

T1DAWGS: CREATING A NETWORK FOR TYPE 1 DIABETIC STUDENTS

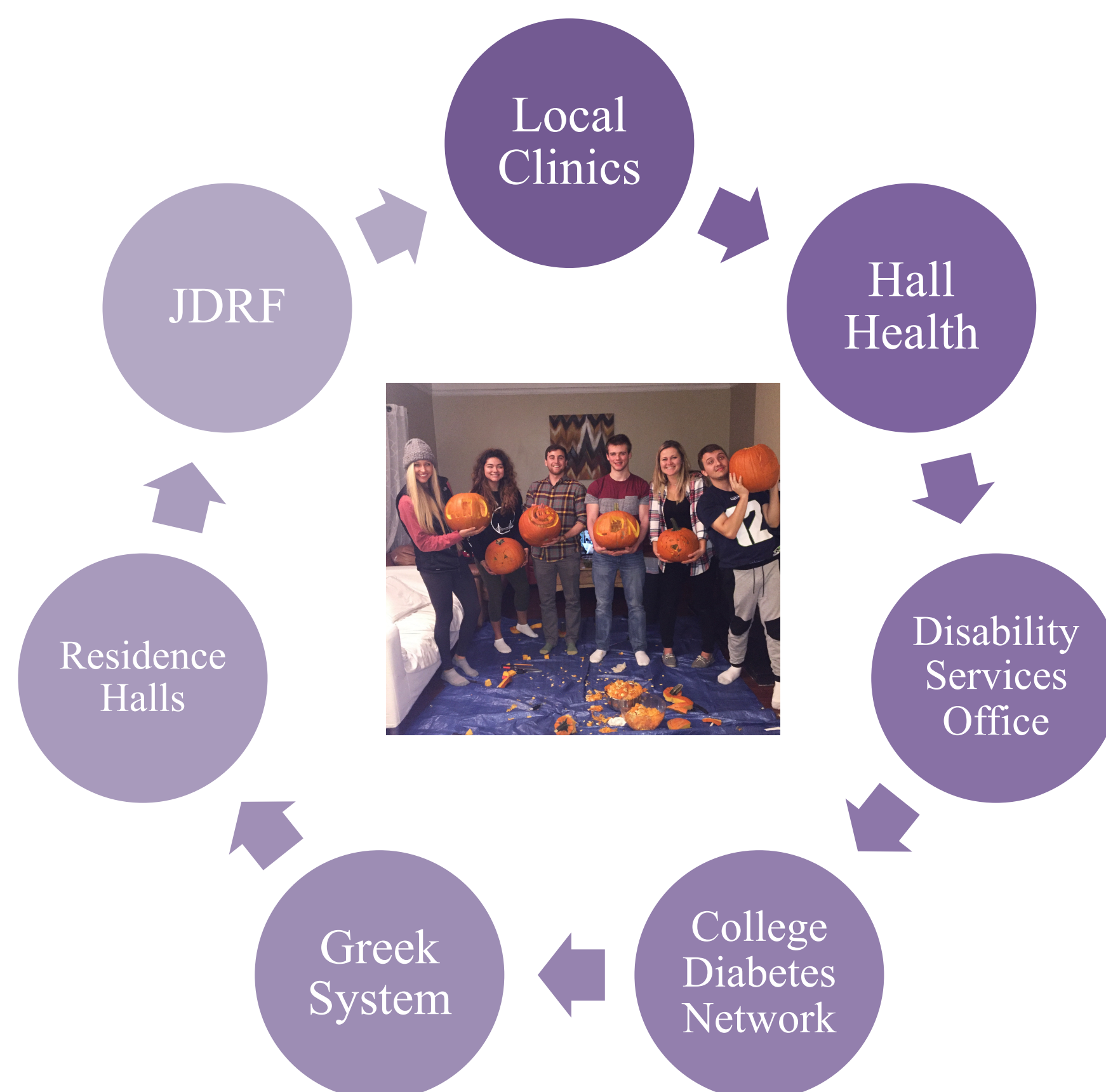
Andy Zeiger (Mary Gates Scholar, Department of Biology), Gwen Malone (mentor, JDRF)

CHRONIC ILLNESS ON CAMPUS

Chronic illnesses like type 1 diabetes (T1D) are emotional, physical, full-time jobs. To thrive on campus with a chronic illness, individuals require social support on top of their normal healthcare regiment.

