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American College Health Association White Paper Examines Violent Acts on College and University Campuses

[BALTIMORE, MD] Feb. 16 /PRNewswire/ – In an effort to confront the issue of campus violence at college and universities, the American College Health Association (ACHA) has released a White Paper that chronicles the scope of the problem, presents significant data, and recommends models for prevention.

The term “campus violence” includes shootings, murder-suicide, homicide, suicide, rape, dating violence, harassment, assault, stalking, hazing, arson, and hate crimes based on gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. The White Paper analyzes the patterns of these violent incidents, methodological problems with collecting crime data, and underlying issues, such as sports culture and alcohol use. The paper also focuses on legal mandates, policy recommendations, and promising practices to help prevent the problem.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice’s Violent Victimization of College Students survey, between 1995 and 2002 students ages 18-24 were victims of approximately 479,000 violent crimes annually. Data from the Spring 2004 ACHA-National College Health Assessment (ACHA-NCHA) indicates that out of a sample of 47,202 students, 15.0% of women and 9.2% of men report being in an emotionally abusive relationship within the last school year. ACHA-NCHA data also revealed 2.4% of women and 1.3% of men reported being in a physically abusive relationship and 1.7% of women and 1.0% of men reported being in a sexually abusive relationship within that time frame.

ACHA is committed to deconstructing campus violence through the circulation of its White Paper and by tapping into its members' experiences in addressing this issue. "Campus violence can seriously affect student learning and their mental and physical health, making it a health problem that requires immediate attention," said Joetta L. Carr, PhD, chair of the ACHA Campus Violence Committee. "Prevention programs are the key, and successful ones require commitment from health professionals and administrators."

The White Paper is available online at http://www.acha.org/info_resources/guidelines.cfm.

The American College Health Association, the nation's principal advocate and leadership organization for college and university health, represents a diverse membership that provides and supports the delivery of health care and prevention and wellness services for the nation's college students. Ongoing efforts such as the Campus Violence White Paper and ACHA-National College Health Assessment help the association advocate for student health by integrating the critical role of college health into the mission of higher education. For more information, visit <http://www.acha.org/>.

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Web site: http://www.acha.org/info_resources/guidelines.cfm

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