

Testimony of Wendy S. Krisak, M.A., NCC, LPC July 13, 2016

Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Murray, and Members of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, I deeply thank you for this opportunity to testify and share the efforts of DeSales University regarding the reduction and prevention of bullying and hazing incidents.

DeSales University is a distinctive institution of higher education. Its culture is based upon its mission of Christian Humanism. DeSales prepares its students not only with a high quality academic education but a character based education as well. Opportunities are created every day for students to explore their vocations, critically think about their value system, and improve their social conscience.

At DeSales University, we not only educate the mind, we educate the heart as well.

The following few pages offer more details about who we are. I assure you that everything from our philosophy and mission through our Heritage and our Character Code, serve as the foundation for our low count of bullying and hazing incidents, and, most certainly, provide the spring board for our continued efforts toward prevention of such behavior.

QUICK FACTS ABOUT DESALES UNIVERSITY:

- University President – Fr. Bernard F. O’Connor, OSFS (July 1999)
- Formally named Allentown College of Saint Francis de Sales (opened in 1965).
- Private, four year Catholic university for men and women.
- Administered by the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales.
- The enrollment for traditional undergraduate day students is 1,597
- Total enrollment (traditional, graduate, and ACCESS adult) is 3,136.
- There are 125 full-time faculty members of which 84% have the highest degree in their field.
- More than 95% of undergraduate, full-time day students receive some form of financial aid.
- Accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE).
- Nineteen athletic teams compete in the NCAA Division III Middle Atlantic States Collegiate Athletic Conference (MAC) and the Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference (ECAC).

PHILOSOPHY OF DESALES UNIVERSITY:

DeSales University is firmly and publicly committed to the principles of Roman Catholic doctrine and morality. It also fully recognizes that the search for truth requires an atmosphere of intellectual freedom and that love demands an openness to all that is good.

DeSales carefully distinguishes between the free pursuit of truth—which it guarantees every member of the campus community—and its own commitment to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

For DeSales University, Christian humanism means that every aspect of human experience is capable of enlightenment by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This Gospel brings light to each dimension of personal existence (physical, intellectual, social, moral, aesthetic, and religious) and every environmental domain (natural world, social institutions, cultural achievements, historical periods, and religious societies).

The encounter between the Word of God and the concrete world of the human person makes a fully meaningful existence possible. DeSales University strives to teach the student what it means to be Christian in a Salesian way, what it means to embrace one's own life, and what it means to bring this Good News to the human family.

MISSION OF DESALES UNIVERSITY:

It is the mission of DeSales University to provide men and women with quality higher education according to the philosophy of Christian humanism as developed by Saint Francis de Sales and his spiritual heirs. The University imparts knowledge about, and develops talents for, personal, familial, and societal living. DeSales University enriches the human community and enhances the dignity of the individual through its educational endeavors. In its work, the University fosters a vital and respectful dialogue between Roman Catholic faith and human culture.

CHARACTER CODE:

“As a member of DeSales University, I will conduct myself in a respectful manner with dignity and honesty in the Salesian tradition of humility and gentleness.”

HERITAGE OF DESALES:

DeSales University is named for a man who lived more than 400 years ago, but whose lessons are still timely and practical for today's world.

St. Francis de Sales is admired throughout the Church for his great sanctity, learnedness, missionary zeal, gentleness, and understanding of the human heart. Scholar, writer, pastor, spiritual guide for souls, diplomat, bishop, and Doctor of the Church, he is best described as a Christian Humanist, a potent spiritual force for creating a spirituality admirably suited to those in every walk of life, especially the common person.

De Sales was born in Thorens, France, on August 21, 1567. As a member of a noble family, he was educated in the humanities at the Jesuit college of Clermont at the University of Paris and received his doctorate in both civil and canon law from the University of Padua.

For Francis, love of God naturally lead to love for all persons. His life became a model of selfless service to God and the countless individuals who called upon him for advice.

