

# WE ARE ALWAYS IN UNIFORM

As University of Arizona student-athletes,  
we care about our health and the health of our friends.  
We STEP-UP! to help someone in need.



## RESPONSIBILITY IS A CHOICE THAT WE MAKE

Brought to you by UA Athletics and S.T.A.R.R. (Student-athletes Taking Active Responsible Roles)

A poster used to promote the STEP UP! program.

## Doing the Right Thing

*An innovative program at the UA that teaches student-athletes to take action when their peers are in trouble is a national model for NCAA leadership training.*

While it's easy for most people to tell the difference between right and wrong, it's not always easy to witness a wrong and make it right. An innovative bystander intervention program at The University of Arizona, created for student-athletes, teaches participants not only how to make good choices in their own lives, but how to identify

and come to the aid of others in trouble.

"Nine out of 10 students want to do the right thing, but may not have the skills or confidence, and we want to help," says Becky Bell, associate athletics director at the UA, who spearheaded the development of the "STEP UP! Be a Leader, Make a Difference!" program.

Dubbed "A Prosocial Behavior/Bystander Intervention Program for Student-Athletes," STEP UP! focuses specifically on the bystander effect, a well-known phenomenon in social psychology in which an individual is less likely to help someone in need when a large group of people are present. The tendency to think that someone else will take care of the problem can lead to dangerous outcomes, which the STEP UP! program aims to prevent, Bell says.

Bell, who heads the UA's award-winning C.A.T.S. (Commitment to an Athlete's Total Success) Life

Skills Program, consulted with experts across the country in the various topic areas covered by the program to develop a curriculum that would reach students in a more meaningful way than a simple lecture on right and wrong.

Developed in partnership with the NCAA, the STEP UP! materials have been sent to every athletics program in the NCAA, establishing the UA-initiated program as a national model for student-athlete leadership training.

About 350 UA student-athletes have completed the interactive training since its launch in 2007. Athletes in all sports are encouraged to participate, and some coaches have even made it a requirement, Bell said.

Athletes attend a three-hour, on-campus training session, which includes an interactive PowerPoint presentation, followed by a breakout session that allows groups of students to talk through possible real-life situations in which their intervention could make a positive difference. Each student receives a paperback "Student-Athlete Guide," filled with examples of scenarios where they might be able to help, including situations involving alcohol, hazing, relationship abuse, eating disorders, depression, discrimination and more. The booklet



**Becky Bell heads the UA's award-winning C.A.T.S. Life Skills Program.**

the event as a problem/emergency, assume personal responsibility, know how to help, and implement the help – or "step up."

"It's a great awareness program," said UA student Pat Metham, a member of the UA men's tennis team who went through the training. "Now I can recognize a situation that needs intervention; it's much easier to pick up on it. It also helps people realize even one person can make a difference, and that the impact won't go unnoticed."

Scott Goldman, a clinical and sports psychologist who works with student-athletes at the UA, said the STEP UP! program

is valuable because of its proactive approach, which encourages students to really think about the impacts of their behavior without using stern lectures or scare tactics to get the message across.

"What we're trying to do is promote healthy behavior and develop a community that looks out for each other," he said. "We're trying to encourage our student-athletes not only to be

responsible and respectful but also to be leaders in the community."

With peer pressure an undeniable part of college life, the program is a helpful reminder for students to make good choices, said one student-athlete who completed the training.

"It really opens your eyes about what kinds of situations aren't OK," said Maggie Callahan, a member of the UA cross country and track and field teams.

"Especially going into college, everyone's trying to fit in and they're not necessarily going to leave their comfort zone to help," she added.

Callahan is one of about 35 student-athletes in the UA's P.A.L., or Peer Athletic Leaders, program, which Bell advises. The peer mentoring group is designed to help freshmen athletes make the transition into college.

Teammate and fellow P.A.L. member Shelly Splittberger said STEP UP! helped provide her with valuable information to pass along to younger students.

"Freshmen are always so willing to learn and look up to people so it's such a benefit for upperclassmen" to go through the program, she said.

Splittberger also appreciates that the program brings together athletes from all different sports on campus for a community-building experience.

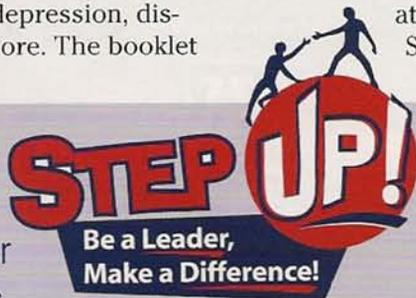
Although STEP UP! originally was designed for the student-athlete population, Bell notes that the program's teachings are universally applicable, and many other schools across the country are adapting the program for use in divisions like Greek life, residence life, sexual assault centers and student affairs.

Bell said she hopes the program will continue to grow, encouraging more people to take responsibility and step up.

*Alexis Blue, Office of University Communications*

"We're trying to encourage our student-athletes not only to be responsible and respectful but also to be leaders in the community."

Scott Goldman, Clinical and sports psychologist



identifies several "Strategies for Effective Helping" in emergency and nonemergency situations and outlines "The 5 Decision Making Steps": notice the event, interpret