Mental Health Awareness Month Resolution

"A resolution to recognize May as Mental Health Awareness Month"

Action Taken: PASSED

Certified By: Zachary McCue
Speaker of the Senate

Date Passed: June 18th, 2020

Introduced By: Iman Ahmed, Diversity & Inclusion Chair, Off-Campus Caucus
Aariana Myles, Off-Campus Caucus
Mariana Montes, Liberal Arts Caucus
David Garcia, Off-Campus Caucus
Brendan Ramirez, College of Education and Human Development

Sponsored By: Collin Tran, Health Science Center Caucus
Dang Dang, Off-Campus Caucus
Michael Garcia, Off-Campus Caucus

Whereas(1): Since 1949\(^1\), May has been observed as Mental Health Awareness Month in the United States. This initiative has been led by Mental Health America and its associates to creating awareness and reducing the stigma around mental health; and,

Whereas(2): Stigmas not only impact a person's willingness to ask for help, but can also worsen an individual's existing condition. While it is estimated that a 25% of Americans will face a mental illness in a given year, experts claim that stigma around asking for help prevents an accurate count, making the real estimate closer to 33%\(^2\); and,

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\(^{1}\) https://www.mhanational.org/mental-health-month
Whereas(3): According to the CDC\textsuperscript{3} Texas has seen a steady increase of suicide rates since 2012 and currently exceeds the national average for suicide among people of ages 15-24. Texas also exceeds the national average for suicide among black and hispanic communities; and,

Whereas(4): According to the American College Health Assessment\textsuperscript{4}, 24.4\% and 12.3\% of TAMU Students reported that anxiety and depression affects their academic performance, respectively; and,

Whereas(5): Texas A&M University’s Student Counseling Services was established in 1982 when it joined with the former Academic Counseling Center to create a unit that would address academic, career and personal counseling. But as of July 2019, it has been renamed\textsuperscript{5} as Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) to accurately reflect all the services they offer; and,

Whereas(6): In Fall 2009, Texas A&M University’s Disability Resources\textsuperscript{6} served 216 students with mental health diagnoses. This number has consistently risen since then, with 1,022 students being served as of Fall 2019; and,

Whereas(7): Dr. Farzan Sasangohar\textsuperscript{7}, an assistant professor in the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering, is currently leading a research team in the development of a wearable software program to help manage a person’s mental health and overcome the stigma associated with mental health treatment. The pilot program is called “Mental Health Evaluation and Lookout” or “mHELP”; and,

Whereas(9): Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CAPS has adjusted to physical distancing guidelines by having phone consultations and have provided students with many resources\textsuperscript{8} regarding how to cope with mental health during this time. With that, this year’s theme for Mental Health Awareness Month is #Tools2Thrive\textsuperscript{1}, chosen in response to “an unprecedented anxiety” centered around the COVID-19 global pandemic; and,

\textsuperscript{3} https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/annual/measure/Suicide/state/TX
\textsuperscript{4} https://studentlife.tamu.edu/hp/topics/mental-health/
\textsuperscript{5} https://today.tamu.edu/2019/07/09/student-counseling-service-name-change-reflects-broad-array-of-services/
\textsuperscript{6} https://disability.tamu.edu/statistics/#DiagnosesByCat
\textsuperscript{7} https://engineering.tamu.edu/news/2020/02/new-wearable-tool-helps-manage-mental-health.html
\textsuperscript{8} https://caps.tamu.edu/mental-health-coping-during-covid-19/
Therefore  
Let it be  
**Resolved(1):** The 73rd Session of Student Senate recognizes May as Mental Health Awareness Month; and,

Let it be  
Further  
**Resolved(2):** The 73rd Session of Student Senate recognizes the importance for Aggies to stay safe during these difficult times and looks forward to continuing engagement with student leaders, University officials, faculty, and staff in order to promote mental health initiatives on campus; and,

Let it be  
Further  
**Resolved(3):** The 73rd Session of Student Senate extends its support to all Aggies facing mental health struggles and urges Aggies to end the stigma surrounding mental health; and,

Let it be  
Further  
**Resolved(4):** The 73rd Session of Student Senate encourages all Aggies who struggle with mental health to utilize university resources such as Counseling & Psychological Services (caps.tamu.edu) and Disability Resources (disability.tamu.edu) to access services and accommodations. Other sources include reaching out to HelpLine at 979-845-2700 for after-hours mental health services and the use of the Sanvello mobile application; and,

Let it be  
Further  
**Resolved(5):** A copy of this resolution be sent to:  
  Dr. Daniel J. Pugh Sr., Vice President of Student Affairs  
  Dr. Mary Ann Covey, Counseling & Psychological Services Director  
  Kristie Orr, Disability Resources Director  
  HelpLine  
  The Battalion
Further Sponsored By: Hannah Spurr, Speaker Pro Tempore, Off-Campus Caucus
Sam Jefferis, Academic Affairs Chair, Engineering Caucus
Cole Allen, Mays Caucus
Emily Lucas, College of Education Caucus
Meghan Hein, Rules & Regulations Chair, C.O.A.L.S Caucus
Fawaz Syed, Student Services Chair, Engineering Caucus
Brogan Gunia, Off-Campus Caucus
Michael McKnight, Off-Campus Caucus
Joshua Feldman, Legislative Relations Chair, Off-Campus Caucus
Chandler Trosclair, On Campus Caucus
Mikayla Nasis, On Campus Caucus
Sofia Chunga Pizarro, Off-Campus Caucus
Carly Oldag, Community Relations Chair,
Jocelyn Marrufo, Liberal Arts Caucus
Kerri Marbut, Executive Director of Operations
Ximena Reynoso, Liberal Arts Caucus
Joseph Rodgers, Off-Campus Caucus
Clarissa Rodriguez, Constituency Affairs Chair, Engineering Caucus
Kieran Tillis, Engineering Caucus
Alexia Hernandez, Liberal Arts Caucus
Blake Martin, Liberal Arts Caucus
Jack Merritt, On Campus Caucus