

## **MSTC Staff Proactive in Suicide Prevention**

MSTC's *Department of Student Affairs* takes a number of proactive steps to help students become more aware of the signs of suicide and steps they can take if they or someone they know are suicidal. Furthermore, the importance of knowing there is help for someone with depression or other mental health disorders is also a message stressed by counselors and disability service coordinators at the college.

Each year staff members from the *Department of Student Affairs* offer a powerful presentation on Suicide Prevention to every section of Introduction to Psychology offered at the various MSTC campuses. For students not required to take Introduction to Psychology, the presentation is also offered during a student activity hour or during a more specific program course in our efforts to capture as many students as possible.

These presentations open with a dialogue about why the incidence of suicide is greater for those attending college. Thanks to the *American Foundation for Suicide Prevention*, a video titled ***The Truth About Suicide*** is shared with the class. This 25 minute documentary highlights the signs and symptoms of depression, as well as the signs of suicide and the resources available to help those who are suicidal. In addition, the film helps the audience recognize what they can do if someone they know is suffering from depression or is suspected of being suicidal.

Discussion follows the film highlighting some of the key points from the video. Students are often shocked to learn how many other students in the class have already been touched by suicide in one way or another. The connection to the film is made again by helping students recognize that there is something they can do to help themselves or someone they know who might be suffering from depression or is suicidal. Students are then provided with a list of resources which includes the following:

- ACT Now to Stop a Suicide:
  - What to look for and what to do if you are concerned about someone
- 24 Hour Crisis Intervention phone numbers
- MSTC resources including
  - MSTC Student Affairs Office: 715-422-5445
  - <http://www.mstc.edu/students/counseling.htm> with links to
    - Alcohol screening tests
    - Alcohol self-assessment tools
    - Quick Inventory of Depressive Symptomology
    - Wakefield screening test for depression
    - Test Yourself – Anxiety self-assessment
- Connect on Campus: <http://www.mstc.edu/pdf/supportservicesstaff.pdf>

The feedback noted on the class evaluations has been very positive year after year which in turn tells us that this is a very worthwhile cause to continue here at Mid-State Technical College.

Additional information on Suicide Prevention and the Video ***The Truth about Suicide*** can be found at <http://www.afsp.org/>