Francis de Sales died in 1622. In 1665, Pope Alexander VII proclaimed him a saint. Today, the Oblates of Saint Francis de Sales are one of several religious congregations in the Catholic Church founded under his patronage.

DESALES UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

CYBER BULLYING POLICY:

Cyber bullying is defined as the use of electronic information and communication devices, to include but not be limited to, email message, instant message, text messages, cellular telephone communication, blogs, chat rooms, and defamatory websites that:

- Threaten, harass, intimidate, an individual or groups of individuals
- Place an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual or damage the individual's property

- Have the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school. Violation of this policy is considered to be an act of intolerance and anyone found in violation will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the University.

GENERAL STATEMENT:

The University will not tolerate improper actions by University community members or visitors. Actions, which are improper, include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Actual or threats of physical violence, or other forms of harassment
- Destruction of University property or other private property
- Interference with entry to or exit from University buildings or facilities, including free movement by individuals
- Disruption of or interference with instructional activities, campus events or other University business
- Interference with the rights of others to the freedom of speech and assembly
- Unauthorized entry to a University facility and failure to leave when requested by a representative of the University
- Possession of firearms, explosives, chemicals, or fire extinguishers
- Failure to comply with the orders of directives of University officials, police or other law enforcement agencies acting within the scope of their duties.

HAZING POLICY:

At DeSales University we believe in the dignity of life and hold a deep respect for each individual person as a creation of God. Hazing is contrary to these beliefs and will therefore not be tolerated in any form. DeSales University defines hazing as any activity suspected of someone affiliating with or joining a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers, regardless of the persons willingness to participate. Furthermore, this definition includes any action which DeSales University – 2015-16 Student Handbook Page 124 of 162 results in the disruption of the educational process, the impairment of academic performance, or failure to properly fulfill obligations to University sponsored groups or organizations. DeSales University unconditionally opposes all forms of hazing and adheres to Pennsylvania Penal Law which defines hazing as follows: “Any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student or which willfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in, any organization operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by an institution of higher education. The term shall include but not be limited to, any brutality of a physical nature such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor drug or other substance, or any other forced physical activity which would subject the individual to extreme mental distress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual, or any willful destruction or removal of public or private property. For purposes of this definition, any activity as described in this definition upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with or continued membership in an organization is directly or indirectly conditioned shall be presumed to be “forced” activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such activity notwithstanding. (Penal Law, P.S. 5325) “Any person who causes or participates in hazing commits a misdemeanor of the third degree.”(Penal Law, P.S. 5353) Any violation or suspected violation of this hazing policy should be

reported to any of the following: the Student Affairs Office, the Director of Athletics, or the Director of Student Engagement and Leadership. In addition, students may also report incidents of hazing to University Police dial ext. 1250 from any on campus phone or direct dial 610.282.1002. Any person or organization in violation of this policy will be subject to University disciplinary action.

INTOLERANCE POLICY:

Intolerance, harassment, or any other conduct that diminishes the dignity of a human person is incompatible with our fundamental commitment as a Catholic university in the Salesian tradition. Every person shall be treated with respect and dignity. No person shall be subject to any sexual, racial, psychological, physical, verbal, or other similar harassment or abuse. Those who treat others with such intolerance will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the University.

DISCIPLINARY EFFORTS:

- Harassing, stalking or hazing any person, including sexually harassing and cyber bullying.
 - Minimum - Disciplinary probation
 - Maximum – Expulsion

- Engaging in disorderly conduct, disruptive, lewd, or indecent conduct.
 - Minimum - Community service
 - Maximum – Expulsion

- Physically harming or threatening to harm any person, intentionally or recklessly causing harm to any person or reasonable apprehension of such harm or creating a condition that endangers the health and safety of self or others.
 - Minimum - Disciplinary probation
 - Maximum – Expulsion

OUR NUMBERS:

