Suicide Awareness Week
Armstrong’s effort to shine light on a dark topic

ACTIVE MINDS PRESENTS “LANTERNS & LYRICS”

The “Pass It On” presentation, the topic of the event “Lanters & Lyrics” on Friday, Sept. 29, showed awareness for those who are victims of suicide. Poems were read, songs were sung and a few people from Active Minds shared their stories about their experiences with suicide, as well as how they believe suicide can be prevented.

Personalized lanterns were made by students early in the day, and each lantern was lit up the night to recognize victims of suicide. Some of the lanterns had beautifully drawn pictures, while other had positive quotes or sayings that touched everyone in attendance.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among people ages 20-24. One in 12 college students in the United States plans suicide. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention claims that every day, approximately 80 American college students take their lives and 1,500 American college students attempt to do so, which may not sound like a lot but 80 people a day piles up very quickly, and especially so considering that the statistic only applies to college students in America.

I asked the Active Minds group questions about how suicide awareness can become a more important topic among college students.

“Definitely some more lectures would be great. More events on it, maybe more groups could get together with us, we could do a play about it, etc. Any organization that is willing to work with us to bring these type of events to [Armstrong] because it’s definitely a very silent thing, and it definitely needs to be spread out and talked about…” We definitely need more help from the campus.

Then asked how Active Minds could be more active on the Armstrong campus. To which they responded, “Spreading the awareness. Get involved with us. We have resources from a national point of view because we are a national organization, so we get resources from those who know how to advocate for it. So get involved with us as PEF (Pirates Educating Pirates).” Check your emails because we are always sending something. We are bringing one of our themes forward, Expressing Yourself. To allow people to come out of their comfort zone and speak about suicide and their personal experiences with it. Being part of something that is this powerful.” Pirates Educating Pirates

Active Minds Present “Pass It On”

CHARITY WILLIAMS
STAFF WRITER

On Sept. 29, Armstrong students gathered together in the Solms building to listen to the “Pass BO” presentation, which was centered around suicide prevention. Friday’s event was part of week-long activities that were being held as part of Armstrong’s Suicide Awareness week. While waiting for the presentation to start, students prepared themselves for the session. “I went online and read about the presentation beforehand. I wanted to know what to expect from the presentation,” said one student.

The presentation began at noon and lasted until 1 p.m. “The “Pass It On” presentation brought the Active Minds, an on campus mental health organization. Active Minds is an organization designed for our students. They are dedicated to empowering students to speak out about mental health and to encourage help seeking behavior.

Speakers, Liz Kersey, president of Active Minds, and Sakile Johnson, an event coordinator of Active Minds, both led the presentation as they first started the discussion with statistics about suicide. Some statistics included that there are more than 1,000,000 health care professionals who deal with mental health each year on campuses and that suicide is the third leading cause for teens and adults.

Becca Bussard, a junior nursing major, came out to share her support and also knowing how important it is that Armstrong hosts these kinds of events for college students, “It sheds light on the issue,” Bussard said. “It’s especially important when you are at an age when so much is on your shoulders.”

Many students showed up for the event in droves that resulted in the relocation of the presentation to accommodate the abundant number of students. Although Armstrong students, primarily in the psychology and the nursing fields, were present, there were other students who came to listen and to show their support for the event.

The speakers discussed stigmas concerning mental health. Kersey let students know how important it is to choose their words carefully regarding how they go about talking about suicide. For example, the stigma of victimizing language such as “committed suicide.” As noted by Kersey, “Saying a person ‘committed suicide’ puts a stigma, so we change it by saying ‘lose their lives to…’” Johnson discussed in the presentation “Do’s and Don’ts in Preventing Addiction.” Some Do’s include: do know the risk factors and do stress that suicide is not their only option. Some Don’ts include: don’t demand they seek help and don’t try to solve the problem alone. Because of the nature of the presentation, Kersey gave advice for anyone who chose not to come out of fear of what others would think. “Don’t be afraid. We are all in this together,” Kersey said.

A Pill That’s Hard to Swallow

BRENNAN BASS
STAFF WRITER

On Monday, Sept. 25 at 5:30 p.m., students gathered in the Student Union Ballroom for the third annual “Engaging the Patient Experience” event hosted by Armstrong’s student chapter of the Institute of Health Care Improvement. This year’s speaker was Bill Carruthers, a Savannah local and mental health advocate. He shared his personal experience with addiction and how he overcame that dark time of his life. Instead of dwelling on all the negative experiences in his life, he uses his story to help and inspire others.

