



The Extra Mile

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



Looking Back on 2023

What did we achieve and what's to come?

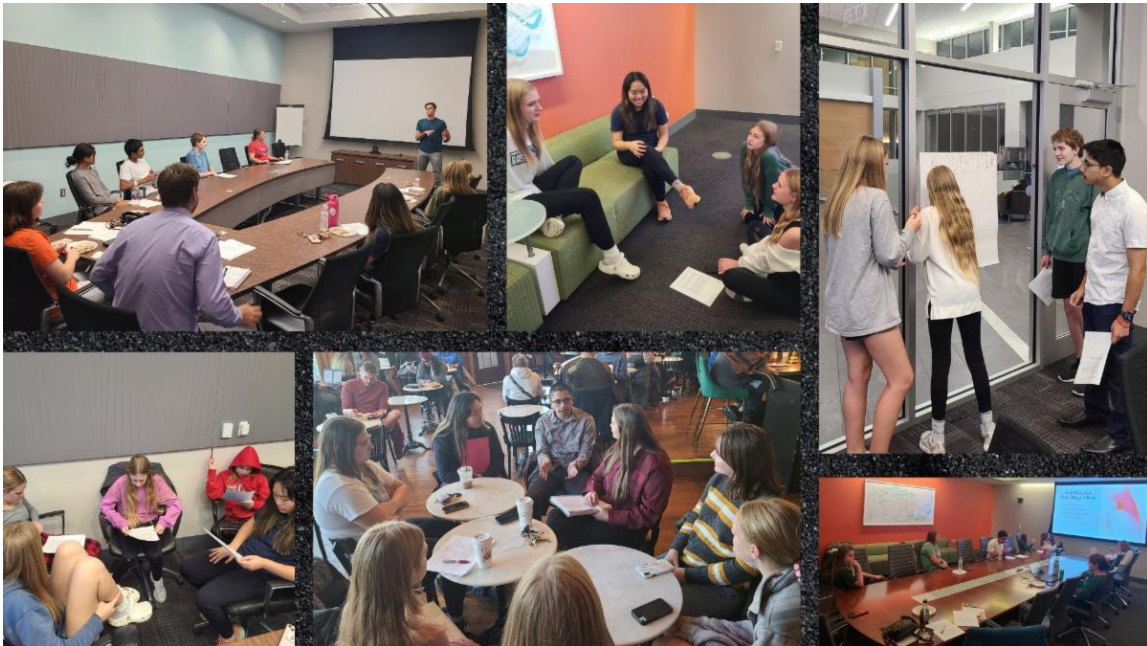
We want to express our deep and heartfelt gratitude for your continuing support of our mission of advocating for evidence-based policies and practices to prevent alcohol-related

harms. It wouldn't be possible without you!

Enforcement: During 2023, PEM collaborated with 12 law enforcement agencies across Nebraska to conduct alcohol-focused enforcement operations. Over the past year, our law enforcement partners have performed compliance checks at 273 businesses in five Nebraska counties with 29 (11%) selling alcohol to minors. The results of these and past underage drinking enforcements can be found on our [website](#). You can also find the administrative [penalties imposed by the Liquor Control Commission](#). The organization also supported operations by the Douglas County DUI Task Force to remove impaired drivers off our roads resulting in 146 citations and 46 arrests, including 15 DUIs (11 first offense & 4 second offense); refuse alcohol test (2); refuse breath test (1); open container (2); and DUID (1).

Other enforcement efforts included:

- A law enforcement training on how to build a successful case when a business sells alcohol to minors during compliance checks and other Liquor Control Act violations. ***A Spring 2024 training will focus on controlled underage party dispersal.***
- The organization also advocated for more enforcement to prevent underage binge drinking by expanding compliance checks to include delivery services and create proactive enforcement of state regulations and local laws against selling alcohol to intoxicated persons.



Youth Leadership: PEM's Youth Leadership Network met 11 times during 2023, including a three-day youth leadership summer retreat at Mahoney State Park. The students learned about excessive alcohol consumption and its harms, evidence-based policies, and advocacy. ***The group has already met with two senators' offices to advocate for the creation of an alcohol sales tax; they have two more meetings on the books; and have reached out to more.***

The organization also recognized three youth leaders this year: Kaleciana Perry, Saral Sapkota, and Janine Fell. Janine was named the first ever Project Extra Mile Youth Leadership Scholar, and she received a \$500 scholarship to help continue her education after she graduates next year. The Youth Leadership Network is open to youth in the Omaha metro area and meets once a month at the UNO Community Engagement Center. Youth entering 8th-12th grades are welcome to join at any time and can learn more on our [website](#).



