The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Drug Misuse Prevention and Recovery (HECAOD) is a collaborative between the College of Social Work, College of Pharmacy, and the Office of Student Life. Launched from a $2 million, 3-year grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, HECAOD has accomplished most of its initial goals, including the development of strategies to deliver education, training, and technical assistance as well as augmenting Ohio State’s effort to expand the continuum of care and the College of Pharmacy’s Generation Rx program.

HECAOD has continued to work towards meeting the mission and vision adopted in 2015. Over the last two years, the Higher Education Center has experienced a transition in leadership, with Dr. James Lange now serving as Executive Director, and diversified its funding, allowing the Center to be more responsive to the needs of colleges and universities. This evolution, in combination with stakeholder feedback, led us to refine the strategies we use to meet our mission. In response, HECAOD has identified four pillars: 1) Education and training; 2) Tools and resource development; 3) Technical assistance; and 4) Connecting networks.

HECAOD is proud of its accomplishments since its inception. HECAOD developed ScreenU®, a web-based screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) tool to increase the capacity for campuses to implement SBIRT. To date, nearly 50 institutions have utilized ScreenU, with close to 50,000 screenings collected nationwide. HECAOD has hosted three national conferences, with representatives from 40 states in attendance. Additionally, the Higher Education Center has grown its web-based training presence, offering four learning collaboratives- each focused on a specific topic including cannabis, collegiate recovery, prescription drug misuse, and engaging peers across the substance misuse continuum- and 25 free webinars. These trainings have engaged 6,800 campus and community professionals.

In 2018, HECAOD received an additional $500,000 from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to support system-level engagement. HECAOD established a consortium of statewide coalitions for campus wellness professionals, which is working toward developing best practices for state-level coalition development. To date, 32 of the 36 identified coalitions in the country have engaged in this initiative. Additionally, HECAOD has developed strategic partnerships with a number of national and state-level organizations, including the Drug Enforcement Administration, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, NASPA, Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, International Town-Gown Association, and Prevention Action Alliance. These collaborations have led to opportunities that have furthered HECAOD’s mission.

HECAOD continues to support the University’s core goals of Teaching and Learning, by providing opportunities for a dozen students to complete internships or field placements, and Outreach and Engagement, through our training and technical assistance efforts reaching thousands of campus professionals across the nation.