

college beat | BY LAUREN ROSENBLUM

ZERO TOLERANCE AT USC

Hit the books, not the joints.

ON APRIL 2, A USC FRESHMAN WAS found dead in his dorm room after suffering from an accidental drug overdose, according to USC Department of Public Safety officials. He was 19.

Michael Weiss, a freshman who majored in business, is remembered as friendly and compassionate by his friends. He was raised in a zero-tolerance environment at Francis Parker High School in San Diego.

When Weiss came to USC last fall, his older brother, Justin Weiss, told the *Daily Trojan* that Michael "worked himself hard to get good grades." But when he was found dead in his dorm

room people began to question the effectiveness of a zero-tolerance policy.

Weiss wasn't the first, and will not be the last student to get involved in substance abuse incidents. In fact just three days prior to his death, a mass e-mail was sent to USC students warning of a new zero tolerance policy.

"All instances of any misconduct will be dealt with swiftly and harshly," the e-mail read. "All violations can result in permanent consequences for your academic career."

Some are wondering if this is really the best way to handle drug abuse on campus. Such security-oriented policies seem to do little to

prevent those who want to use drugs.

But why is it that drug abuse is so prevalent among students? CASA (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse) chairman Joseph Califano, Jr. says that frequent boredom and too much money drive large numbers of teenagers

to use drugs.

"Kids that had more than \$25 a week actually in spending money were twice as likely to get involved in substances as kids who had less than \$25 a week to spend," offers Califano, Jr. "And kids with more than 50 bucks a week, which is 15 percent of our population of 12 to 17-year-olds were at very high risk."

Considering these statistics, the "University of Spoiled Children" must be swarming with students who are spending Mommy and Daddy's money on drugs. Imagine if every USC student caught for smoking weed was punished under the full extent of the law.

Before you know it, USC's nickname would quickly change to the "University of Suspected Criminals," which is why the administration has decided to punish students themselves, instead of turning them over to the Los Angeles Police Department.

So what are we to do?

Parents need to be more aware of how their children are spending their money. They also need to work with teachers and students to put an end to the deadly threat of ignorance.

If naive kids are walking out of high school and onto college campuses, then they're bound to get hurt. The university already tries to take precaution by making all students complete AlcoholEdu, a Web-based, alcohol prevention program, prior to arriving on campus.

But in all honesty, students are going to keep using drugs regardless of these efforts.

Next time you get ready to smoke a joint, why don't you try hitting the books instead? Your parents are paying good money for you to go to college and learn.

Try it some day. ■

THE POWER OF AUDITING

(Less) Serious Study

BY GLORIA DEWALT

WITH PREREQUISITES, CONFLICTS between course offerings, major requirements, labs and lectures, it's often hard to know where to begin to plan your schedule, let alone fit in courses that just pique your interest. Although

auditing is the idea of not widely advertised at most schools, it's a phenomenon many students should strongly consider. Auditing gives you the chance to branch out and take a variety of classes in different fields of study. Nearly every

college and university has some established method in choosing to audit a course. USC and UCLA, as well as community colleges like Los Angeles City College and West Los Angeles College, have opportunities to audit that are available through the registrar's office.

Typically, auditing a class involves attending all classes just like you would any other course. Some professors may want you to partake in discussions and/or small homework assignments, but traditionally it's not mandatory. Depending on the course, it is helpful to read or review the material to be discussed.

Without the usual stresses – worrying about grades, preparing for exams and writing papers – that accompany classes taken for credit, you can absorb information and acquire new skills and knowledge.

Ever wanted to take French but weren't sure if all that *parlez-vous-ing* was up your alley? Well, you can audit it and see if the next level is

worth taking for credit, or if the subject is interesting enough to major or minor.

Additionally, after auditing you may be able to take the next course level for credit or do sufficiently well on a placement test, thus bypassing the prerequisite requirement.

For underclassmen, auditing provides insight as to which direction to consider as far as major(s) or minor(s), and for seniors, it provides insight into avenues to explore after college, and it may even be helpful in supplementing skills acquired from your major(s). Either way, auditing is a way to continue with areas of study that are enjoyable, but may not always be practical or worthwhile to devote to a major.

With auditing, just as with any other course, you get as much out of it as you put in. The worst thing that could happen after auditing a course is that you discover you don't like it, but then again, you realize this without wasting any precious credits or having to withdraw from the course and receive a "W." Ultimately, you never know what you're capable of, or what you may want to do in the future, unless you try it. ■

Students Free on Sunday



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Main St. at Pico \$10
\$2 off Reg Adm with ad
Sat 10-6, Sun 11-5
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"DIA DE LAS MADRES"
CELEBRATION!

There will be two Mother's Day celebrations here at Antonio's!

There is the one on the 10th of May, which is celebrated in Mexico. We celebrate that day here with a special menu, cards and goodies, as well as a musical trio performing.

Then there is the one on Sunday celebrated here in the U.S. We will have the special menu, cards, and goodies, as well as the trio to serenade the moms.

We at Antonio's always treat the moms special, so make your reservations and whichever day you decide, the 10th or the second Sunday of May as celebrated here in the states, we will make sure mom is given the extra special treatment.

Call (323) 658-9060 for reservations and "Recuerde a Mama"!

7470 Melrose Ave.
Tues-Fri: 11 a.m.-11 p.m., Sat: noon-11 p.m., Sun: noon-10 p.m., closed Mondays

lifestyle | BY PARIMAL M. ROHIT

JOE DOUGHRITY

Creator of *Akira's Hip Hop Shop*

MANY HOLLYWOOD ACTORS, WRITERS and producers were spawned from Motown, including Jerry Bruckheimer and Francis Ford Coppola. The next Detroit native to make a silver screen splash is Joe Dougherty.

Writer, producer and director Joe D. was recently awarded the prestigious Director Guild of America Student Film Award for a movie he wrote and directed, *Akira's Hip Hop Shop*, a romantic comedy/drama about an Asian man and a black woman that was accepted at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, which runs through May 8.

Joe D. received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Columbia College Hollywood, got his first break as a production assistant on John Singleton's *Boyz n the Hood* and then collaborated with Singleton on *Poetic Justice*



and *Higher Learning*.

Joe D.'s documentary, *Seven Days in Japan*, won Best Documentary at the 2005 San Diego Comic-Con Film Festival. It won't be long before Hollywood becomes a second home for Joe D. ■