education."

Project Extra Mile has gathered [the many evidence-based reasons](#) why increased alcohol taxes make sense for Nebraska - including the fact that about 43% of surveyed adults already support or strongly support such a measure.

As a [recent editorial](#) in the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* noted - alcohol tax increases are a public policy "trifecta" - they raise revenues, reduce harm from excessive harmful alcohol consumption, and help contain health care costs.



## Guest Speaker

**Jennifer N Rutt**  
Evaluation Project Manager  
University of Nebraska - Lincoln

## Omaha Metro Coalition Meeting

Wednesday  
**March 14, 2018**  
9:00 a.m.

We invite you to join us for **coffee and conversation** as we welcome Jenn Rutt, who will be providing an overview of the coalition's work as part of its Partnership for Success grant during the last year.



**Thank you for your involvement!**  
Jennifer Pollock  
Coalition Chair

**MEETING LOCATION:**  
La Vista Police Department  
Community Room  
7701 S. 96th St, LaVista, NE

**For more information:**  
**(402) 963-9047**  
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