

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH FOR URI STUDENTS

Honors Class HPR 224G-0002

URI Honors Student Advocates: Kaelyn Bamford, Carly Caldarella, Calli Coles, Jessica Daltorio, John Ferguson, Camy Matthews, Amanda Notarantonio

Presented to Vice President Kathy Collins, Dr. Dr. Robert Samuels & Staff (May 1, 2019)

Statistics from the National Institute of Mental Health dictate that one in four young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 have a diagnosable mental illness (<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness.shtml>). This makes college bound students one of the most at risk groups dealing with mental health issues. Most are not being treated, nor do they have access to adequate resources to help them at this crucial point in their young lives.

Therefore, URI Student Advocates met with URI Administrators who were already working to expand mental health services on campus and presented their advocacy.

According to a survey conducted on campus by student advocates, nearly 70% of a polled group admitted to struggling with mental health at some point in college.

In their meeting, students were encouraged to discover that URI administrators were already working on conducting surveys, expanding and improving services to meet students' needs.

In their positive collaborative meeting, URI students discussed the following issues and solutions with Vice President Collins, Dr. Samuels and URI Administrators:

- Increasing counseling center staff.
- Presented research conducted in 2016 found that poor mental health was significantly associated with students dropping out from institutions of higher education (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5024430/>).
- URI student survey conducted indicated that 79% of respondents reported that they have struggled with stress and anxiety during college, 48% have struggled with depression, and 17% have had thoughts of suicide.
- URI student survey conducted indicated that when asked whether students were satisfied with the resources available to them on campus: 36% answered 'yes', with 45% claiming their needs were only partially met, and 20% answering 'no'.

- URI should create online appointment scheduling: Adding this feature will make it easier for students seeking help to plan a meeting for a trained professional. This will cause more students to get the help they need.
- Expand enhanced group treatment programs, such as games, mind-body exercises, or arts. This could be done by partnering with any of the wellness centers on campus to make activities advertised and promoted as mental health support programs at no extra cost to students.
- Improve awareness of mental health services through improved advertisements.
- Reduce wait times.

For more information regarding this advocacy contact:

Amanda at: anotarantonio@my.uri.edu

Camy at: camryn_mathews@my.uri.edu

Carly at: ccaldarella@my.uri.edu

Jessica at: jdaltorio@my.uri.edu

John at: jferguson22@my.uri.edu

Kaelyn at: kaelyn_bamford@my.uri.edu

****THIS IS A SUMMARIZED VERSION OF STUDENTS' PRESENTATION****