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## **(Neb.)-Free Responsible Beverage Server Training To Be Held Around The Panhandle**



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 05/21/2013 09:45 AM

(PANHANDLE)-Since September 2009, the Panhandle Prevention Coalition, along with other local coalition partners, has presented free Responsible Beverage Server Training to over 600 alcohol retail merchants, owners, and employees across the Panhandle.

Responsible Beverage Server Training classes are designed to provide individuals entrusted with the responsibility of serving or selling alcohol with strategies to avoid illegally selling to underage youth or intoxicated patrons. They are also designed to train volunteers who serve at fairs, festivals and other special events. The free classes are offered to anyone who serves or sells alcohol or tobacco.

Training is available throughout the Panhandle via televideo sites. The next training date is Tuesday, June 11th, from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m. Tami Otto of the Nebraska State Patrol will provide the training, which will originate at the Panhandle Mental Health Center in Scottsbluff and will be available through televideo sites in Chadron, Hemingford, Gordon, Sidney, Bridgeport, Kimball, and Oshkosh. Register online at [www.trainingacademy.info](http://www.trainingacademy.info), or for more information or if you cannot pre-register one week in advance, call Mary Wernke at 308-487-6397 or e-mail [marywernke@letterperfect.net](mailto:marywernke@letterperfect.net).

Otto says, "The #1 goal of the server training program is to give employers, employees and volunteers the tools and knowledge necessary to successfully avoid allowing alcohol access to minors, intoxicated individuals or any other violation of the Nebraska Liquor Control Act. Alcohol is the #1 most abused substance among high school age youth across the Panhandle of Nebraska and is a contributing factor in dangerous and illegal activities among high school and college aged youth."

Training participants are given a pre- and post-test on their knowledge of Nebraska alcohol laws. Test scores show a 43% increase in knowledge between pre- and post-test scores, which has resulted in more businesses passing compliance checks. "More and more retailers are learning about the laws and being responsible, and implementing them so our communities are safer," says Panhandle Prevention Coalition coordinator Jann Lawle.

The Panhandle Prevention Coalition, along with the Nebraska State Patrol, Panhandle Partnership for Health and Human Services Training Academy, Region 1 Behavioral Health Authority and local community coalition partners, has combined to provide this free training. "Without the collaborative effort of these agencies, organizations and local

communities, these prevention efforts would not be a success.” said Lawler.

#### About the Panhandle Prevention Coalition (PPC)

The PPC is a part of the Panhandle Partnership for Health and Human Services and is comprised of local community coalitions and a regional coalition united together by a passion and dedication to healthy and safe people across the lifespan. Our efforts include, but are not limited to, reducing underage drinking, binge drinking and drinking and driving in the Nebraska Panhandle. We do this by:

- Seeking policy change at the local and state levels to reduce youth access to alcohol.
- Collaborating with law enforcement to facilitate, fund and standardize compliance checks, beverage server training, and sobriety checks.
- Educating and generating awareness about the dangers of substance abuse and consequences of minors in possession (MIPs) and buying/providing alcohol to minors.

Community partners include concerned parents, healthcare workers, law enforcement, social service professionals, community leaders, elected officials, educators, business owners, volunteers and citizens both locally and statewide who seek safe communities for children and families to live and grow. The PPC is supported in whole or part by federal or state funds received from the Division of Behavioral Health of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

-- Panhandle Prevention Coalition