

# **CAYUGA'S WATCHERS, INC.**



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**ANNUAL REPORT  
FY 2017**

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Adam Gitlin '13, *Treasurer & Co-Founder*

Hannah James '15, *Secretary*

John Mueller '13, *Co-Founder*

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Naoya Fukuchi '19, *Vice President of Development*

Shailen Doshi '19, *Vice President of Data Analysis*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Cayuga's Watchers is a student-run 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that seeks to curb high-risk behaviors and promote student safety in social environments. The organization uses a selective recruitment and training process to adequately equip students with the skills to be effective bystanders in a range of scenarios. These trained student-employees ("Watchers"), who are retained by Cornell student groups to work at their events, actively engage with partygoers in a friendly and non-confrontational fashion.



Cayuga's Watchers was initially established in 2012 and became fully operational during the 2013-14 academic year. The demand for our services has been increasing, and fortunately so has our ability to deliver them to the Cornell community. is escalating. Since 2014, Cayuga's Watchers has been requested to work at **305** events and has engaged in **1,473** interventions. We currently staff an average of **6-9** events each week of the academic year. We constantly review our performance and incorporate critical feedback from our users and administrators to ensure the consistency and quality of our activities. We hope to work more events in each successive year.

The 2016-2017 academic year was Cayuga's Watchers' strongest year to date. We trained over **2,000** students, including athletic teams, academic classes, Multicultural Multi-Cultural Greek Letter Council organizations, and other student interest groups. Following a recent Panhellenic and Interfraternity Council mandate, we also trained all IFC and Panhellenic organizations.

During the 2016-17 fiscal year, Cayuga's Watchers employed approximately **224** students, who staffed **136** social events, during which they performed **878** interventions while on duty. During the first week of the fourth quarter of the year alone, commonly known as "wet week," Cayuga's Watchers performed **122** interventions, **12** of which involved deterring unwanted sexual advances.

Most importantly, as an educational non-profit, we equip students with the knowledge and skills to mitigate alcohol-related risks. Our program has received strong support across all segments of the student community. Ultimately, we aim to improve social norms associated with alcohol consumption through the promotion of peer social responsibility.

# OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

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## General Campus Training Opportunities

Our hour-long general training sessions are conducted by our training committee, which is staffed by undergraduate students. The general trainings cover a series of topics including: noticing over-intoxication, understanding tolerance, calling EMS, learning about Cornell's Good Samaritan Protocol, recognizing the different types of "risky" partygoers, and being an active bystander. Our trainings are both educational and engaging, and during the training, we explain the professional services that Cayuga's Watchers provides to the Cornell community and invite students to apply to become an employee after receiving more training. We also screen a series of scenes from Cornell Health's professional film *Intervene*, which encourages bystander intervention by presenting examples of students intervening in risky situations. This addition to the training adds a richness and depth to a student's understanding of identifying situations that warrant appropriate intervention.

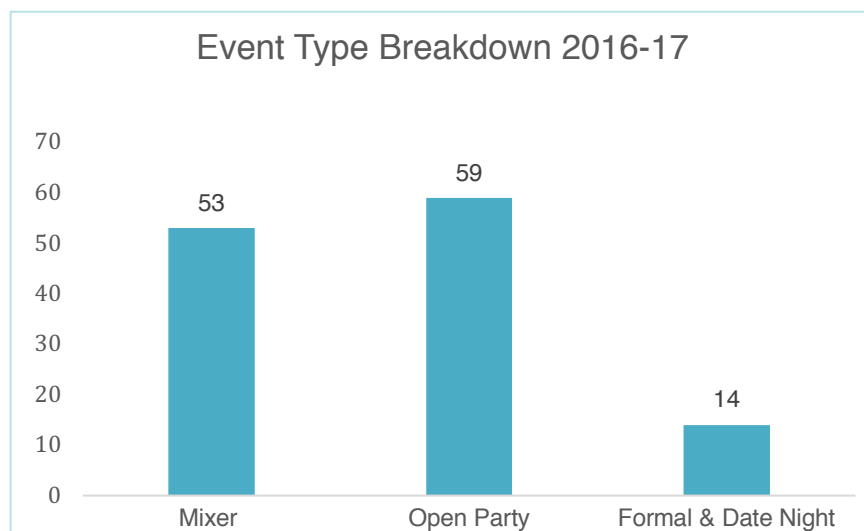
Cayuga's Watchers works closely with other organizations and professionals across the Cornell community for regular evaluation and improvement of our training materials and procedures. Our Vice President of Training and President meet regularly with Cornell Health administrators to incorporate their professional advice and suggestions. Additionally, we maintain close affiliations with student leaders from other organizations who are committed to risk mitigation on campus, such as Cornell University Emergency Medical Services (CUEMS). We also collaborate with a number of professors, including Professor William Sonnenstuhl who is helping us perform an impact evaluation of our training procedures.