According to our Director of Student Conduct, our numbers for bullying/hazing are relatively low. The majority of the numbers do revolve around social media, where students feel that they can “hide behind the screen.” Many times, these violations are very hard to address because it is unknown who was involved. Other times, the violators are unknown, but other students will come forward with information because they feel that what was done was wrong. For instance, there was an incident in which derogatory remarks were written on flyers promoting a student program. The remarks were personally attacking the individual on the flyer. Several students came forward and shared that the student who wrote these remarks was bragging about it on his social media (Twitter). The students who came forward said that they did not feel what he did was right and that the students of DeSales are better than that. Our students so often pull together and protect one another

The following is from the Student Conduct 2015-2016 annual report:

Total Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Engaging in disorderly conduct, disruptive, lewd, or indecent conduct	5	6	3	4	11
Harassing, stalking, or hazing any person, including sexually harassing and cyber bullying	0	3	0	0	0

Physically harming or threatening to harm any person or creating a condition that could endanger self or others	0	1	2	0	0
TOTAL	5	10	5	4	11

THE STUDENT CONDUCT PROCESS:

Our student conduct director takes an educational, as opposed to punitive approach when addressing student behavior. She knows that everyone in life makes mistakes. Her goal is to work with the students to get them back on track. Students do receive sanctions for violations of policy, however, the key aspect of student conduct meetings is what the student learns and applies to future situations. The minimum and maximum sanctions are listed above. The following are some of the educational sanctions that are often given:

- Educational conversation
- Mediation with both parties (similar to restorative justice)
- Counseling session to process (extended counseling depends on the counselor)
- Educational assignment (student may be asked to research policies/impact and write a paper with a section for reflection of how their violation may have impacted others)
- Community service (when possible, the service has relevant connection to the violation)

PREVENTION:

EARLY ALERT PROCESS:

- **Purpose:** To provide a confidential referral system which will enable the Counseling Center to be proactive in the support of our students.
- **Reasons to Use an Alert:** Some suggestions for use of an Early Alert Form would be: changes in behavior, depression, eating disorders, attendance irregularity, drug or alcohol use, unusual behavior, loneliness, abuse, rape, death, relationship conflict, and family conflict.

CARE (Concern Assessment REsponse) Team:

This team provides a confidential resource to the DSU community to which faculty and staff direct concerns they may have about a student. Such as:

- Attendance Concerns
- Academic Decline
- Emotional Issues
- Behavioral Problems

The team investigates and responds to matters of concern related to students, coordinates interventions, and makes recommendations for further action. The team provides assistance to students through consultation with appropriate faculty or staff, and referral to on-campus and off-campus resources.

AREAS OF FOCUS:

- **Concerns:** through consultation with faculty, staff, and students the team ensures appropriate information exchange and provides support for campus personnel, and attempts to identify behaviors of concern to provide earlier intervention.
- **Assessment:** when additional information is needed, the team functions as an investigative body, charged with gathering relevant and confidential information to assess whether further action is required.
- **Response:** when warranted, the team makes referrals to on- or off-campus resources. University policy, along with other legal and regulatory requirements, guide the team's actions. The team can also serve as a resource to educate the campus community on effective intervention strategies when concerns arise.

CHARACTER U (First Year Experience Program):

Character U is designed to ease the transition from high school to college and to help students develop core character values that will set them up to succeed at DeSales and in life after college. Through Character U, they enjoy a close relationship with a peer mentor assigned to guide them through their first year, an instant social group in their dedicated pod of classmates, and a variety of Character U programming. Programming throughout the year reflects character traits inspired by the *Golden Counsels of Saint Francis de Sales*. Each month, a trait is highlighted at Character U meetings and at various events across campus:

- September: Patience
- October: Trust and Cooperation
- November: Perseverance
- February: Love
- March: Forgiveness
- April: Hope

HAVEN:

Haven is the premier online program addressing the critical issues of sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual harassment—among students, faculty and staff. It was created in collaboration with leading campus practitioners and researchers and national thought leaders, including renowned expert Dr. Alan Berkowitz, *Haven* reaches 700,000 individuals at over 650 institutions across the country. Haven is required for all first-year students (freshmen and transfer students) to complete and introduces and focuses on Bystander Intervention. This empowers our students with the understanding that DeSales University is a community that cares for all.

