

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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ABC Investigators Arrest Three Suspects for Furnishing Alcohol to Minors during Cal Poly's WOW Week

(San Luis Obispo) – The California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) completed two separate alcoholic beverage enforcement operations last weekend that resulted in seven arrests. Officers also sent a loud and clear message that adults who buy alcohol for persons under 21 will be arrested.

ABC investigators arrested three suspects on September 18, 2009 for furnishing alcoholic beverages to minors, and one minor for being in possession of alcoholic beverages. The operation was conducted in the general vicinity of San Luis Obispo, and was part of a multi-agency alcohol related enforcement effort during Cal Poly's Annual WOW Week (Week of Welcome). Agencies that worked on some type of operation to increase safety for WOW Week on September 18 and 19, 2009, were the San Luis Obispo Police Department, the California Polytechnical State University Police Department, and the California Highway Patrol.

In addition to the above WOW Week enforcement operation, ABC Investigators also arrested four additional suspects on September 19, 2009 for a variety of alcohol and drug related charges.

The first operation conducted on September 18, 2009 was a Decoy Shoulder Tap Operation. This type of operation targets adults who purchase alcohol for people less than 21 years of age. Under the program, a minor under the direct supervision of a peace officer will stand outside a liquor or convenience store and ask patrons to buy them alcohol. The minor indicates in some way he or she is underage and cannot purchase the alcohol. During the Shoulder Tap Operation, two of the 19 adults who were approached by the decoy furnished alcohol to the minor. Additionally, a third adult was observed furnishing alcohol to a minor who was not a decoy and not part of the operation. Both the adult and minor were arrested.

Furnishing alcohol to a minor is a crime. Any adult who agrees to purchase alcohol for a minor can be arrested and cited. The penalty for furnishing alcohol to a minor is a minimum \$1000 fine and 24 hours of community service.

The program is intended to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. Statistics show they generally have a higher rate of drunken driving crashes than adults. Studies also show the combination of alcohol and youth tends to increase criminal conduct. According to the American Medical Association, underage drinking can increase chances of risky sexual behavior and teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, compromise health, and result in unintentional injury and death.

ABC is a department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Dale E. Bonner, a member of the Governor's Cabinet.