## Pre-Employment Campus Training

Pre-employment trainings are a prerequisite for becoming an employee of the organization. The pre-employment trainings are twice as long as general training opportunities, as they provide more in-depth information about the topics covered in the general training. Pre-employment training emphasizes risk identification, simulated practice with bystander intervention techniques, and understanding Cayuga's Watchers employee protocol. In addition, to be eligible to be a Cayuga's Watchers employee, students are required to fill out the required application, interview with a member of our executive team, and successfully complete the Cayuga's Watchers training test. Only after successfully fulfilling these conditions will a student be able to become an employee of Cayuga's Watchers. Currently Cayuga's Watchers has 224 employees, each of whom is required to work at least 3 events per semester.

## Events

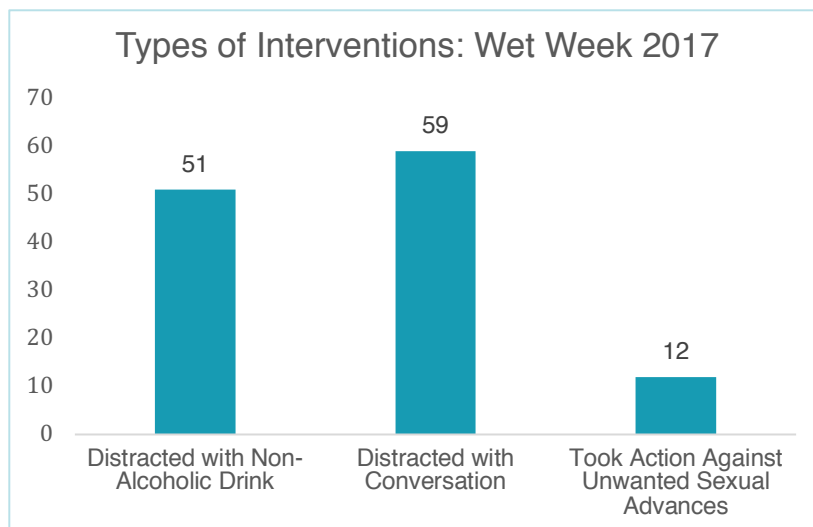
Cayuga's Watchers worked 136 events during the 2016-17 academic year. Of these events were 53 were "mixers," 59 were "open parties," and 14 were Greek-affiliated "date nights or formals." See Figure 1. Typical clientele includes various Tri-Council fraternity and sororities, school clubs, athletic teams, cultural organizations, and musical groups



**Figure 1: Event types worked during the 2016-2017 school year.**

The University's "quarter-system" drives a greater number of events in the second semester. This system is designed to manage first-year students' interactions with Greek chapters. The first week of the fourth quarter, also known on campus colloquially as "Wet Week," marks the first time that newly initiated Greek members are permitted to fully participate in campus social events. This week historically results in higher numbers of medical transports and other alcohol-related incidents.

Cayuga's Watchers posted a 89.2% fulfillment rate for Wet Week 2017, having received 28 event requests and successfully staffing 25 of them. These numbers represent a 27% increase in events requested and 56% improvement in staffed events compared to Wet Week 2016. Of the 63 Watchers who staffed Wet Week events, 31 of them worked more than one event, with one Watcher working an impressive 5 events. The largest night of the week was Friday, with 22 Watchers working at one time at 6 unique locations. As illustrated in Figure 2, Watchers performed 122 interventions, averaging 4.88 interventions per event. The most common type of intervention involved distracting a partygoer with a conversation.



