

NEW PROGRAM TO REDUCE ALCOHOL OVERSERVICE AND OVER-CONSUMPTION IN COLLEGE COMMUNITIES

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Media Contact: Dr. Brad Krevor: (781) 647-0858; krevor@rrforum.org

Waltham, Massachusetts- RRF Field Services LLC, the research arm of the Responsible Retailing Forum (“RRForum”), has received a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Award from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) to study the effectiveness of a new program to assist alcohol beverage licensees to recognize and refuse service to intoxicated customers.

S-STOP (“*Stop Service to Obviously-impaired Patrons*”) employs actors as “pseudo-intoxicated” patrons who enter a licensed establishment and ask to be served alcohol while exhibiting distinct signs of impairment. *S-STOP* provides confidential feedback on actual staff conduct, plus a website link for viewing how the pseudo-intoxicated patron behaved. Additionally, *S-STOP* offers a brief, online training video that shows staff how to monitor consumption and ways to refuse service in a safe, non-confrontational manner.

The program will be field-tested in ten pairs of college communities in California and Pennsylvania. California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Director Jacob Appelsmith notes, “Preventing the service of alcohol to already-intoxicated patrons is very important in the effort to keep impaired drivers off the roads and surrounding communities safe. The California ABC welcomes the opportunity to work with the Responsible Retailing Forum in the effort to increase compliance with alcoholic beverage laws.”

S-STOP is modeled on RRForum’s successful program – developed under an earlier SBIR award from NIAAA – to increase compliance with the age 21 legal drinking age law by providing feedback from young, *legal-age* mystery shoppers on whether staff check IDs.

S-STOP is part of RRForum’s initiative to address the unique challenges of alcohol misuse among college and university students and the impact of alcohol use and abuse upon host communities. Underage sales and over-service prevention are two key elements of the RRForum *Alcohol Responsibility Program*. In a pilot project with six member communities of the International Town & Gown Association, over-service in these campus communities averaged 81%.

The Responsible Retailing Forum is a 501(C)3 non-profit organization that engages public and private stakeholders to promote responsible retailing of alcohol and other age-restricted products.

