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## **CaIMHSA Program Partner Spotlight**

### **Statewide Student Mental Health Prevention and Early Intervention Project**

### **California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the Foundation for California Community Colleges**

With 112 campuses and 2.4 million students, California's Community Colleges are the largest system of higher education in the nation. Through partnership with CaIMHSA, the California Community College Student Mental Health Program (CCC SMHP) is deploying prevention and early intervention (PEI) strategies that will impact every student in this diverse system. The CCC SMHP has multiple components, including grants for developing innovative campus programs that can be replicated system-wide, offering technical support for campuses to strengthen current and future mental health service offerings, focusing on special populations, such as student veterans and foster youth, with unique needs and opportunities to benefit from campus-based PEI services.

CaIMHSA's Student Mental Health Partnership empowers California's Community Colleges to meet the mental health program and training needs of the nation's largest, diverse system of higher education by:

- Providing technical assistance and training to 106 colleges, amounting to 1,017 days of training for faculty, staff, students and county and community partners.
- Offering on-site training for 1,000 participants and web-based training for over 500 individuals.

The reach of this unique partnership is evident in a monthly electronic newsletter distributed to over 1,200 individuals and the project website, which receives over 2,300 visitors in a given month.

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) and the Foundation for California Community Colleges (FCCC) are delivering the CCC SMHP in a unique partnership that brings together program and fiscal oversight for the program, and a flexible implementation structure.

#### **Campus Based Grants**

The CCC SMHP selected 23 California community college campuses or consortia of campuses (representing a total of 30 campuses) for grants that expand and enhance campuses' PEI capacity to address the mental health PEI needs of their students, faculty, and staff. Through the grants, CCC campuses are implementing peer-to-peer support programs, suicide prevention, and training faculty and staff to address mental

health challenges on their campuses. The grant program is intended to have benefits far beyond the 30 campuses that received direct funding, as model programs, services, strategies and tools are shared system-wide as well as with campuses in the California State University and University of California systems.



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Effective partnerships with local county mental health, community, and regional campus partners are a foundation of the grant program:

- Santa Rosa Junior College’s “Sustainable Student Peer Support Coalition” is deploying its CalMHSAs grant to build a campus-wide coalition to raise awareness of mental health resources, conduct suicide prevention outreach, offer Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) suicide prevention trainings, and conduct suicide prevention event in partnership with the Sonoma County Mental Health Department.
- Modesto Junior College’s “Weaving Mental Health Services” project coordinates effective campus-based response to the growing need of students with mental health concerns, with a special emphasis on veterans, foster youth, and low-income students. With the campus’ grant, college partners with Stanislaus Behavioral Health & Recovery Services to deliver Mental Health First Aid and QPR trainings to faculty and staff. Regional partnerships with Columbia College and California State University, Stanislaus connect faculty and staff on a dialogue around stigma and discrimination, as well as culturally responsive methods and best practices to improve mental health on campus.

View a list of all the campus-based grantees, and their unique programs [here](#).

### Statewide Training and Technical Assistance

The CCC SMHP Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) component assists campuses in implementing PEI programs that meet mental health needs of students, and are sustainable in the long term. TTA is tailored to each campus’ unique needs and may include consultation on developing new or strengthening current student mental health systems, protocols, and procedures, or engaging county and community partners. The CCC SMHP also assists in

#### Relevant & Empowering Suicide Prevention Training for Faculty:

*“The situations and discussions are similar to what I have personally experienced.”*

*“When I made a good choice, it helped to boost my confidence and made me feel like I could really do this. Seeing options that I wouldn’t choose also helped me know I was on the right path.”*

establishing or maintaining student mental health support teams, provides expert trainers and presenters for customized student mental health trainings to faculty and staff, and in reaching underserved student populations and building cultural competency on campuses system-wide.

All California community colleges, campus based grants recipients, and CCC student mental health partners (e.g. county mental health, campus health services and mental health professionals, and other referral and/or provider partners) are all eligible to receive TTA, enabling every campus the opportunity to improve student mental health.



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Campuses can request technical assistance or training by visiting [www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org](http://www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org), calling toll free (855) 304-1647, or emailing [SMHP-info@cars-rp.org](mailto:SMHP-info@cars-rp.org).

### **Suicide Prevention Training for Faculty and Staff**

The CCC SHMP Suicide Prevention Training component provides online training, available at no cost to every CCC campus through Kognito Interactive, to boost the knowledge, skills and abilities of faculty, staff and key student populations. Through role-playing simulations, faculty and staff and student leaders are learning to identify signs of psychological distress, how to approach and talk with an at-risk individual and how to make a successful referral. A customized Veterans on Campus training presents faculty and staff with typical challenges faced by student veterans so they are better able to assist and refer students to appropriate support services.

### **Program Evaluation**

The CCC SMHP has a robust evaluation and quality assurance component to assess implementation of the CCC SMHP's anticipated outcomes. The Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation conducts program evaluations in alignment with RAND's statewide evaluation plan for CaIMHSA's PEI initiatives.

### **Transition Aged Foster Youth Project**

The CCC SMHP's partnership with CaIMHSA has expanded the capacity of California's existing community college-based foster youth training programs. To help address the mental health needs of Transition Age Foster Youth (TAFY) students, a new curriculum was designed to help TAFY students realize their own abilities and strengths, and to empower them to reach a higher state of health and well being as they make their successful transitions into adulthood. Twenty-five colleges received funds to implement the new curriculum, and all materials produced, including syllabi, workbooks, and peer and counselor guides are available to any organizations or individuals serving the TAFY population, including higher education partners within the SMHP initiative and county mental health and PEI partners.

#### **Students See Real-Life Application in Suicide Prevention Training:**

*"I liked the detailed interpersonal communications concepts that are helpful to soften statements when communicating."*

*"...it can prepare you to interact with a fellow student who is under a lot of stress or dealing with other psychological issues."*

*"It helped show me new ways in which I can help a friend get through at stressful situations, and questions that can help a friend open up."*

**The collaboration between the CCC SMHP, educational settings, county services, and the community at large, form the foundation of programs that will be sustainable and able to reduce gaps in mental health services for all of California's community college students.**



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For more information on resources or programs from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the Foundation for California Community Colleges, visit <http://www.cccco.edu/mentalhealth>, <http://www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org>, or contact Betsy Sheldon, Program Coordinator at [bsheldon@ccco.edu](mailto:bsheldon@ccco.edu) or (916) 322-4004, or Colleen Ammerman at [cammerman@foundationccc.org](mailto:cammerman@foundationccc.org) or (916) 325-8572.