SOLIDARITY INITIATIVE:

Solidarity is an action on behalf of the one human family, calling all of us to help overcome the divisions in our world. The DeSales Solidarity Initiative is to provide students, faculty, and staff with a new understanding of this human family, while encouraging them to “be who they are and be that well.” We inspire mutual respect, the development of friendships, and learning about the realities of each other's lives through compassion and patience. We commit to fostering the “holistic” growth of the DeSales community by opening a dialogue and investing in the good of one's neighbor. Goals of the Solidarity Office:

- Welcome and accept all at DeSales.
- Welcome, recognize, and respect cultural differences among the student body.
- Provide a comfortable environment where differences are met with love.
- Highlight those who have paved the path to equality.
- Teach one how to accept/love themselves while continuing their journey to “holistic” growth

POSITIVELY DESALES:

Positively DeSales is an anonymously created and run Facebook page that was student initiated. Its goal is to spread positivity around campus. Students, faculty, and staff can post positive words about any other member of the campus community. Positively DeSales then posts these words for all to see on the page. This is a wonderful way to anonymously highlight others.



PACE (Peers Advising Counseling Educating):

In keeping with the wellness model of college health, the PACE (Peers Advising Counseling Educating) program was born out of a need expressed by the university for peers teaching peers how to lead healthier lifestyles; and this remains their mission today. Following the piece of the DeSales University's mission, "enriching the human community and enhancing the dignity of the individual through its educational endeavors," the PACE team maintains as its vision to emphasize **personal responsibility, deep respect for others, leadership development, and concern for the common good**. Through program development, activities, practices, and policies, PACE reinforces these values and offers students opportunities for personal growth, self-assessment, and success in all aspects of their lives.

PACE also works hard at enhancing our University's Character Code through their programming:

As a member of DeSales University, I will conduct myself in a respectful manner, with dignity and honesty, in the Salesian tradition of humility and gentleness.

The PACE team is comprised of six students. The team includes seniors, juniors, and sophomores. Their majors range from marriage and family studies, psychology, communications, and biology. They represent many leadership roles beyond PACE including, DAWG (DeSales University Welcoming Guides), peer mentors, rugby, tutors, student government reps, yearbook, L.E.A.D.S.U. (leadership program), etc.

As for the brief history, PACE was created in 2003/2004 with a group of six students. Their focus was on wellness education across the campus community. Over the years, this has grown in many ways. Through the years, PACE has broadened its scope from programming on campus to offering "PACE Academy", a leadership course for high school students, "Character Quest", a character-based scavenger hunt for middle school students, and "Bully Busters", an anti-bullying program for elementary school students.

In 2006, "Character U, the First Year Experience Program" was launched at DeSales with each PACER leading a group of five DSU mentors and 50 freshmen. This led to a global initiative, "Destination: South Africa" which took a group of first-year students, led by PACERs, to do service work in South Africa. Over the years, PACE has continued to create new programs, including expanding the Safe Spring Break initiative, the Journey to Wellness Fair, the Walk-A-Mile In Her Shoes (Sexual Assault Awareness Program), To Write Love on Her Arms (Suicide Awareness Program), and on and on. Since its inception, PACE has effectively extended its reach to elementary schools, middle schools, secondary schools, and professional groups on campus and internationally. In their short existence PACE grew from nothing to a powerful, positive force on and off campus.

