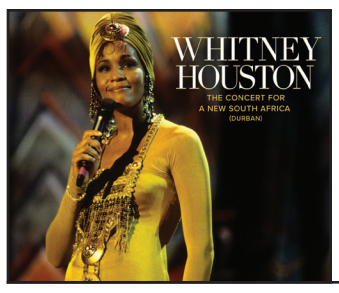


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SOUTHERN NEWS

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Narcan boxes now found around campus

By Brianna Wallen
News Editor

In response to the growing opioid crisis, the university has implemented new initiatives aimed at increasing access to naloxone, also known as Narcan, and educating the campus community.

Funded by a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to the Connecticut Healthy Campus Initiative, the university has recently adopted public Narcan boxes.

"I worked with facilities to identify the locations and have the boxes installed once I purchased the boxes and the signs," Sarah Kaiser, coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Services, said.

Keiser said that she wanted to place the public access naloxone boxes in high-traffic campus buildings.

Located in 20 buildings on campus from residence halls to Buley Library, these boxes are available for members of the campus community to use in case of an opioid overdose emergency.

To enhance visibility, purple overdose signs have been placed above each box. Additionally, the alarmless boxes contain instructions on how to administer naloxone, which are also displayed on digital boards and throughout campus buildings.

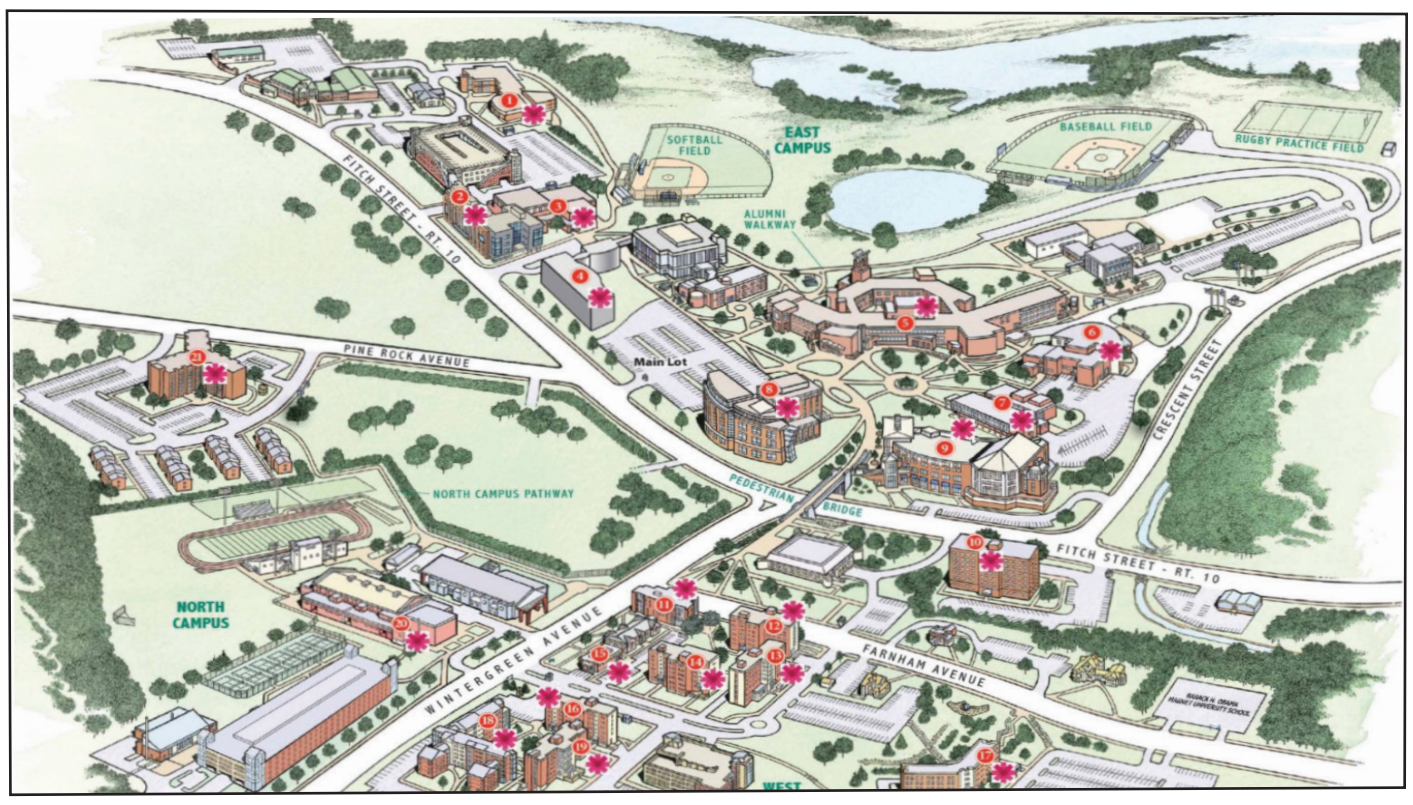


PHOTO | SARAH KEISER

The new updated university map that showcases where the Narcan boxes are distributed around.

