March 27, 2013

Out of the Darkness Campus Walk will step up awareness of depression, suicide

Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among college students – and can be prompted by untreated depression.

Sacramento State’s Active Minds Peer Health Educators and Student Health & Counseling Services have teamed up with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) to present the second annual Out of the Darkness Campus Walk fundraiser Thursday, April 4.

To date, 53 teams – in excess of 600 people – representing campus clubs, organizations, departments and the Sacramento-area community have signed up and raised more than $11,000 for AFSP.

The 1.5-mile walk begins at 6 p.m. on The WELL lawn. Check-in starts at 4 p.m.

Representatives from 25 community mental health organizations will be on hand for the Mental Health Fair from 2 to 4 p.m., and, at 5:30 p.m., Nielsen Gabriel, executive vice president of Associated Students, Inc., and Katie Williams, a Sac State student representing Sacramento County’s Stop Stigma Sacramento Speakers Bureau, will address the crowd.

Williams, a psychology major, is the first recipient of the President Alexander and Gloria Gonzalez Public Service and Community Leadership Scholarship. She knows firsthand the pain of depression.

“I've had two friends who were suicidal approach me,” she says. “Both are safe now. People who are suicidal, what they need to know is that there is help out there and that they are not alone. I have suffered from depression and been suicidal.”

Online registration for the walk continues until 3 p.m. Wednesday, April 3. Walkers can sign up in person beginning at 4 p.m. April 4.

To register and learn more about the Campus Walk, visit its website. For media assistance, contact Sacramento State’s Office of Public Affairs at (916) 278-6156.

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