From its beginning, the PACE team has always had a major impact on the campus community, particularly with the offices of Residence Life, Student Engagement and Leadership, Dean of Students, Student Conduct, Career Development, and Health Services. PACE currently has many "canned" programs, which members are willing to present at any time and to any group on campus. All of the programs have their own unique activities and lessons attached to them and are offered periodically through the year. The PACERs are some of the first people that our freshmen meet when they move to campus. The Office of Student Engagement and Leadership (SEAL) truly values the PACE program because they realize that peers can sometimes reach their peers better than staff members, particularly in certain areas of education. Because of this, SEAL requests the PACERs for several key programs throughout freshmen orientation, including alcohol and personal safety. PACE has impacted the campus by bringing awareness to so many important (and sometimes forgotten topics), including alcohol, body image, nutrition, personal safety, sexual assault, "Mean Girl" behavior and cyber-bullying. There is little doubt that their energy and enthusiasm are infectious and will pervade our community for years to come. It is certain that the PACERs will continue to test themselves with new and exciting programs and find ways to better reach the DeSales students and faculty as well as the greater community. With so much accomplished in their years of existence, the DeSales University PACE team is certainly destined to a future of continued success in wellness programming.

What sets PACE apart from other efforts on our campus is first, the name that they have made for themselves. PACE has become synonymous with genuineness, positivity, truthfulness, "down-to-earth", etc. PACE has worked very hard over the years to become a "go to" when a person, or group, needs to be educated on a topic. Because they are in a fish bowl, PACERs also work hard at living the messages that they teach. They are just a solid, good group of students, with only the best intentions at their very core. When they say they will do something, they follow through. This does not mean that they do not make mistakes every once in a while. Obviously, they do. Nobody is perfect. But, they are willing to admit their mistakes and turn them into something positive (which explains why their Booze Busters first time alcohol offenders program has been so successful).

AWARENESS AND PREVENTION EFFORTS AND PROGRAMMING (AND IMPACT)

In the 2011-2012 academic year, one of the PACE students created an original program entitled, “**#sorryimnotsorry**”. This program takes a whole different approach to cyber bullying by introducing the most fundamental part of our education; the alphabet. The alphabet, in itself is simply 26 letters, but when rearranged, can be used to spell out words. The Internet has provided a new use for the alphabet, shortening words to save time (i.e.LOL, BRB, LMAO, etc.). While these terms might provide a humorous gesture to some, there can also be an extreme to it. Social Networks have been providing ways to communicate across the world, allowing us all to stay connected at all times. Cell phones, iPads, and laptops, are all easy ways to access websites to update Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and more. However, the use of the social network for its original purpose of bringing people together, has now changed. In recent years, these ‘updates’ to status have become more of attacks on certain people, races, ethnicities, and more. Bullying is no longer just limited to the schoolyard playground. With technology easily available to record, capture, or send messages, cyber bullying has no limits, and assumes it has no ‘real’ victims. The **#sorryimnotsorry** program provides real life examples using tweets, Facebook, and other real messages to show the severity of the issue.

The student who created this program had a strong passion for this topic. Through several incidents that he handled as a Resident Advisor, he knew that DeSales was impacted by cyber bullying. In researching for his program, he realized that DeSales did not have a policy regarding cyber bullying. As a result, he decided to take the pen to paper and write one. This policy made its way through the correct chain of command and was approved by the administration to be added to the 2012-2013 handbook.

Although **#sorryimnotsorry** was an extremely successful program which led to new policy, the PACE team felt that they needed to take a different approach to educating on the topics of bullying, hazing, etc. Taking from our mission, philosophy, and heritage, PACE began to create programming that would focus on the other bookend of the spectrum—kindness. They chose to title their first program **#happierdesales**. The following are some of the programs and initiatives that PACE created to make a kinder and happier DeSales:

KINDNESS WEEK: #happierdesales:

Imagine a world without conflict and everyone coming together. With all of the negativity that is portrayed in the media today, it is hard to be motivated to make a change. Bullying affects people of all ages. From harsh words to ruthless behavior, our society has gone down a path of not caring about other people’s feelings for their own gain. Our goal is to create a week solely dedicated to being kind to one another through selfless acts that inspire everyone to pass on the smiles and happiness which will promote positive behavior and a more unified campus community.