Policy Initiatives: During the 2023 legislative session, seven bills were introduced to increase alcohol availability, weaken the three-tier regulatory system, and increase alcohol advertising. Nineteen community advocates, including high school youth, pastors, and prevention professionals, came together to successfully kill a bill that would have deregulated near ("non-alcoholic") beer. Deregulating it would have made it available to any person or child.

Other policy initiatives included:

- Member of the Vision Zero Omaha Task Force Technical Advisory Council to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries on city streets.
- Opposed alcohol sales at Memorial Stadium for Nebraska Volleyball Day.
- Submitted written testimony on proposed changes to the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission's Rules and Regulations.

Media Advocacy: During the year, PEM had 16 pieces of earned (unpaid) media on topics including efforts to stop misguided legislation, enforcement operation results, impaired driving, and the Omaha Vision Zero Action Plan. All earned media can be found on our [website](#).



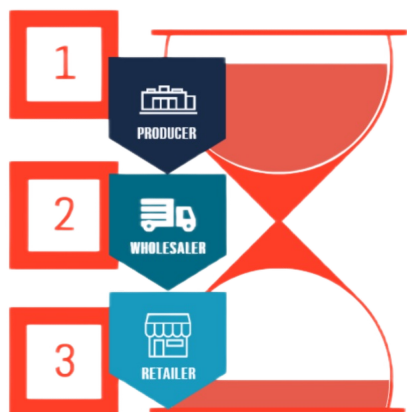
Education and Awareness: PEM organized community trainings focused on the problem of underage drinking and its solutions as well as the liquor licensing process to empower community members and neighborhood associations to speak up and be involved in making their communities healthier and safer for all.

Technical Assistance: Finally, the organization provided technical assistance on several occasions to over 40 community members, faith-based organizations, and other coalitions. Topics included problem liquor outlets, the liquor licensing process, and successful implementation of alcohol retail compliance checks.

If you would like to get involved in any of these efforts, please let us know at 402-963-9047 or at info@projectextramile.org!

News Brief:

Coca-Cola Purchases Vodka Company -- Why That's a Concern



Coca-Cola recently finalized the purchase of Finlandia Vodka which could be problematic in that it opens the door for Coca-Cola to become both a producer and distributor of their products. Being a distributor allows the direct sale of products to retailers. Wholesalers, as the middle tier, obtain the products from producers, collect the appropriate taxes for the state, and then distribute those products to retailers. When businesses sell directly to retailers, there is a possibility of improper tax collection. An audit in Virginia showed that nearly 40% of shippers were not licensed, therefore the state was losing almost \$63,000 in tax revenue on those products.

The three-tier system is the regulatory structure for alcoholic products to protect producers, wholesalers, retailers, and ultimately the public. The system was built following Prohibition to ensure product safety, accurate tax collection, and prevent market domination by large companies -- each tier is usually required to be licensed and independent. This system is constantly being threatened, primarily in the name of the craft producers, even though the three-tier system was created in part to ensure they would be able to thrive in the marketplace. The video below explains more about how the three-tier system works and its importance to all parties.



Over the past decade, there have been several attempts to dismantle the three-tier regulatory system in Nebraska, including the expansion of how many satellite locations micro-distilleries and craft breweries can have under one license; the creation of craft wineries with up to four satellite locations; as well as permitting craft breweries to self-distribute up to 250 barrels of beer and micro-distilleries up to 500 gallons of product per year, among others. The assault on the three-tier system will likely continue to be the biggest threat to public health and safety in terms of alcohol in our state for years to come.

News Brief: Vision Zero Action Plan Disappoints

Greater alcohol-impaired driving focus needed to eliminate traffic fatalities

VISION ZERO OMAHA

The Vision Zero Task Force has been working for years to create an action plan to eliminate traffic fatalities and pedestrian injuries in the city of Omaha. [The Action Plan](#) has eight focus areas: equity, high-risk arterial roads, intersections, pedestrians & bicyclists, speed, impairment & inattention, occupant protection, and high-risk users. It identifies two strategies to address alcohol impairment: increasing-high visibility enforcement operations and addressing alcoholism and drug addiction by establishing a Vision Zero Impairment Committee. Unfortunately, these strategies do not go far enough when it comes to changing the environment in which individual decisions to drive impaired are made.

