

## Back on TRAC Case Study:

Colorado State University (CSU) has served as the laboratory for the successful piloting of the Back on TRAC model. Preliminary data has shown the model to be an overwhelming success in (1) its positive effect on once-troubled students, (2) its cost effectiveness, and (3) its impact on the rebirth of a collective professional enthusiasm. In addition, Back on TRAC has functioned as a powerful vehicle for promoting, integrating and sustaining collaborative partnerships between campus and community service delivery providers and systems.

Successfully pioneered at Colorado State University, the Back on TRAC model offers colleges and universities a team-based methodology for giving substance abusing students the structure to reorient, focus, mature and succeed. It is a purpose in sync with the sometimes forgotten mission of all institutions of higher education that being - "student development." Back on TRAC is a highly structured, developmentally appropriate treatment intervention that complements "environmental" and other substance abuse prevention strategies and redirects substance abusing students to responsible matriculation and accomplishments. It is perhaps best viewed as the missing intervention link in a campus/community attempt to develop a comprehensive system of substance abuse education, prevention and intervention.

Back on TRAC transforms the way colleges intervene with substance abusers. Whether one

occupies the role of a campus administrator, city or county official, service provider, volunteer or student participant, those who participate in the Back on TRAC process will feel both awed and reenergized by the power of a truly collaborative system put into practice.

Back on TRAC is a collaborative partnership between higher education and the judicial system and is headquartered at The National Judicial College ([www.judges.org](http://www.judges.org)), the nation's premier training institute for judges. The National Judicial College has partnered with Colorado State University and the National Association of Drug Court Professionals to provide the assistance and training for this project. Initial funding for the development of the Back on TRAC national demonstration project is provided by The Century Council ([www.centurycouncil.org](http://www.centurycouncil.org)).

**If you are interested in obtaining more information, visit [www.judges.org/backontrac](http://www.judges.org/backontrac) or contact Randy Monchick, Director, Back on TRAC, Project Consultant, The National Judicial College at [monchick@judges.org](mailto:monchick@judges.org)**



# Back on TRAC

*Treatment, Responsibility & Accountability on Campus*



Est. 1963

THE NATIONAL  
JUDICIAL COLLEGE

THE  
CENTURY  
COUNCIL

*Distillers fighting  
drunk driving and  
underage drinking*

# Back on TRAC

## Treatment, Responsibility & Accountability on Campus

“Back on TRAC: Treatment, Responsibility & Accountability on Campus” is a national initiative that offers an institution a collaborative methodology for redesigning its programming so that it can systematically, holistically and effectively intervene when a student’s pattern of substance abuse has undermined his/her emotional, physical and academic well-being.

The Back on TRAC model recognizes that the lifestyles of substance-abusing college students transcend the physical boundaries of campus existence, significantly impacting the resources, safety and quality of life of both the campus and the local community. Changing the self-destructive behavioral patterns of college student substance abusers requires a town and gown partnership and necessitates a collaborative system response from both on-campus and off-campus judicial and treatment systems.

The Back on TRAC “clinical justice” model adapts the principles and components of the successful drug court model to the college environment. It holds substance

The drug court model has shown how the combination of a collaborative team approach, adherence to evidence-based clinical treatment principles and ongoing judicial oversight can successfully intervene in the lives of those with histories of substance abuse. Back on TRAC borrows heavily from the drug court model and incorporates the best practices of Student Affairs and Higher Education.

abusing students to a high level of accountability while providing individualized treatment and compliance monitoring. It operates within the confines of existing resources and without interrupting a student’s educational process. It unites campus leaders, judicial affairs personnel, treatment providers and health professionals with their governmental, judicial and treatment counterparts in the surrounding community, an intervention partnership that should serve as the hub for a comprehensive campus/community strategy for dealing with underage and excessive drinking as well as illicit drug use.

### Back on TRAC National Committee

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Those of us who have witnessed the drug court system model substantially change the face of community justice and treatment systems over the past decade have vividly seen how motivation to change is significantly stimulated by utilizing one’s job, freedom, or privileges as the leverage for entering and completing structured treatment. In a college setting, it is the threat of dismissal from the institution or loss of significant privileges that stands as the “stick” to help compel entry into and maintenance within a rigorous treatment regimen.



Back on TRAC primarily targets those students who, because of significant substance-fueled behaviors, have come to the formal attention of a college or university’s office of judicial affairs. Back on TRAC utilizes the student’s “trouble” as a window of opportunity for the student to “voluntarily” enter the program or face dismissal, substantial loss of campus privileges, or some other leveraging sanction such as the parents’ withdrawal of financial support.

Armed with this knowledge, the next step is to provide the structure to make such a campus-based leveraged intervention appropriate and highly likely to be successful. The Back on TRAC model provides this structure. In doing so, it sets the stage for higher education and the judicial system to link hands: (1) in addressing the overlapping impact of substance abuse on campus and community life, and (2) in developing a coordinated and collaborative systems-based intervention that promotes student development and campus/community civility.

Back on TRAC recognizes that the successful alteration of an individual’s substance abuse driven behavioral patterns requires more than well-intentioned advice from authority figures or treatment professionals. The Back on TRAC roadmap to success incorporates the following elements:

- (1) a blended “carrot and stick” systems approach that directly and expeditiously ties the student disciplinary process to substance abuse counseling, mental health treatment, and an array of related “wellness” services;
- (2) an expedited and reliable screening and referral process to feed a comprehensive clinical assessment;
- (3) a reevaluation and potential reconfiguration of available clinical modalities and interventions to better integrate clinical and ancillary responses to co-occurring disorders;
- (4) a collaborative multi-disciplinary team process to routinely share information and collectively monitor performance;
- (5) a sophisticated alcohol and drug testing protocol;
- (6) ongoing motivational case management;
- (7) a collaborative “status review” process to gauge progress; and
- (8) a “status hearing” mechanism for providing periodic sanctions or incentives to encourage or reinforce positive change.

By blending judicial and therapeutic systems and harnessing the power of a multi-disciplinary team-based approach, the Back on TRAC model creates an evidence-based “clinical justice” intervention system potent enough to bring the out-of-control student from the brink of dismissal to the status of a rejuvenated, sober, healthy and responsible individual on the path towards graduation.