



MENTAL HEALTH FORUM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ACADEMIC SENATE, CLASSIFIED SENATE & ASSOCIATED STUDENT GOVERNMENT.

April 16, 2019

5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., BYKH-105

SUMMARY

Attendees: Lesley Romero, Victoria Schwartz, Cameron Downs, Marilyn Jimenez, Michelle LaBrie, Garrett Hooper, Danielle Hazlett, Rosa Song, Michael Joslin, Brittany Applen, Cassie Eads, Nicole Faudree, Sara Farnell, Madison Leatherman, Mary Manuel, Cynthia Nelson, Larry Schallert, Jessica Small, Sheldon Helfing, Diane Sionko, Siane Holland, Rebecca Eikey, Erick Pena, Michael Gravo, Lisa Wallace, Patti Haley, Sab Matsumoto, Michael Jara, Mai Jara, Tyler Robert Clark, Andrew Rodriguez.

A. Welcome and Introductions

- Call to order: 5:15 pm
- Panelist where introduced:
 - 1st Panelist, Larry Schallert, Assistant Director of the Student Health & Wellness Center/Mental Health Program; Member of the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)
 - 2nd Panelist, Garrett Hooper, Counselor
 - 3rd Panelist, Michelle LaBrie, Psychology Professor
 - 4th Panelist, Nicole Faudree, Paralegal Instructor & Department Chair of the Business Department.

B. Purpose of this meeting

- This event is to create awareness and learning about the various mental health resources that are available on campus. It is also to discuss what additional things we can be doing as a campus, such as other additional strategies or other avenues that we can be doing to help support the wellness of students. This is an opportunity to collect feedback from students, faculty and staff. There may be policies changes we could develop that could help address possible gaps.

C. Word Poll exercise & Mental Health Forum Presentation

- An exercise was given to all attendees using Pollev.com to collect what words come to mind when everyone thinks of Mental Health and Wellness.
- Some words which were most commonly shared were “anxiety, depression, therapy, stress, help, isolation, misunderstood & fear”. Remaining results to the Word Poll can be found [here](#).

D. Questions for Panelist:

- *Question for Larry Schallert: What resources are available for those who need assistance?*
 - One common resources is the [Personal Counseling Program](#) which is available for any mental health issue. This resource is available to students for up to 6-8 sessions. There are also integrated physical and mental health programs. There is outreach conducted

along with the Body, Mind & Wellness program. Training with staff and faculty and students is done. There are collocated services such as the Family and Child Center, Child & Family Guidance Center, EOPS and Veterans Center. In addition, the Northeast Valley Health Corporation is at the COC Health Center once a week providing information regarding obtaining health insurance through Medical or Covered CA. The Student Health & Wellness Center also networks with other local SCV resources such as Child & Family Center and Henry Mayo Hospital. The COC Health Center works closely with the BIT and ICS Team. Larry Schallert is currently the Chair of the Santa Clarita Valley Suicide Prevention Wellness community. When there is a tragedy on campus a word is put out to all faculty, staff and students that counseling is available.

- *Question for Michelle LaBrie: From a Psychology standpoint do you have advice for people on how they can manage their Mental Health & Wellness?*
 - The first approach is to seek help. This can be really difficult to do as many times people don't know how they feel. Many times people may not realize that they are hurting or don't understand why? The Student Health & Wellness Center is a terrific place to start. Students many times, in the Psychology coursework, try to understand themselves. It is helpful and empowering for students to educate themselves and understand their mental issues and to understand that they are not alone. It is important to have emotional and psychological support, to address physiological and biological mechanism. For some people there may be undiagnosed physiological illness that may be neurochemical and which may be contributing to someone's mental health issues.