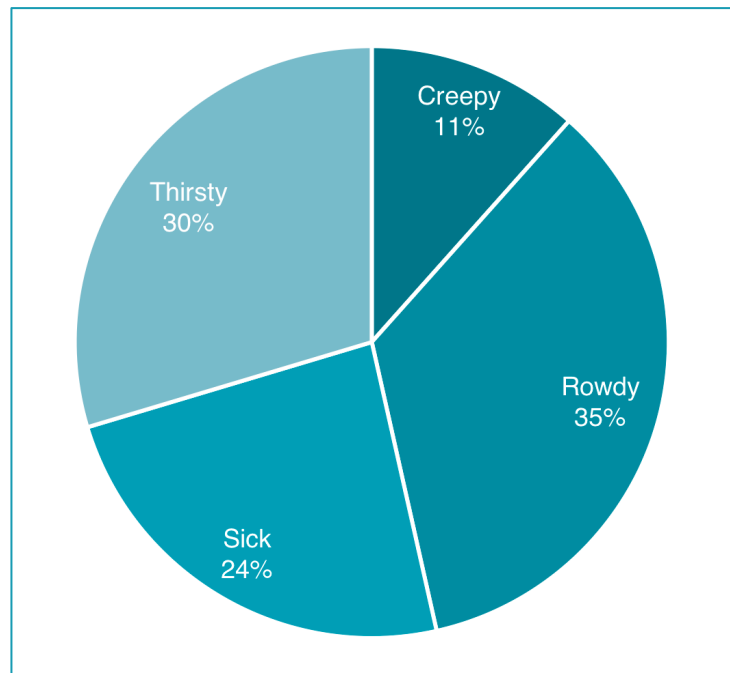
**Figure 2: Breakdown of Interventions during "Wet Week" 2017.**

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## Interventions

Cayuga’s Watchers trains its employees to recognize four party-going archetypes: (i) the sick partygoer, (ii) the rowdy partygoer, (iii) the thirsty partygoer, and (iv) the creepy<sup>1</sup> partygoer.

- The sick partygoer is an individual who is beginning to show symptoms of alcohol poisoning — vomiting, slurring words, losing balance or passing out.
- The rowdy partygoer is an individual behaving aggressively and potentially posing a risk to those at the event.
- The thirsty partygoer came to the party with one goal in mind: to get very intoxicated. This individual is not pacing him/herself and may be pressuring others at the party to begin binge drinking alongside them.
- The creepy partygoer is an individual who is acting predatorily towards other partygoers.



**Figure 3: Partygoer type breakdown.**

A partygoer type breakdown, as reported by on-duty Watchers during the 2016-17 academic year, is displayed in Figure 3.

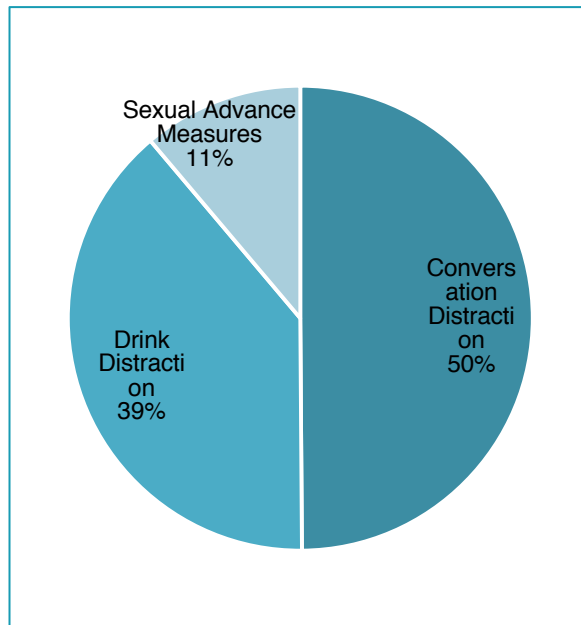
In our experience, the most basic forms of distraction are the most powerful: simply engaging a partygoer in conversation or offering a non-alcoholic beverage are two incredibly effective methods for mitigating the speed or intensity of one’s alcohol consumption. We use these techniques at every event because they fit perfectly within our non-confrontational peer-to-peer bystander intervention model.

This past year, Watchers performed a total of 878 interventions while on duty, which represents a 103% increase from 2015-16 driven in part by a 15% increase in events staffed.

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<sup>1</sup> Effective Fall 2017, the “creepy partygoer” has been rebranded as “predatory partygoer” to communicate that 70% of sexual assault victims knew their perpetrator (via <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/perpetrators-sexual-violence>).

Of the 878 interventions, 97 of them were to prevent unwanted sexual advances. These interventions require our Watchers to act creatively, sometimes working in teams, but always erring on the side of caution (or, in other words, always erring on the side of performing some type of intervention to ensure the safety of the situation). Intervention methods include asking a seemingly at-risk individual if he or she would like to dance, use the restroom, or accompany one of our team members on a trip to get a drink. The goal is to provide a window of opportunity to escape for those who want it.



