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Student-Led Organization, Active Minds, Focuses on Mental Health at Triton College

National Nonprofit Organization Hopes to Encourage Students to Reprioritize Mental Health

RIVER GROVE, Ill. – Triton College’s student-led mental health organization, Active Minds, encourages students to reprioritize their emotional well-being. Active Minds is the nation’s premier nonprofit organization to support mental health awareness and education for young adults.

The group meets weekly during the fall and spring semesters in Student Services, Room B-240.

According to Triton counselor Sandra Berryhill, the Active Minds organization is on more than 600 campuses and reaches more than 1.9 million students each year through campus awareness campaigns, events and advocacy.

“Active Minds helps change the conversation when it comes to mental health among young adults,” said Berryhill. “It reduces the stigma associated with mental health conditions and establishes a culture of caring on college and university campuses.”

On Triton’s campus, Active Minds shares information about mental health such as understanding stress, anxiety, bipolar disorder and depression. The group also leads Validate-Appreciate-Refer training, or V-A-R training, which is Active Minds’ everyday tool for conversation.

Berryhill explained that the organization reviews school policy to improve campus mental health support and hosts events where students can share their story.

“A majority of mental illnesses start between ages of 14 and 24 when teens and young adults are in school,” she said. “Suicide is the second leading cause of death for college students.”

Going forward, Berryhill hopes Active Minds is a way to promote the mental well-being for students. She wants it to provide opportunities for staff to engage in important conversations and meaningful activities surrounding mental health.

“One of the most beneficial aspects of getting involved with Active Minds is that it offers students the chance to develop and build skills that they wouldn’t get otherwise,” she said.

Active Minds was founded by Alison Malmon when she was a junior at the University of Pennsylvania following the suicide of her older brother, Brian.

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ABOUT TRITON COLLEGE

Triton College is a two-year college dedicated to helping members of the 25 Western Cook County communities in our district and beyond to achieve educational, professional and personal success. Located in River Grove, IL, Triton offers more than 110 degree and certificate programs on its 110-acre campus, featuring a comfortable, friendly and diverse atmosphere. Triton holds classes at several satellite locations as well and offers online learning opportunities. Triton’s

dedicated faculty and staff work to provide high quality, convenient and affordable educational opportunities to more than 12,000 students each year. Triton College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Learn more at www.triton.edu.