STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Raising Awareness for Mental Health Through the Arts



Project Green, Dean College's student-led club that advocates for mental health awareness and a recent grant award recipient from KyleCares, works hard to disperse proper resources to those who need them, and to create opportunities for mental health education and discussion on campus.

Led by students Meg Arrington, Syra Pandey, Sara Finamore and Mackenzie Nazworth, the club's main annual event is the Project Green Showcase. Held in the Guidry Center on campus, the Project Green Showcase provides a creative outlet for individuals to share stories and experiences related to mental health through dance and music on stage, along with visual art such as poetry, creative writing, painting and drawing in an art gallery outside of the performance space.

"I hope the Project Green Showcase allows students to feel less alone. The goal of the club is to break the stigma behind mental health. We are here to facilitate the conversation and we will not be shying away from the taboo subjects. Art is a way to present these ideas in a more digestible way, but these discussions are taking place in our club meetings every week – in a safe space where everyone is welcome to share their feelings and experiences", noted past club President, Meg Arrington '22.

Working closely with MaryAnn Silvestri, M.Ed., LMHC, and Director of Counseling Services, Project Green donates proceeds from the Showcase to Dean College Counseling Services, to be utilized for campus mental health initiatives and various charity donations.

The club also recently hosted a discussion and screening on campus of MY ASCENSION. A suicide attempt left a 16-year old varsity cheerleader in Louisiana, Emma Benoit, paralyzed, and this feature length documentary chronicles Emma's inspiring journey and quest to walk again while she also uses her painful experience to help others find hope and stay alive.