**Figure 4: Intervention type breakdown.**

Approximately 80% of the events we staffed were mixers and open parties, which explains the high interventions: events ratio. A breakdown of intervention tactics is provided above in Figure 4.

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To give a better sense of the specific interactions Watchers encounter while on duty, we've provided a few accounts of our employees interacting with partygoers while on duty:



*One individual kept falling asleep at the party. A friend and I made sure he got some water in him. When the time came, and we knew he could walk back, we sent him home.*

*There was one incident in which two men were playing two women in beer pong. The men made a rack that, under typical rules, requires the other team to flash their opponents. The women disagreed on whether this rule was valid, and when the men attempted to command them to flash them, I stepped in and said if the women did not want to do so they would not do so. The women thanked me and this was the conclusion of the interaction.*

*At one point, a fellow Watcher and I had to get assistance to break up a fight of larger men. No one was hurt because we were able to step in with the host before it got too physical. In addition, we played close attention to a certain couple to make sure everything was okay*



*because there seemed to be an issue between the two, but everything was deemed okay.*



## Emergency Action Protocol

The Emergency Action Protocol (EAP) — a process used by Watchers to call for additional medical services — was activated 5 times over the course of this year. In all 5 situations, multiple Watchers reported that they were monitoring the partygoer throughout the evening and when the situations became too risky they either contacted the party host for consultation or immediately called EMS, depending on the severity of the situation. All 5 situations resulted in students being transported to Cayuga Medical Center to receive proper medical attention; the students were all released a short time later without any long-term injury. Although it is unsettling to see an increase in EAP from last year, we are encouraged that on-duty Watchers were vigilant in monitoring their peers, active in alerting the authorities when needed, and able to handle emergency situations professionally.

## Slope Day

Slope Day, an annual outdoor concert hosted on Cornell's campus, is one of the University's most high-risk events of the year given its 14,500 attendees. On Slope Day 2017, Watchers were utilized for three pre-game parties and two Slope shifts that comprised almost the entirety of the day's events. Watchers performed 44 interventions throughout the course of the day, and worked side by side with Slope Day volunteers and University officials to identify 33 at-risk students and connect them with medical personnel for evaluation and transport when needed.

## Addition of Board Of Advisors

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In the spring of 2017, Cayuga's Watchers officially incorporated a formal Board of Advisors. The newly established Board of Advisors serves to complement the Executive Board and the Board of Directors in developing our operational and long-term strategies. The inaugural Board of Advisors is comprised of 5 individuals from various professional backgrounds who all have been committed to our organization over the past few years. The Board of Advisors formally meet twice per semester and consult with Directors and Executive Board members on a periodic basis. We look forward to the Board of Advisors playing a key role in the expansion of the organization both on the Cornell campus and across the country.

### Inaugural Members:

**Ralph Wilhelm:** President/Founder of Wilhelm Associates, Chairman of Cornell Fraternity and Sorority Alumni Committee. Business strategy expert and longtime consultant and advocate for Cayuga's Watchers.

**Dr. William Sonnenstuhl:** Professor in the Department of Organizational Behavior in the Cornell ILR school. Associate Director of ILR School's R. Brinkley Smithers Institute for Alcohol-Related Workplace Studies. Academic research focuses on college drinking, bystander intervention, and sexual assault prevention. Member of Cornell Fraternity and Sorority Alumni Committee as well as a number of other student life committees.

**Dr. Renee Alexander:** Associate Dean of Students at Cornell University and Director of Intercultural Programs, former Director of Cornell Diversity Alumni Programs. Dr. Alexander is a leader of undergraduate diversity initiatives and student advocacy programs across Cornell.

**Bob Forness:** Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of MultiStrat Insurance Group. Insurance expert and longtime consultant and advocate for Cayuga's Watchers. Additionally, serves as a member of the Cornell Fraternity and Sorority Alumni Committee.

**Matthew J. Rubins:** Venture capitalist and fundraising expert. Matt also serves as the Director of the Zeta Beta Tau foundation and served as the former international president of Zeta Beta Tau. Additionally, Matt serves on the Fraternity and Sorority Alumni Committee.

