



ArchivesSpace

Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program; Records

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on September 29, 2021.

M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives

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Summary Information

Repository:	M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives
Title:	Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program Records
ID:	ua732
Date [inclusive]:	1972-1987
Physical Description:	0.2 cubic ft.
Physical Location:	The materials are located onsite in the department.
Language of the Material:	English .
Mixed Materials [Collection]:	X
Abstract:	Contains records from the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program, which operates within Counseling and Psychological Services and provides telephone and online peer assistance, peer education, and peer advisement services. Materials include brochures, fliers, correspondence, and training manuals.

Preferred Citation

Preferred citation for this material is as follows:

Identification of specific item, series, box, folder, Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program Records, 1972-1987. M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York (hereafter referred to as the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program Records).

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Historical Note

The efforts of these students did not end upon their graduation from the University at Albany. As years passed, CRISIS 5300 gained momentum. Upon its renaming as "Middle Earth" in 1973, grant funds were secured by the Dean of Students, Lois Gregg, to expand Middle Earth into a comprehensive peer counseling and peer education agency. Middle Earth quickly gained a reputation as a leader in peer assistance, consulting on the development of similar programs at other colleges and universities across

the state, speaking to young people about alcohol and drug abuse prevention, and training professionals, such as hospital personnel, teachers, and overseas operators for New York Telephone, on ways to recognize and address crisis situations. In 1983, Middle Earth expanded its horizons by sponsoring its first Sexuality Week, an event that continues today.

Today, Middle Earth carries the same name and logo, but the look of the agency has evolved with our times. The agency continues to operate a student-staffed hotline service and peer education and peer career advisement programs under the supervision of a Director who is a licensed psychologist. Middle Earth operates one of the few surviving student-staffed hotlines in the country, and it is the only hotline of its type that services the Albany County area. Students can perform services for Middle Earth either on a volunteer basis or for course credit through the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology. The agency is funded both by the University and by the Student Association, making it a student organization that enjoys the rights and benefits of University affiliation.

The nature and scope of Middle Earth services have also evolved with our changing times. While its mission continues to focus on providing services to assist students in achieving their educational and personal goals, this mission is carried out in a more proactive, preventive manner. For example, the impact of HIV/AIDS on our lives today could have never been imagined by a Middle Earth volunteer of the 1970's or early 1980's, nor was there as much of a focus in society or in Middle Earth training on the importance of issues such as personal safety, eating disorders, and human diversity. While CRISIS 5300's first hotline service was operated by less than ten students and was housed for a time in a converted closet in the Campus Center, today's Middle Earth volunteers number over 160, and its offices are located in the former Health and Counseling Building as a service arm of the University Counseling Center, Division of Student Success.

The look of Middle Earth consumers has also changed. During the 2009-2010 year, the hotline service received over 1,600 contacts. Males requested slightly more services than did females, perhaps suggesting that males prefer to seek services anonymously. The three primary issues of concern for students who contacted the hotline were peer relationship issues, sexuality concerns, and psychological concerns. In addition, the Middle Earth outreach education program devoted its 2010 Sexuality Week to a discussion of race, gender, and sexuality hosted by author and political expert Keith Boykin. Through Sexuality Week, over 10,000 students and community members were reached. Middle Earth has been recognized as a national model for its work by the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and other national, state, and local organizations.

In 1970, a student had a dream and, with the help of administrators who cared, did something with it. Forty years later, the dream is still alive because over 1,400 alumni and alumnae, over 160 students, and a number of administrators and student leaders are continuing to support this very important community service.

[Source: <http://www.albany.edu/middleearthcafe/aboutus.shtml>]

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Scope and Contents

Materials in this collection include: brochures and fliers advertising the services provided by Middle Earth, training manuals for volunteers, and reports.

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Arrangement of the Collection

The collection is unprocessed and is likely disorganized. Individual items may be difficult to find.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives

Revision Description

Encoded in EAD by Benjamin Covell 2017 March 21

Processing Information

Processed in 2017 by unprocessed.

Access

Access to this collection is restricted because it is unprocessed. Portions of the collection may contain recent administrative records and/or personally identifiable information. Please contact an archivist for more information.

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The University Archives are eager to hear from any copyright owners who are not properly identified so that appropriate information may be provided in the future.

Acquisition Information

All items in this collection were transferred to the University Libraries, M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Drug abuse counseling
- Peer counseling of students
- training manuals
- Correspondence
- UAlbany Student Affairs
- State University of New York at Albany