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Date: October 5, 2011
For Immediate Release

NJ Community Colleges Promote Mental Health Awareness

TRENTON, N.J.—During the first week of October, New Jersey’s 19 community colleges, in partnership with the Governor’s Council on Mental Health Stigma, will hold events designed to generate awareness about mental health among community college students.

“We applaud the New Jersey Council of County Colleges and all the participating students, faculty and administrators for this extraordinary effort,” said Stigma Council Executive Director Celina Gray. “This first-ever series of statewide mental health awareness events is yet another inspiring collaboration with New Jersey’s community colleges, critical partners for the state’s Department of Human Services and the Council in raising awareness and combating stigma.”

Mental health awareness events at the community colleges will take place on Thursday, Oct. 6th (unless otherwise noted). The events include:

- 1 **Atlantic Cape Community College** – Mental Health Awareness Day will take place from 12:30 to 3 p.m. in Café B, with a panel of mental health experts discussing the services in Atlantic and Cape May counties.
- 1 **Bergen Community College** – “Turning Points” will feature performances from the Reflections Theatre Group and a panel discussion with students, alumni, parents, faculty

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and mental health professionals from 8:30 a.m. to noon in the Moses Family Meeting and Training Center.

- 1 **Brookdale Community College** – National Depression Screening Day will offer a free and confidential screening available in the Student Health Center, Room MAC 112, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- 1 **Burlington County College** –The weekly Mental Health Fair will feature yoga, massages and blood pressure screening.
- 1 **Camden County College** – Two events will be hosted at the Blackwood campus, the first being a discussion on domestic rights and healthy relationships at 11 a.m. The second event, taking place at 1 p.m., will discuss the negative effects of college drinking and partying.
- 1 **Cumberland County College** – Throughout the day, there will be community presentations on anxiety, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and coping skills.
- 1 **Essex County College** – The College is holding a “De-stress Fest” on Wednesday, Oct. 19, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the J. Harry Smith Hall on its Newark campus. The highlight of the afternoon will be a discussion at 1 p.m. on "Leadership and Motivation" lead by personal development expert Dion Johnson. The "Fest" also features depression screenings, stress relief techniques, support information for single parents, and other activities that focus on leading a healthy lifestyle.

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- 1 **Gloucester County College** – “Live Well! It’s essential for your potential!” will take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Student Assistance Center (SAC) will host an Open House with tips for living well and mental health awareness, along with free chair massages and light refreshments.
- 1 **Hudson County Community College** – Wellness Week will focus on physical and mental health, and include relaxation tips, massages, yoga, and Pilates.
- 1 **Mercer County Community College** – “Healthy Haven” will feature a life coach’s discussion on health and well-being on Monday, Oct. 3, at noon in the John P. Hanley Student Center Room 104. A free yoga class will be offered at 5:30 p.m. in the Fitness Center, Room 22. On Oct. 6, the MCCC Student Activities Office and National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) will host "In Our Own Voice" Mental Health Workshop at noon in the Conference Center, Room 213.
- 1 **Middlesex County College** – A series of events is set for the day, and includes two speakers discussing wellness. There will also be nutrition demonstrations, stress related workshops, and dance, comedy, and music events.
- 1 **County College of Morris** – “The De-stress Fest” will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 4, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Student Community Center. It will feature a scavenger hunt, an African drum circle and several panel discussions on anxiety, depression and nutrition. The college will also offer massages, yoga and meditation tips.
- 1 **Ocean County College** – The College will host community groups throughout the week, in addition to ongoing outreach by the counseling center.

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- 1 **Passaic County Community College** – Agencies will host workshops on stress management and time management with additional discussions on disability services and student success.
- 1 **Raritan Valley Community College** – “Mental Health Awareness Day” will include community agency information tables and a panel of students who have dealt with mental health issues.
- 1 **Salem Community College** – “Wellness Day: Mind and Body” will take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Student Union, Donaghay Hall. The College will emphasize the impact a healthy mind and body has on student success by collaborating with various Salem County agencies and the student nursing organization.
- 1 **Sussex County Community College** – “National Depression Screening Day” will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Student Center. The event will feature mental health screenings for depression, bipolar disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and PTSD.
- 1 **Union County College** – The College will host fairs on three different campuses, and include community agency services related to mental health.
- 1 **Warren County Community College** – Community agencies will offer service listings, stress management, time management, and peer mentoring.

“New Jersey’s community colleges are pleased to help raise awareness about mental health stigma,” said Dr. Lawrence A. Nespoli, NJCCC president. “Educating community college students on mental health issues will help support a community effort to combat mental health stigma.”

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The mission of the Governor's Council on Mental Health Stigma is to combat mental health stigma as a top priority in New Jersey's effort to create a better mental health system. Through the Council's outreach and education initiative, A Community Effort, the Council works with community partners statewide to raise awareness, and to send a message that mental health stigma must no longer be tolerated: "Mental Illness Does Not Discriminate – Only People Do."

The New Jersey Council of County Colleges is the state association representing New Jersey's 19 community colleges. As an independent, trustee-headed organization that joins the leadership of trustees and presidents, the Council is the voice of the community college sector before the state legislature and other branches of government. The Council is also the state coordinating organization for all community colleges in New Jersey.