The alarmless feature allows individuals to have immediate access to Narcan in the event of an emergency.

"In some cases, emergency first responders may not arrive on scene for several minutes, so this allows a person to intervene immediately if they know where the Narcan boxes are located in each building," Keiser said.

Along with Narcan boxes, the university is committed to combating opioid overdoses by raising awareness about the critical role naloxone has in saving lives.

"Naloxone has been a life-saving drug that has been instrumental in the reduction of opioid overdose deaths in the US and across the world," Keiser said.

Keiser said that the funding was also intended for Connecticut Institutions of Higher Education to develop opioid and stimulant education initiatives that will benefit campus communities.

Through offering prevention and recovery programs targeted at lowering the number of deaths from opioid overdoses, the State Opioid Response grant has expanded access to treatment and worked toward educating the university's community on opioid use disorder for the last three years.

Keiser said that she has been working in a partnership with the Department of Health in New Haven to carry out and offer opioid overdose training for members of the campus community.

"Every August, we do training for resident advisers and have done training for athletics and coaches, incoming nursing students this past summer and other departments on campus," Keiser said.

To provide more information, Keiser said that a campus map that identifies the Narcan box's locations on campus and information on the Good Samaritan Policy was sent out to all students and staff last week.

The university's Alcohol and Drug Services website will also provide further details.

With the new initiative implemented, Keiser said that she hopes this momentum does not stop.

"My hope is that we continue to raise awareness on campus about opioid use and the importance of Narcan in saving lives," Keiser said.

To receive a map and a good samaritan poster or to gain more information on where to attend an opioid overdose training, contact Sarah Keiser at keisers3@southernct.edu.

Students participate in competitive coding club

By Taylor Green
Contributer

For Owls, the International Collegiate Programming Contest is an unofficial competitive coding club where students gather once a week to practice their computer science programming skills in teams.

Despite the end goal being to compete in the contest, the process of improvement is valuable to their members.

"The competition itself isn't necessarily the focus," the unofficial student coordinator for ICPC computer science major Jacob Stephens, a senior, said. "It's more of the skills that you pick up through practicing for it."

Stephens is the main contact for ICPC and helps coordinate weekly meetings that take place Mondays from 6–8 p.m.

Stephens was one of the first members when the university became involved with ICPC a little over two years ago with the help of the alumni coaches, Brett Jurman and JPat Cooley.

This year, there are five teams of three students competing from the university, and the students are working hard to hone their skills.

Club members work together to solve various problems given to them which vary in topic between each competition.

"We look at computer science technical problems," Stephens said. "We focus on collaboration, problem solving skills and how to communicate your ideas."

Computer science major Hamza Nazim, a junior, is competing for the first time this year.

Nazim joined ICPC in hopes of improving his coding knowledge and gaining more confidence.

"I love the fact that we all have one computer," Nazim said. "All three of the people have to become one person to solve one problem."

Members said they enjoy working alongside their group mates and other members of ICPC to figure out the problems they face.

"We have a great group of people who all have the same passion for problem-solving and collaboration skills," Stephens said.

Stephens said the community they have built within ICPC is strong, and students rely on each other to push themselves toward improvement to prepare for the contest and the workforce.

"It's really useful for technical interviews for software companies," Stephens said. "This is perfect practice for that and makes me feel more prepared and confident for going into the workforce."

Computer science major Amilcar Armmand, a senior, is also competing in the upcoming competition. Armmand said the practice problems they complete are challenging; either you will get it, or you will never get it.

Despite the competition being spread across 80 different countries and six continents, Stephens said the university competes at a regional level, only facing competitors from Connecticut, New York and some parts of New Jersey.

This year, despite the contest usually taking place at Columbia University, Stephens said it will be remote, and students will be competing from a classroom on campus.

"There is more than one way to solve a problem, so hearing someone else's input and what they would do to solve a problem and comparing it to my own is very interesting," computer science major Miraj Jara, a senior, said. "It gives me ideas for the next time I see a problem somewhere."

Computer Science Club President Jara said he is excited to compete and collaborate with his teammates.

"That's where all the magic happens in life," Armmand said, "working with other people. You don't do anything by yourself.



PHOTO | TAYLOR GREEN

Computer science major Miraj Jara, a senior, working on a coding problem.



Computer Science major Jacob Stephens, a senior, in the student lounge in Jennings Hall.