



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
Student Government Association

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
Senate Resolution 23.04

(Stating the sentiments of the TTUHSC Student Senate on the need for the University to recognize a week in the month of October as Substance Use Disorder Awareness Week)

WHEREAS, the month of October is National Substance Abuse Prevention Month; and,

WHEREAS, substance use disorder includes underage drinking, alcohol dependency, non-medical use of prescription drugs, abuse of over-the-counter medications¹, and illicit drug use that can lead to death or other negative impacts (loss of personal relationships, failure to fulfill professional or educational responsibilities, and compromised health) in an individual's life; and,

WHEREAS, 4,172 Texans died from drug overdose in 2020 according to the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention²; and,

WHEREAS, 4.4% of healthcare professionals engage in heavy alcohol consumption, 5.5% of healthcare professionals struggle with illicit drug abuse, and one out of ten healthcare professionals will struggle with alcohol or drug abuse at some point during their career³; and,

WHEREAS, substance use disorder costs in the United States of America. are more than \$740 billion per year, but school-based prevention programs save an estimated \$18 per \$1 invested⁴; and,

WHEREAS, raising awareness about the appropriate language to use when talking about individuals with substance use disorders affects perceptions of this population, as a study in 2010 showed that the specific terms used to describe persons who use substances affects judgments of these individuals and can perpetuate stigmas, ultimately leading to decreased resources and support for these populations⁵; and,

¹ Spotlight on Substance Abuse Awareness: October is National Substance Abuse Prevention Month. (2021). <https://www.nccaa.net/post/spotlight-on-substance-abuse-awareness-october-is-national-substance-abuse-prevention-month>

² Drug Overdose Mortality by State. (2022). https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/drug_poisoning_mortality/drug_poisoning.htm

³ Statistics for Substance Abuse in Mental Health Professionals. (2022). <https://americanaddictioncenters.org/rehab-guide/addiction-statistics/medical-professionals>

⁴ Costs of Substance Abuse. (n.d.) <https://archives.drugabuse.gov/trends-statistics/costs-substance-abuse#supplemental-references-for-economic-costs>; Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Month. (2022). <https://www.samhsa.gov/blog/youth-substance-use-prevention-month#5>

⁵ Does it matter how we refer to individuals with substance-related conditions? A randomized study of two commonly used terms. (2010). https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0955395909001546?casa_token=bTZwut2QnUcAAAAA:ccG3yH0d-qQZH-QJw84Ucm9hB7f_9XwULyxcjqip5UtPct89UWQpc9dC_MzGOqLPs5t8Ntq

WHEREAS, the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) is an institution that trains future healthcare professionals and is thereby invested in promoting a culture that provides timely, equitable prevention and intervention healthcare resources to all individuals; and,

WHEREAS, social stigma related to substance use disorder may impede or delay individuals including students, providers, staff, patients, and community members from pursuing resources to address this health concern; and,

WHEREAS, TTUHSC holds a unique stakeholder position within the greater West Texas community and the greater population of individuals that will be served by healthcare professionals trained at TTUHSC; and,

WHEREAS, this position fosters a valuable opportunity to heighten awareness of substance use disorders, educate current and future providers on the adverse outcomes associated with substance use behaviors, reduce social stigma related to substance use disorders, and draw attention to accessible community resources pertinent to those impacted by substance use disorders; and,

WHEREAS, promoting awareness about substance use disorders encourages an open environment for people to speak out about their own struggles and educate those to recognize signs to get help for other individuals; and,

WHEREAS, recognition of substance use disorders with a designated awareness week across all campuses included in the TTUHSC system is a feasible step toward improving community awareness, educational resources, organized programming, cultural climate, collaborations with the greater Texas Tech University system, and expanded community engagement on the subject of substance use disorders; and therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Student Senate of TTUHSC supports the designation of a Substance Use Disorder Awareness Week within the institutional system in order to advance the quality of training being provided to future healthcare professionals and align the prevention and intervention services being promoted with a growing public healthcare concern; and therefore,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Student Senate of the TTUHSC calls for the establishment of a Substance Use Disorder Prevention Committee and the recognition of National Substance Abuse Prevention Month every October through campus-wide educational programming and events; and therefore,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread upon the Journal and that copies be sent to **Lori Rice-Spearman Ph.D.**, President of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center; **Darrin D'Agostino, D.O., MPH, MBA**, Provost and Chief Academic Officer, **Elisabeth Conser, M.D.**, TTUHSC School of Medicine Assistant Dean of Student Wellness and Advancement, **Erin Justyna, Ph.D.**, TTUHSC Associate Provost for Student Affairs; **Keri Shiplet**, TTUHSC Office of Student Life Director; **Michelle Ensminger**, TTUHSC Office of Global Health Director; **Zach Sneed, Ph.D.**, School of Health Professions Program Director for the TTUHSC Addiction Counseling Program; **Alan Korinek, Ph.D., LMFT-S**, Managing Director of the TTUHSC Counseling Center, **Lisa Viator, Ph.D.**, Managing Director of the Texas Tech University Student Counseling Center; **Ann Marie Casiraghi**, Coordinator

for the Center for Collegiate Recovery Communities at Texas Tech University; **Thomas G. Kimball, Ph.D., LMFT**, Director of the Center for Collegiate Recovery Communities at Texas Tech University; **Brianna Mendoza**, Student Body President; **Arianna Flores**, Editor-in-Chief of *The Daily Toreador*, and to the students of TTUHSC.

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Brianna Mendoza
President, Student Government Association