

## **The Setonian**

### **Nursing students mobilize for new smoke-free zones on campus**

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Leaders in Healthcare is an organization run by students who belong in the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) program and this semester they have embarked on a new initiative to create a clean air, smoke free perimeter around campus buildings.

According to the proposal, “The 25-foot smoke free perimeter from entrances to all University buildings would apply to all students, employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors. The policy would encompass cigarettes, cigars, pipes, e-cigarettes and all other forms of smoking tobacco.”

Tara Gillespie, president of the Leaders in Healthcare organization, explained that students in the organization, along with the support of some of their mentors, started work on this proposed policy a few months ago.

“We noticed that smokers were congregating near building entrances, and in some cases, that was the only nearby place the school had carved out for them to be,” Gillespie said. “The evidence is there; there is no safe limit to secondhand smoke.” Gillespie also explained the importance of having designated areas for smokers.

“We absolutely do not want our smokers to feel like they are being excluded. We advocate for them too,” she said. “We believe that they should have designated, safe places where they can smoke without exposing others to cigarettes, and we believe that there should be resources for them on campus to seek help quitting if they so wish.”

Proposals to designate smoking areas have become contentious issues on campus. On one side, non-smokers say they have a right to expect that their health will be protected while they are attending Seton Hall and they don't want to be exposed to secondhand smoke. But smokers say they have rights too and besides, they can't be expected to quit cigarettes cold turkey. Mohammed El-Sayeed, a senior and a non-smoker, supports the idea of designated smoking areas away from the entrance to University buildings.

"I think that'd be great honestly because like when I walk into McNulty for example there's always like a little crowd of people that always have to inhale second hand smoke and I'm not too crazy about that," he said. "For me, it would be great if they banned it around academic buildings."

Andriy Bashta, a second year clinical nurse leader program student, and a smoker, also supports the initiative.

"Smokers like me don't smell or feel how unpleasant the cigarette smoke actually is so having us smoke away from the public is good," Bashta said. "I think it's a great idea that this initiative is taking into account both smokers and nonsmokers. I know many campuses that would just ban smoking altogether leaving smokers in a tough situation of having to walk off campus to have a cigarette."

A proposal to create smoke free zones outside buildings would need the support of the Student Government Association.

"Student government last year was also spearheading some initiatives to do the same thing like make sure that you're 50 feet away from a building," said Morgan Kulesa, sophomore and senate speaker of the SGA. "It was done by Ryan Kane who was

vice president last term, so student government definitely backs up that initiative. So we've been doing it too so I believe that we would definitely support it."

On the flip side, there are also those who do not support the proposal.

"Personally I'd be pretty upset with that only because like the campus is so small as it is," said Taylor Marotto, a freshman. "I don't think it's a good idea but I understand wanting to keep the smoke away from everybody. I wouldn't like it but I would listen to it."

For more information and to read the proposal email [LeadersInHealthcare@shu.edu](mailto:LeadersInHealthcare@shu.edu). Students who want to sign a petition of support can do so in Nursing Room 113.

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