

Stockton Breaks the Silence on Suicide with a Series of Prevention Week Activities Oct. 2-7

The Resiliency Project Shares Student Stories in a Documentary Set to Debut Oct. 3 Followed by a Reflection Session with the Students Filmed

For Immediate Release; [Watch](#) the Documentary Trailer

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Galloway, N.J. – Stockton University is breaking the silence that surrounds suicide, the number two leading cause of death for college students, to reduce the stigma of mental health with a series of free, public events during Suicide Prevention Week, **Oct. 2-7**.

“People are uncomfortable talking about suicide and mental health,” said Taylor Adams, former president of Stockton’s Active Minds student chapter. We might not ask someone if he or she is suicidal because it seems really confrontational and abrasive, but that’s exactly what we have to do, she explained.

Suicide Prevention Week provides resources and information about mental health, opportunities for individuals to share their stories, training, speakers and events that reduce the stigma surrounding mental health—all of which help those affected build courage, heal and become advocates to help others. The week was planned by Nathan Morell, assistant director of Counseling Services, with the Suicide Prevention Team, Spread the Love Foundation of Mays Landing, the Mental Health Association of Atlantic County, the Stockton Active Minds student chapter and representatives from across the campus. “This initiative is everyone’s project and a community-wide effort. We are loving this dream of a suicide-free community into reality together. There are specific events for high-risk groups such as veterans and the LGBTQ community,” said Morell.

The week begins on **Sunday, Oct. 2**, with a candle-lit suicide prevention walk on the Galloway campus at dusk followed by an open mic healing session and a chalk-out stigma project where participants can write positive messages with glow-in-the-dark sidewalk chalk donated by Viking Electric.

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Greta Parrott Schwartz, a mother, former actor and the owner of Red Sky Cafe in Seaville, N.J., walked 80 miles this spring to New Jersey's capital with a coffin to raise awareness of mental health after hearing former Rhode Island congressman Patrick Kennedy speak at Stockton University last November. She will join students for their suicide prevention walk on Oct. 2.

Over the summer, six Stockton students bravely shared their personal experiences with mental health during the production of a documentary, The Resiliency Project, directed by Kent Green, a professional services specialist in Production Services. The students chose to break the silence by sharing their own stories, hoping that their voices and experiences will help decrease mental health stigma, prevent suicide and give others the courage to seek help. The documentary will premiere on **Monday, Oct. 3** at 6 p.m. followed by a reflection session with the featured students and Kent Green.

Reaching out to men and encouraging mental health support is a focus this year with a "Men and Mental Health" panel event on **Tuesday, Oct. 4** at 4:30 p.m. discussing the signs and symptoms of mental illness and how to de-escalate a crisis with interactive scenarios.

Event speakers include Pablo Campos, a member of the Active Minds Speakers Bureau, on **Oct. 5** and Assemblyman Bob Andrzejczak on **Oct. 6**. Campos, who attempted suicide in high school, will discuss cultural challenges, his road to recovery and how the absence of discussion or education about mental health in his childhood led to risky behaviors. Andrzejczak, a veteran whose left leg was amputated after a grenade explosion in the Iraq war, will be joined by Stockton Theater Club members who collaborated with the Stockton Student Veteran Organization to perform monologues sharing veteran suicide stories.

Throughout the week, depression screenings will be available in the E-Wing Gallery outside the Library along with interactive tables distributing resources and information and a display of artwork focusing on the theme of courage and healing.

In August, Gov. Chris Christie signed into law the Madison Holleran Suicide Prevention Act requiring colleges and universities in New Jersey to offer 24/7 suicide prevention support. Stockton offers staff counselors in the Wellness Center and Residential Life staff who can help students during regular hours with the Stockton Police Department available to respond to emergencies around the clock. A website, www.stockton.edu/suicideprevention, offers a number of statewide and national hotlines and resources available 24/7.

Suicide Prevention Week Event Listings

Sunday, Oct. 2, 5:45 p.m.

Starts at the Lodge at Lakeside, Galloway Campus (Campus Center Event Room if raining)
Suicide Prevention Walk

Monday-Thursday, Oct. 3-6, 10:30 a.m.- 4 p.m.

E-Wing Gallery

Depression screenings and interactive tabling

Monday, Oct. 3, 6-8 p.m.

Campus Center Theatre

The Resiliency Project documentary screening and reflection session

Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 4-5, 10:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

E-Wing Gallery

"The Courage to Heal" art contest voting

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Tuesday, Oct. 4, 4:30-5:45 p.m.
Campus Center Meeting Room 5
Men and Mental Health Panel

Wednesday, Oct. 5, 8 p.m.
Campus Center Theatre
Active Minds Speaker Pablo Campos

Thursday, Oct. 6, 4:30-5:45 p.m.
Campus Center Meeting Room 5
Student Stories

Thursday, Oct. 6, 6-8 p.m.
Campus Center Theatre
Veteran Monologues and speaker Assemblyman Bob Andrzejczak

Thursday, Oct. 6, 8-10 p.m.
Campus Center Coffeehouse
Acoustic Music: "Support, Educate, Love"

Friday, Oct. 7 and 21, 8:30-5 p.m.
Townsend Residential Life Center on Oct. 7 and the Lodge at Lakeside Oct. 21
Mental Health Aid Training

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