- *Question for Garrett Hopper: What do you think people can do to help manage stress, using wellbeing and using mindful techniques and other methods?*
 - Instructional faculty see a lot of students in crisis who come into the Counseling Department looking for help. The Counseling Department teaches a lot of life skills in the Student Success Classes such as building a connection through a support team. There is a biologist, Robert Sapolsky who has done a lot of work on the physiological effects of stress. In his studies he has discovered that when people are connected they are much better at managing their stress. Sapolsky also states that when people don't have a sense of agency, if they don't feel self-efficacy or feel they can effect a change in the outcome of their life that can be very stressful. Student need to feel they have a sense of agency. Garrett provides, in his classrooms, a Class Constitution in which students help write what the rules of the class should be and can identify projects they want to do or not do. Student then create buy in or ownership of the class. This helps to create a sense of control for students in one area of their lives.
 - There are many different ways students can manage stress such as volunteer work, exercise, meditation, prayer and visualizations. Mindfulness practice is another technique which can help to manage stress by bringing yourself back to the present moment. Stress doesn't live in the present moment as it either lives in the past or the future.

- *Question for Garrett: What life skills do you teach?*
 - Time management, Life skills, motivation strategies, goal setting, soft skills for job interviewing, career skills and time management.

- *Question for Nicole Faudree: When we spoke with the students about how to plan for this event one aspect that needed to be covered was the legal perspective? What are the legal concerns that faculty, staff and students should be aware of?*
 - Nicole shared a disclaimer that she did not practice Health Care Law therefore, she does not feel she is an expert in this area. As a lawyer, Nicole did share some basic information on law. Two majors laws were discussed such as FERPA dealing with educational privacy and HIPPA dealing with health privacy. Neither of these two areas should ever be at risk while at COC. Faculty members should never learn private information about someone from someone else. It is important that when addressing a student in distress to use a calming voice as any form of physical contact could potentially cause a trigger. It is important for students to ask for help. Faculty can check in with someone else to refer that student to the appropriate resource.
 - It was clarified that if there is an emergency and someone discloses a desire to self-harm or to harm others both FERPA and HIPPA regulations can be set aside to address that matter. Depending on the content shared between a student and a faculty member a faculty member may ask for permission from the student to make a phone call to refer that student to someone else who can help them. There are Mandated Reporters who if anyone speaks with them about a minor or elderly person being abused, self-harm to themselves or others or shares safety issues on campus they are required to report it.
 - It was emphasized that if an incident occurred to a COC student off campus a student should still feel comfortable discussing that issue with a person responsible for investigating that claim.

E. Causes of Mental Health Issues among students

- There are several factors which may also be making students feel more distressed and anxious such as higher tuition costs, homelessness, depression and anxiety caused by social media, imposter syndrome, issues with perfectionism and feelings of fear, loneliness and isolation. Students feeling disconnected due to courses in their program being offered in different buildings on campus rather than in one central building location.

F. Possible policy changes or areas of improvement

- Financial: expand the current number of students participating in the First Year Promise Program.
- Geographical: Offer courses for a program within one building to help students get connected with other students. Create more group projects in classrooms. Allow 15 minutes during class to share and discuss current events. Allow students to share contact information with each other.
- Opening Day: Replace staff opening day and make it available for student at the beginning of fall and spring semesters. It was clarified that the Fall FLEX Schedule will be conducted in a conference style setting with an orientation scheduled on Mental Health & the Stigma on campus.
- Extending student services office hours: To later in the evening to accommodate more

- students commuting from areas outside of SCV.
- Safe Areas for students: Create an “Oasis” or “Sleep Pods” similar to those being offered at various CSU’s and at the Hart District to allow students a safe quiet place to destress and rest.
 - Compile a list tips and tricks for all faculty: This list will help faculty make students feel more comfortable in their classrooms and help open up that dialogue.
 - Create a Faculty Resource Team: This team would allow other faculty to talk to other faculty in an emergency situation or to get advice about how to proceed with a student’s academic issue. Behavioral issues should still be referred to the BIT Team.

G. Adjournment: 6:30pm