



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Organizations Partner to Provide Lifesaving Measures on WV College Campuses**

January 13, 2022—The West Virginia Collegiate Recovery Network (WVCRN), Marshall University, and the West Virginia Drug Intervention Institute (WV DII) have launched a new overdose prevention initiative on West Virginia’s college and university campuses entitled, “**Be The One.**” The initiative is the first of its kind and will focus on opioid overdose prevention from a bystander’s perspective, encouraging students, staff, and faculty to **Be The One** to save a life.

The first project of the initiative includes the distribution and installation of 50 opioid overdose rescue kits, also known as “Naloxboxes,” on college and university campuses across the Mountain State. These kits contain two doses of the opioid reversal medication, naloxone and training materials instructing individuals how to administer naloxone during an active overdose.

The goal is that the initiative will increase prevention and recovery efforts on West Virginia campuses, educating individuals in medication safety and training them how to properly respond to an overdose. Later this month Naloxboxes will be installed in locations at BridgeValley Community and Technical College (CTC), Concord University, New River CTC, West Virginia State University, West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, Southern West Virginia CTC, Marshall University, and West Virginia University as well as the Erma Byrd Center for Higher Education.

“We believe naloxone should be easily accessible everywhere and through our partnerships with WVDII, colleges and universities around the state we are decreasing stigma and providing vital resources to help save lives,” explained Susie Mullens, director of the WVCRN.

As someone who worked on college campuses for 25 years, and also responded to campus overdose, Dr. Susan Bissett, president of the WV DII believes that this initiative is much needed. “College campuses are representative of the communities in which they are housed; and they are often the hub for activity in their town,” said Bissett. “Our campus buildings have AEDs, first aid kits and fire extinguishers and so the Naloxbox is just one more way to keep our campuses, our students and our communities safe.”

New River Community and Technical College’s President, Dr. Bonny Copenhaver, said, “I am so grateful to WVCRN and WV DII for the funding for the Naloxboxes. As we kick-off the spring semester, we are holding naloxone training for our staff and faculty, and we can have Naloxboxes on all our campuses thanks to this program. Participating in the ‘Be the One’ initiative is a way that we can be prepared to support our students in a moment of crisis and hopefully save a life.”

For more information regarding the **Be The One** initiative, the West Virginia Collegiate Recovery Network, or the West Virginia Drug Intervention Institute please contact Dr. Susan Bissett at: [susan@wvdii.org](mailto:susan@wvdii.org), Susie Mullens at: [mullens20@marshall.edu](mailto:mullens20@marshall.edu), or call (681) 205-2287.