During the advisory stage, Project Extra Mile shared recommendations from the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) "[Getting to Zero Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities](#)" recommendations with the Task Force and further discussed how those could be tailored to Omaha with [KETV](#). These strategies include:

1. Conducting enhanced enforcement of overservice operations targeting businesses that sell to intoxicated customers;
2. Conducting high-visibility sobriety checkpoints;
3. Increasing the price of alcohol;
4. Reducing alcohol availability by limiting alcohol outlet density through the licensing process;
5. Addressing illegal sales at licensed locations through consistent utilization of the city's Good Neighbor Ordinance;
6. Limiting the amount of advertising at licensed businesses;
7. Requiring all licensed businesses to train their employees periodically as a part of the liquor licensing application and renewal process; and
8. Advocating for a more stringent blood alcohol concentration (BAC) law in Nebraska.

Prevention Efforts

Written by Saral Sapkota, Junior at Elkhorn North High School

The alcohol industry is very powerful and advertises alcohol everywhere with full impunity. There is no requirement to broadcast anti-alcohol public service ads to ensure consumers get both sides of the story. The tobacco industry used to operate in the same way, until [Action on Smoking and Health \(ASH\)](#) was established in 1967 with a vision of “a world free from the harm caused by alcohol,” to fight against the tobacco industry. During this time, people smoked everywhere, and it was difficult to avoid secondhand smoke in public places, including public transportation. ASH started a campaign and successfully convinced the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish a new provision that TV and radio stations advertising tobacco products must give free airtime to anti-tobacco public service messages.

In the next three years, radio and TV stations aired [free anti-smoking announcements worth \\$75 million in 1970s dollars](#) (\$594,724,871.13 in today's dollars, adjusted with inflation). It was groundbreaking work that was so successful that the tobacco industry felt threatened. Tobacco companies were so desperate to silence these public service messages that they were willing to go to any lengths to stop their funding. They lobbied Congress to pass laws to ban tobacco ads on television and radio because no ads meant no funding for the public service announcements. They were so scared about people learning the health hazards of smoking that these companies were willing to kill their own advertising to silence the truth.

Despite the industry's opposition, ASH didn't give up and continues its advocacy and campaigns even today. I think it would be wise to study the history of ASH and learn from its successes and struggles. An important lesson we can learn from the history of ASH is that getting facts out to people in a way they pay attention to is very powerful. Enacting and enforcing bans or comprehensive restrictions on exposure to alcohol advertising has been recognized as one of the [‘Best Buys’ by the World Health Organization](#) for preventing and reducing excessive alcohol consumption and the related harms. If we are serious about our goal of preventing alcohol-related harm, we need to advocate for a similar change that enables us to let people know how alcohol can cause cancer, and how it kills people just like tobacco does.

Coalition Member Spotlight - Jona Beck

This month we would like to highlight Jona Beck, Prevention Specialist at Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare. Jona has been involved with Project Extra Mile for 18 of the 22 years she has been in the prevention field. Her career began in education, teaching parenting classes where she witnessed how alcohol and drugs permanently damage families. That experience caused her to switch to prevention to work to get ahead of substance misuse problems. In her role at Region 6, she assists prevention coalitions around the Omaha metro to achieve their goals to prevent and reduce substance misuse. She joined the coalition to understand better how to help children and families avoid alcohol-related harms. When asked what she gains from the collaboration, Jona responded, “The coalition is so knowledgeable about what is currently going on in our community and within the state -- I always learn something new from their meetings.” Thank you, Jona, for your dedication in the prevention field and involvement in the coalition.



Please join us in 2024!

**PROJECT EXTRA MILE
2024 COALITION
MEETINGS**

JANUARY 17TH
FEBRUARY 14TH
MARCH 13TH
APRIL 10TH
MAY 8TH
JUNE 12TH
NO MEETING IN JULY
AUGUST 14TH
SEPTEMBER 11TH
OCTOBER 9TH
NOVEMBER 13TH
DECEMBER 11TH

LOOKING FORWARD TO CONNECTING WITH YOU IN 2024



**MEETINGS HELD AT
UNO'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTER
6400 UNIVERSITY DRIVE SOUTH**



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