Research suggests that one in every 300 people in America have T1D, but prior to T1Dawgs' founding, UW lacked resources and social support for T1D students¹. After being diagnosed, I connected with the Pacific Northwest chapter of Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) and became their first College Outreach Chair. A few months later I connected with another T1D student to found T1Dawgs, the new UW chapter of College Diabetes Network (CDN). Our goal is to make UW and Seattle places where a T1D student can thrive.

PARTNERS



CREATING THE NETWORK

1. Spread awareness on campus and in Seattle



Fundraiser for JDRF



UW Daily Article



JDRF Beat the Bridge

2. Organize vital resource packet

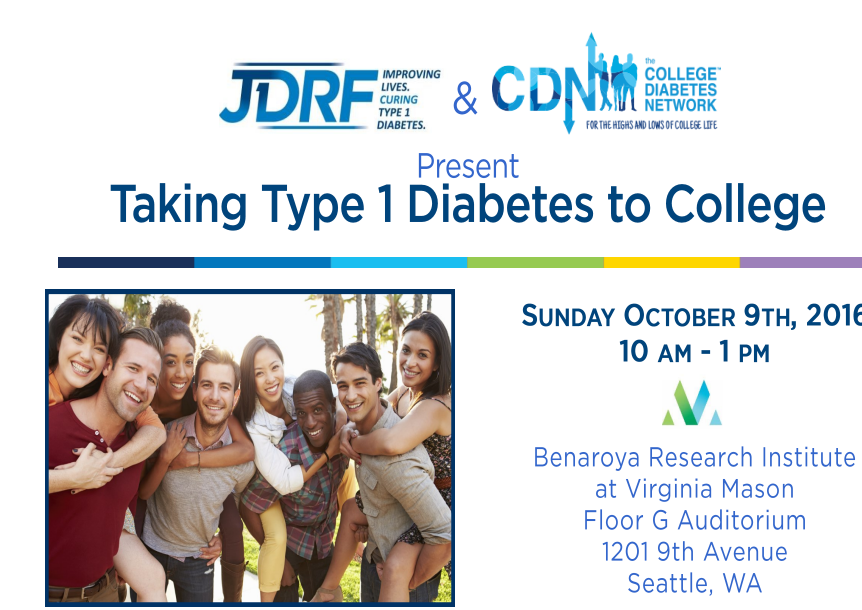


Traveled to Boston to aid CDN in producing a guide for newly diagnosed young adults

3. Host community events about college life with T1D



Spring panel event for high schoolers



Fall event for college students

REFLECTION



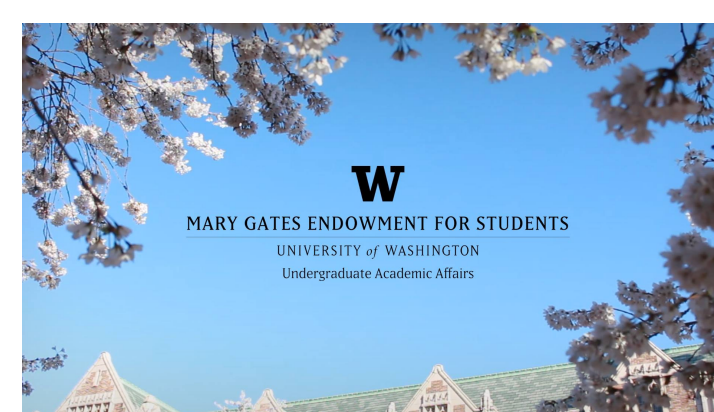
17 months ago this was me, a junior at UW, 30 pounds lighter than usual, and two weeks away from being diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. I was initially fearful of becoming a

public advocate for this disease because it was my own burden to bear – my private struggle. Building T1Dawgs just months after I was diagnosed allowed me to turn my diabetes into an overwhelmingly positive experience, because once I started vocalizing my own anguish, I also started listening to the anguish of others. Type 1 diabetes has not only forced me to be mindful of the carbs I eat, but also of my mental health and the mental health of my friends and family. It has deepened my empathy for those around me. It has been a constant reminder of the fragility of life and it has been a gift.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work has been supported by the Mary Gates Endowment for Students. I want to thank Kassidey Short for being an incredible partner in this endeavor and Gwen Malone for her mentorship and guidance. I would also like to acknowledge my family for being the backbone to my support system; the T1Dawgs team; Karis, Karine and Maddie; Jake, Jordan and Hank; Haley; the JDRF Outreach Committee; the CDN Boston squad; Truman and Eisenhower.

1. Menke, Andy et al. *Epidemiology (Cambridge, Mass.)* 24.5 (2013): 773–774. *PMC*.



UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

