

## Help save a life...Get on the Truck!

Project update

Michael H. Minger Foundation

National Campus Fire Safety Month starts on September 1 and this year brings a new, innovative project to help raise awareness among the students.

The Michael H. Minger Foundation was awarded a DHS Fire Prevention and Safety grant to develop a campus fire safety community service project. The idea is to get students engaged in working with their local fire departments and reaching out to the community with projects that will help improve fire safety. By doing these projects, the students help others but also learn about fire safety themselves, first hand. The community service project is scheduled to launch from September 9 to 24, spanning 9/11 which President Obama has designated as a National Day of Service. This is not only an opportunity to help in the community but to honor all of the fire fighters that gave their lives on 9/11.

The grant was awarded in June 2010, which did not leave a lot of time for planning for September 2010. Fortunately, the opportunity arose to work with several schools and fire departments in North Carolina and they immediately jumped on the idea. The University of North Carolina campuses in Chapel Hill, Greensboro and Charlotte are going to be working with their fire departments on a variety of projects as are schools in Winston-Salem and Raleigh.

Some of these projects include smoke alarm installations in off-campus student housing, low-income housing and senior citizen's homes. In Chapel Hill, students from the Greek system have signed up to ride on Chapel Hill Fire Department trucks and do home fire safety inspections of off-campus student houses. The fire marshals in each of the fraternities and sororities were given the assignment of getting three friends in off-campus housing to sign up, resulting in about 100 inspections!

In Charlotte, students will be going with the Charlotte Fire Department when they make their "meals on wheels" deliveries called Friendship Trays. CFD uses this as an opportunity to work with the community and do home fire safety inspections of senior citizens and others in the community that may be at a high risk. In addition, UNC-Charlotte will be doing a side-by-side burn of sprinklered and unsprinklered mockups of student rooms.



**Know two ways out - always!**

[www.mingerfoundation.org](http://www.mingerfoundation.org)

In Greensboro, they will be holding a safety fair and also doing mockup burns. The university will be working with the fire department and be staffing a table at a community center on September 18 and offering home fire safety inspections. There will be fire safety cooking demonstrations because the fire department has identified this as a serious problem in parts of the city and the students will be working alongside the fire department as part of this demonstration and then going out and conducting home fire safety inspections.

## Help save a life...

*Get on the truck!*



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In Winston-Salem, the fire department is organizing a play about cooking fire safety that will be put on at two Boys and Girls Clubs in the city. This play will be done by students from several of the areas colleges and is being done to address cooking fires which is a problem in the Winston-Salem area.

The Minger Foundation is providing smoke alarms to all of the communities, which were donated by First Alert and the Minger Foundation, and stickers that can be placed on exit doors to remind the occupants of knowing two ways out. In addition, all of the students will be given t-shirts with the slogan "Help Save a Life – Get on the Truck" on them. These T-shirts were provided with underwriting from System Sensor.

## Project Launch

The entire project is going to be kicked off on September 9 with a press conference at UNC Chapel Hill at the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity house, site of the fire in 1996 that claimed the lives of five students. Speaking will be North Carolina Governor Bev Perdue, Bonnie Woodruff who lost her son, Ben, in the 1996 fraternity fire at UNC, Chapel Hill Fire Chief Dan Jones and Kinsey Pilkington who lost his brother, Cody, at an off-campus fire in Raleigh in 2005. Moderating the press conference will be Gail Minger, president of the Michael H. Minger Foundation. Mrs. Minger lost her son, Michael, in a fire at Murray State University in Kentucky in 1998.

## Social media

This project is making extensive use of social media in reaching out to the students. Facebook, Twitter and an event sign-up site called Event Brite are all key parts of what we are doing. So far, after a week of promoting the campaign, there have been 7,100 Facebook ad impressions and 16,000 people have been reached on Twitter. This has been a mainstay of reaching out to the students and encouraging them to take part in this great community service project.



The screenshot shows a Facebook page for the "Help Save a Life, Get on the Truck" campaign. The page features a cover photo of a red fire truck with a group of people on top. The main content area includes a text input field for a post, an "Attach" button, and a "Share" button. Below the input field, there are navigation tabs for "Wall", "Info", "Sign Up", "Photos", and "Discussions". The page also displays a "Description" section with text about the Michael H. Minger Foundation and its mission. There are also several posts from other users, including one about a "Kitchen Fire Demo" and another about a "Volunteer Fair 2010".

You can follow what is going on at

Twitter [www.twitter.com/helpsavealife](http://www.twitter.com/helpsavealife)

Facebook <http://tinyurl.com/getonthetruck>

Event Brite <http://getonthetruck.eventbrite.com/>

## **Help save a life...Get on the Truck!**

### **Project update**

#### **Michael H. Minger Foundation**

#### **Support for the project**

In addition to the grant, generous support is also being provided by System Sensor, who donated the T-shirts that all of the students will be wearing, First Alert who donated 300 photoelectric smoke alarms that will be used in the program (and the Minger Foundation purchased an additional 200 using Foundation funds), and Domino's Pizza who is providing pizza gift certificates and pizza for "thank you" parties for the students after the events.

#### **Support by Minger Foundation**

The Minger Foundation is serving as the central coordinating entity for this project. Overseen by the Foundation's president, Gail Minger, the Foundation is developing the messaging and the social media outreach and coordination efforts for the project. In addition it is coordinating the launch with North Carolina Governor Bev Perdue's office which includes writing the press releases, media advisories, assembling press packages, identifying speakers, developing the press packets and arranging for the logistical support. The Minger Foundation will be closely involved in the individual projects that the schools are doing and, in addition to providing material support through the smoke alarms, T-shirts and exit stickers, it will use the lessons learned from this pilot launch to develop a national campaign for 2011.

#### **2011**

After the experience from this year in North Carolina we will be reviewing the progress from this year and then refining it for a national rollout in 2011. This will be invaluable in helping to develop a highly effective outreach program using non-traditional avenues such as social media that will engage students and motivate them to be involved. By reaching more schools, more communities and more students with "hands-on" fire safety opportunities we can work together to improve fire safety in the community and create a future, fire-safe generation.