University at Albany

Program Name: UAlbany STEPS
Grantee Website: University at Albany website [1]
Program Website: Project STEPS website [2]
Grant Type: Garrett Lee Smith Campus
Grant Status: Active
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State: New York

The University at Albany, State University of New York (UAlbany) proposes to meet the unique and increasingly complex needs of its undergraduate and graduate students who are at high risk for suicide and substance abuse through the enhancement of its nationally-recognized STEPS Comprehensive Prevention Program, listed in SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) and recipient of over ten national awards for behavioral health innovation. Project activities will include: 1) development, implementation, and evaluation of an interactive online audience-specific and responsive gatekeeper training program that addresses the needs, concerns, and subcultures of our diverse campus stakeholders, so that each of these audiences may respond effectively to students with mental and behavioral health problems, including suicide risk and substance abuse, and; 2) enhancement, implementation, and evaluation of the University's existing innovative, evidence-based substance abuse Screening and Brief Intervention (SBI) protocol for alcohol abuse to include concurrent screening for depression, anxiety, marijuana, the non-medical use of prescription drugs, and opioid use.

The objectives of the UAlbany STEPS Program training, educational and screening enhancements will 1) reduce rates of student suicide, suicide attempts, substance abuse, and related mental/behavioral health problems; 2) increase access to and utilization of campus mental health, substance abuse, and related primary care services by the undergraduate and graduate students in most need of them, and 3) increase consultations and referrals of students in need of mental health and substance abuse services by faculty, staff, administrators, and students who have participated in online audience-specific gatekeeper training. Project initiatives and programs will reach 21,000 individuals, including UAlbany undergraduate and graduate students as well as campus administrators, faculty, and staff members. This project has been developed through a strategic planning process involving a diverse cross-section of the target population as well as a Project Institutionalization Council of key campus and community partners and stakeholders in response to a critical service need at the University as documented by assessment survey data and records of critical incidents, including the occurrence of three completed suicides and three substance abuse-related deaths during the past five years. Building on its long history of commitment and national leadership...
in both the suicide prevention and alcohol and substance abuse prevention fields, as well as its successful work and significant progress under two prior SAMHSA GLS Campus Suicide Prevention Grants in FY 2005 and 2008, UAlbany has prepared for project implementation by expanding existing collaborative partnerships with a number of groups on and off campus, including members of the target population of both undergraduate and graduate college students, as well as the community-based Capital District Psychiatric Center/Albany County Crisis Unit and Mobile Crisis Team.

Links within this resource

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