

Sept. 29, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

[Community Wellbeing and Health Promotion](#) is pleased to share some exciting updates. First, you may notice we have a new name for our department. Through assessment, we learned that students most often equated the word “wellness” with fitness, physical health, or self-care products for purchase. Images used in conjunction with the term “wellness” most often feature white-identified individuals. The term was not inclusive of the students we work with nor fitting for the breadth of work that our team facilitates.

In addition to a new name, we also have a new staff member – Lydia Goff who is Bentley’s inaugural mental health promotion specialist. Lydia will create and strengthen mental health resources and outreach programs for our students and the community members who support them.

Lydia has already begun to assist with the implementation of several new projects to learn more about the interests and needs of our community with regards to mental health including:

- **Healthy Minds Study** – Next week, our students will receive an invitation to participate in a confidential, web-based survey that uses validated measures to provide us with information about the prevalence of mental health outcomes, student attitudes about mental health and service utilization.
- **JEDCampus** – We engaged in a four-year partnership with the [Jed Foundation](#) to improve student mental health and well-being. As a Jed Campus, we are joining over 600 other colleges and universities in a multi-year strategic initiative to review our policies, programs and campus needs related to mental health, suicide prevention, overall wellbeing, and substance abuse prevention. JED’s work is innovative, inclusive, and critically important to a university’s mission.
- **Kognito** – this web-based interactive program includes exercises to help participants feel more confident in their ability to speak with somebody who may be struggling with their mental health. Kognito provides virtual simulation training scenarios that allow users to engage in conversations regarding social, emotional, and physical health. You will be hearing more about Kognito and how to log in soon.
- **Active Minds** – though not affiliated with this role, several students are working to bring this new student organization to Bentley to start a campus-wide conversation about mental health and provide educational programs and events. Active Minds is a national organization that focuses on decreasing mental health stigma.

Besides these important initiatives around mental health, Mallory Loggins, our health promotion specialist, is overseeing key programs and initiatives around sexual health, reproductive justice, sleep, and safer substance use. This year, Mallory will also coordinate a photovoice assessment project to provide students with a more inclusive medium for sharing feedback about their health or experiences with health and well-being. Mallory also oversees one of our two peer education groups, the WEs

(Wellbeing Educators) who provide peer-to-peer education on topics that impact student health and academic success.

Olivia Gentry, our MPH graduate intern from Boston University is coordinating a new safer sex supplies access program called Falc Yeah. She will also be looking at campus data to identify and coordinate needs-based interventions for her practicum project.

Finally, our work in interpersonal violence prevention continues. Along with our colleagues in Student Conduct and University Police, we have completed the Office of Violence Against Women campus grant projects and are excited about the [changes announced by President Chrite](#) in supporting the sustainability of this work. The RSVPs (Relationship + Sexual Violence Prevention Educators) will launch two new workshops this fall. One on boundaries and consent and one on social media's role in disguising unhealthy relationships called Behind the Post. This is in addition to the Bringing in the Bystander, evidence-based training curriculum we introduced last year. They have hosted 6 workshops this last week and we are currently working with our colleagues in Athletics to bring these highly interactive prevention trainings to all our teams this semester in conjunction with the annual White Ribbon hockey game. We will continue to offer additional workshops for other audiences throughout the year.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or any of our team members with questions, suggestions, or concerns--we would love to hear from you.

Most Sincerely,

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