

Ohio State Remembers Victims of Prescription Drug Abuse

By [Emily Keeler](#), 11/1/12



On October 25, 2012, people across the country lit a candle in honor of the many lives lost to prescription drug abuse. Ohio State joined in the vigil with approximately 100 students, faculty, staff, and guests who gathered to share memories and raise awareness about this epidemic.

The event was spearheaded by Kelsey Kresser, an undergraduate student in the College of Pharmacy. Says Kresser,

“Prescription drug abuse is such an important issue that affects so many people in our community. I wanted to bring this event to Ohio State's campus to raise awareness about this issue. I believe the key to preventing prescription drug abuse in the future is educating people in our community today.”

Kresser enlisted the help of a number of students, many who are members of Ohio State's [Generation Rx Initiative](#), a group within the student chapter of the American Pharmacists Association (APhA). Generation Rx aims to enhance the public's understanding of medication safety issues in general, and those relating to prescription drug abuse in particular.

The event began with a reception and a display where participants could write a message about the person for whom they were lighting a candle. There were also stories of victims of prescription drug abuse that were hung and played on a video screen.

As twilight enveloped Columbus, participants made their way to the Browning Amphitheatre. Four speakers talked about their personal stories. The speakers were Tasha Tschappat, “Don't Get me Started” campaign; Gina Mee, director of education for Tyler's Light; Marcie Seidel, director, Drug Free Action Alliance; and Jessica Lineberger, senior grants manager, Cardinal Health.

To end the evening, attendees created a “living wall” by each person holding a sign containing a photo and story of someone who lost his or her battle with prescription drugs. As the wall created a large circle, the candles were lit in honor of all victims.

The vigil was made possible by the generous support of the Kroger Company.

The event was part of the Sixth Annual Narcotics Overdose Prevention & Education (NOPE) Candlelight Vigil. NOPE aims to diminish the frequency and impact of overdose death through community education, family support and purposeful advocacy.