Montclair State University

Program Name: Project SAVER
Grant Type: Hispanic Serving Institution
Grant Status: Active
Year Awarded: 2017
State: New Jersey

Project Suicide Awareness Violence Education and Response (Project SAVER) aims to build and support sustainable infrastructure for suicide and violence prevention at Montclair State University (MSU) and throughout campuses across New Jersey (NJ) by establishing The University and College Alliance for Prevention of Suicide (UCAPS). This statewide collaborative will inform and support all institutions of higher education in NJ as well as MSU, a diverse public institution of higher education located in Montclair, NJ, 14 miles from New York City. MSU is listed as one of Campus Pride's top 25 LGBTQ-Friendly Colleges and Universities and designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution. The University's nine colleges and schools serve more than 20,000 undergraduate and graduate students with more than 300 doctoral, master's and baccalaureate level programs.

In addition to establishing UCAPS, Project SAVER endeavors to:

(1) launch a statewide database of referral resources that MSU students and other universities can access,
(2) implement gatekeeper training for all MSU staff and faculty,
(3) bolster MSU counseling center clinicians' skills in assessing and treating suicidal ideation and other high risk mental health problems,
(4) augment current outreach via social media and other technology based formats, linking students to crisis supports (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and Crisis Text Line),
(5) implement online psychoeducation and training that assists students in battling stress, anxiety and depression, and
(6) shift campus attitudes toward help seeking and decreasing stigma related to mental illness through public messaging campaigns.

These initiatives aim to provide universal prevention to reach all MSU students through one or more facets of Project SAVER, engage all MSU staff and faculty in gatekeeper training by the end of grant funding, and extend the reach of this project to students and staff at universities and colleges across New Jersey through the UCAPS consortium.

Goals and objectives of this project will be evaluated using both quantitative data (data from electronic medical records, surveys, questionnaires, and analytics provided by social media and other web based programs) and qualitative data (Suicide Prevention Committee/UCAPS feedback as well as interviews with and reports from students, faculty/staff, and JED Campus experts). While the majority of Project SAVER programs are intended to reach and impact all MSU students, it is estimated that at least 25% of MSU students (~5,000) will be directly served by one or more components of the proposed project.