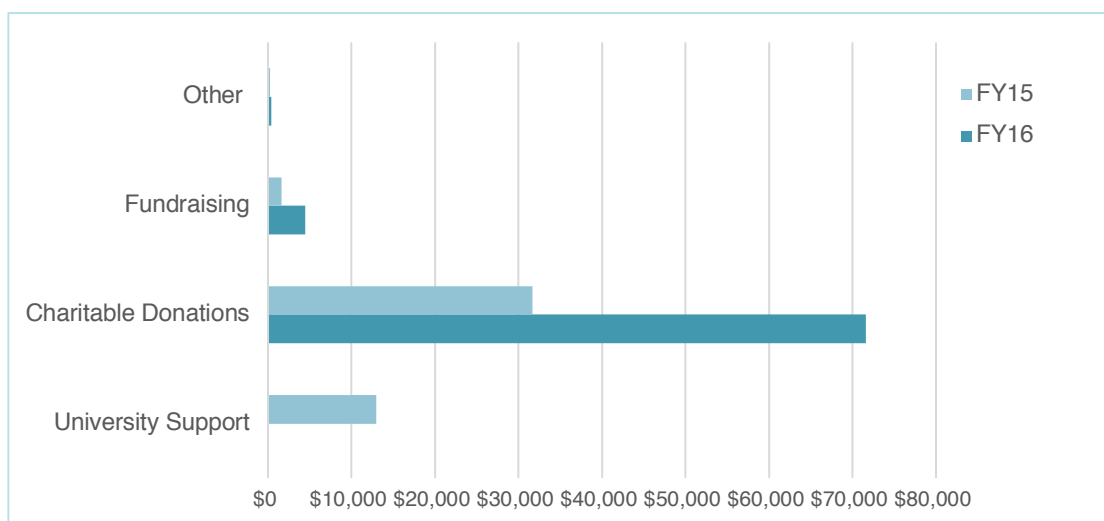
## FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

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Cayuga's Watchers raised a total of \$77,586 during FY 2016, almost double the \$46,486 raised during FY 2015. This increase was primarily driven by a significantly higher amount of charitable, which increased from \$31,685 raised during FY 2015 to \$71,503 raised during FY 2016. Please see Figure 5 below.

For the first time since its inception, Cayuga's Watchers did not accept a single dollar in FY 2016 from Cornell's Student and Academic services department. Our independence is integral to the continued trust and support we receive from requesting student organizations.

The "Fundraising" category shown in Figure 5 refers to donations received from various online and in-person campaigns, such as our annual "Giving Day," during which students in the Cornell community donate at various locations on campus and online. This year, contributions from the "Fundraising" category increased from \$1,586 in FY 2015 to \$5,568 during FY 2016.



**Figure 5: Financial breakdown from FY 2015 to FY 2016.**

## GROWTH & GOALS

The 2016-17 academic year was a very exciting year for Cayuga's Watchers, and as the organization expands, we continue to broaden our horizons and annual expectations. In the spring of 2018, we plan on hosting a conference that will bring together student leaders from various universities to discuss the importance of bystander intervention programs and to understand how these programs are being implemented across the country. We hope to showcase Cayuga's Watchers and have our trainings serve as a model for other universities. It is our belief that the success we have had at Cornell can be replicated at our peer institutions and serve as a model to enhance the social culture of universities across the nation.

In the next year, we hope to continue expanding our presence on the Cornell campus. Although we have greatly increased the number of events we have worked, we hope to continue increasing the number of events we staff each weekend and expand the number of unique organizations who request our services. Specifically, it is our goal to provide more training and to work more events for athletic teams and cultural organizations. We hope to accomplish this by continuing our campus marketing and advertising, programming and outreach efforts and by working closely with our newly-formed Board of Advisors.

We are also excited to announce that in the spring of 2018, our trainers, who serve to train the approximate 2,000 students who participate in our training each year, will be paid for their service. Trainers will be required to go through a more extensive application process and will be mandated to participate in re-trainings periodically. We are also implementing a strict training audit system by which both our training materials and trainers will be evaluated each semester. It is our goal to keep our trainings as up-to-date and informative as possible, especially as our services continue to expand over the next few years.

In the Spring 2018, we will also be implementing a “captain” system whereby Watchers can take on more responsibility and expertise as leaders of an employee event team. Captains will work events like traditional Watchers but will have the responsibility of ensuring that all Watchers are correctly following proper protocol. Captains will be senior Watchers who have shown exemplary service and dedication to the organization for at least two semesters. Similar to the training audits, we are implementing the system to ensure the highest possible quality of service to organizations.