Dr. Anne Thompson, Dean of College and Health Professions, opened this event with the mission statement: “We must become more educated, more observing, more dedicated, more observant health professionals.” The opioid addiction rates are continuing to skyrocket within the past decade. With 26.4 to 36 million living with addiction, the question we must ask ourselves is: “Why?”

Part of the problem is pharmaceutical companies using aggressive marketing techniques, but failing to inform the patient of the “Black Box” warning or negative effects this medication could have. Another catalyst for this increase is an abundance of synthetic drugs at the world’s disposal. If a patient is unable to get their prescription, they can find something similar on the street. They’re simply looking for pain relief, but as Dr. Thompson shared, many patients report that they’re still in great pain, but don’t care. Opioids are a highly addictive substance, and over time will reduce natural pain inhibitors your body produces, which creates a dependence for the substance. Carruthers then shared his recovery story. A user since the age of 10, he is now in long term recovery. Carruthers emphasized that some people are simply playing with fire, and they are not bad people. Not everyone has the privilege of having a mother, father, sibs.

Inkwell is the literary magazine of Armstrong State University that promotes creative expression in all its forms. The Inkwell Online is a platform of the Student Union to honor those affected by suicide. Photo by: Mitchell McCrabb.
The department of Art, Music and Theatre presented their first Blackbox show “The Revolutionists” from Sept. 28-Oct. 1 in Jenkins Hall. The historical miniseries and musical “The Revolutionists” was based on the French historical figure that helped the French women’s movement. 

The Theatre Dept. will be presenting its next production “Blithe Spirit” October 26-29 on the Main Stage.

As one of the remaining events of the Armstrong After Dark series, students were treated to a film within a film. Students who attended the department’s movie night event in Compass Point Clubhouse on Sept. 29. The film screening was organized by Housing and Residence Life’s Mentalist event because it was so cool!” explained Eanes. The students also had some ideas for new events they would like to see on campus next. Vislocky and other students agreed that they’d like to see more campus movie night events at Armstrong in the future. As for future movie nights in campus in general, you can let your RA know. You may also voice your opinions at movie nights or events on campus in general, you can let your RA know. You may also voice your opinions at the Residential Student Association meetings on campus.
In lieu of the recent Vegas shooting, what are your thoughts on gun control?
GEORGE ANDERSON
GEORGE-ANNE STAFF

Student Government Association hosted the annual state of the university last night along with President Jamie Hebert and his cabinet to discuss recent happenings in Armstrong consolidation, financial aid and revised schedule.

Backpage

October 5, 2017

THE INKWELL

Chemistry of Recovery

By George Anderson

The new Georgia Southern University perspectives, I can tell you, it’s been a long jour-

ney,” President Hebert said.

There’s also been some fear, some anxiety and some un-

awareness, you can contact Active Minds at activemind-

@ armstrong@gmail.com.

If you want to know more information and apply at

https://www.armstrong.

e.edu/office-at-armstrong-

porate-educating-pirates.

If you believe someone you know is immediately

friend is going through.

During the symposium we also sat down in smaller groups to hear the individual journeys of others. Geoff Pfaff shared his experiences living with mental illness. Grow-

ishing up in the 70s, there was a harsh stereotype for mental illness—he was told to keep his illness to himself. Pfaff now finds support in a local peer group, he can listen and share in a safe environment with others who face the same challenges.

Pfaff says, “It’s important to consider that recovery is a personal choice. We can encor-
gage others to find help if you know someone who is struggling.”

Financial Aid

As Hebert stepped down from the podium leaving the audience on a high-note from what was a mostly inspira-
tional speech, Amy Ballagh, Ph.D. Vice president of stu-
dents and enrollment management, stepped up to the su-

can talk about a seemingly more serious topic, financial aid.

“Since I have the podium, I’m going to go ahead and an-

counter a question that I know

to our university.

Hebert stepped up to the po-
dium to deliver the state of the University address, which consisted heavily of news on Armstrong consolidation, and the future of our “new” university.

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Hebert then announced that a consolidation imple-
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spective.

Ninety-three operational working groups, or subcom-

mittees, were implemented that looked at every area of the university and made rec-
mendations to the consolidation implementation committee about specific consolidation plans.

“We had tremendous in-

put in this process from all

aspects of the university,” Hebert said.

There were 300 recommen-
dations have been made by these subcommittees.

“I can tell you that through these processes, with the people involved in these processes, our focus has been student success throughout,” Hebert said.

The new University will

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“We will set the bar high,

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