

PRESS RELEASE



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October 9, 2007

***Vanier College takes aim at mental illness:
Student designs poster for DEPRESSION AWARENESS WEEK
Counselling Centre offers Depression Screening Day***

Vanier College is very proud that the official poster used this year by all organizations in the Montreal area participating in Depression Awareness activities, was designed by Boris Tzvetkov as part of a final project for students in Vanier's Micropublishing and Hypermedia program.

Teacher Joan Fee Taylor wanted her students to tackle a real rather than a theoretical subject and challenged them to promote Depression Awareness in a way that would effectively communicate the urgency of seeking help for depression. "There were so many different takes on the same topic," says Joan Fee Taylor, "and many very, very good ones." Students had three weeks to conceive and execute the posters which were then submitted to Ami Qu bec which chose the winning poster.

Vanier College has participated in Depression Awareness Week since its earliest days. This year was no exception as Vanier held its 7th annual Depression Screening Day on October 4, 2007. Counsellors from the Counselling Centre conducted screenings while third year students of the Special Care Counselling program provided information.

Depression Screening Day aims to call attention to the prevalence of mental illness in our society and to educate people about its signs and symptoms. The purpose is also to inform people of the availability of effective intervention and to diminish the perceived social stigma of seeking help.

Students suffering from mental health problems often experience serious difficulty concentrating on their studies, to the point of failing courses and/or withdrawing from school. In addition to seriously undermining academic performance, it can lead to alcohol and drug use, and even suicide. According to a recent survey by Statistics Canada, "Teenagers and young people aged between 15 and 24 were most likely to report suffering from the surveyed mental disorders and substance dependence problems."

Initiated by AMI-Quebec, the Depression Screening Day is a joint collaboration of hospitals, CSSSs, CEGEPs, universities and community organizations.

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