Bullying does not go away when students enter their college years, especially with new technology and the opportunity for cyber-bullying. It is important to educate college communities on the types of bullying that can occur, along with the negative effects that accompany it. In the beginning of “Kindness Week 2014 **#happierdesales**,” students will be flooded with information regarding the commonness of bullying and the increasing risk for low self-esteem, depression, and suicide that coincides with it. As the week progresses, various activities and events will be held in order to promote kindness to combat the negativity of bullying. The main goals in carrying out this project include making students aware of the effects of bullying as well as promoting kindness through the use of activities, giveaways, programming, and events. We hope to instill a sense of positivity on campus that will continue throughout the semester and into the future. “Kindness Week: **#happierdesales**” includes:

- **“Kindness Can Change the World”**: An educational bullying program to motivate students to increase kindness measures around campus.
- Tabling activities in the dining hall to promote kindness & gratitude:
 - “Balloon Compliments” where students wrote down compliments to send to anyone they chose. These compliments were placed in deflated balloons and placed in the recipients’ mailboxes. The recipients were instructed to blow up the balloon and then pop it to receive their compliment. Also, PACers walked around campus and randomly handed out helium-filled balloons that had compliments in them for students.



- “Random Acts of Kindness Tree” where students wrote down random acts of kindness that they performed or were shown to them. These were all placed and displayed on a tree in the student union building.



- “A Positive View” where the DeSales community could write positive statements and quotes on the windows in the cafeteria for all to see.
- “Consent Kisses” where our students asked other students if they could give them a kiss to promote consent. When they received a “yes”, they handed the person two Hershey kisses...one for them to keep, and one for them to give someone else.
- “Flower Friday” in which locally donated carnations and other flowers were randomly handed out to students.



“WRITE LIGHT, WRITE LIFE”:

This letter writing campaign asked the DeSales community to take a few moments to fill out an on-line form nominating any member of the DSU community to receive an anonymous letter of encouragement, gratitude, etc. A day was chosen and all were invited to come and help write the letters, which were distributed during kindness week. People from all across campus called PACE to thank them for initiating such a thoughtful program.

“YOU ARE MORE THAN JUST A LIKE”:

This program had us take a look at the emphasis we put on the amount of “likes” we receive on social media. So often we feel our self-worth depends on what people think of words or pictures we post and tweet. Worst yet, we are devastated when negative comments are made. This program illustrated that we are more than a like, more than a filtered picture, and that our self-worth should only be defined by what we know of ourselves.

“MEAN GIRLS”:

This program came about after several female students met with one of our male PACERs regarding some “mean girl” behavior that was occurring in the freshmen residence hall. There were two distinct groups of students who were not getting along, but no one seemed to know how it started. The male PACER created this program at which there was a viewing of the movie, “Mean Girls.” Afterward there was a roundtable discussion about the movie and the freshmen females were able to share their concerns in a healthy, mediated dialog.

“DIGGING DEEPER: THE DIVERSITY OF INDIVIDUALITY”:

This program helps us realize that as humans, our individual differences are what make us unique, special, and worthy of respect.

“NO ONE ELSE CAN PLAY MY PART”:

During lunch hours in the dining hall students answered the question why “No One Else Can Play My Part.” The papers were later displayed in the Student Union to show that each student’s life is a story; and the part in the story he or she plays cannot be replaced with anyone else. On the second day, students pledged to no longer use words such as crazy, suicidal, mental, and others in a casual or hurtful way. When the words are now used in their proper context, the stigma surrounding mental health illnesses can be eliminated over time.

“THE SECRET WE ALL SHARE”:

This program is presented in residence halls in lecture format to bring awareness to the fact that 1 in 3 people will be diagnosed with a mental health illness in his or her lifetime, but how no one talks about this commonality, making it a secret we all share. The program detailed the signs and symptoms of the most common mental health illnesses and how to break the stigma surrounding them. The program taught that the most valuable tool to breaking the stigma by talking about mental health illness (i.e. share stories). This can be done by having real, honest conversations and by taking the lead, as so many celebrities have done, to speak up about a mental health illness. This openness will start other conversations that will help to break the stigma.

“TO WRITE LOVE ON HER ARMS” OPEN MIC NIGHT:

The event consisted of four different student performers throughout the night. Money was raised in a raffle to benefit To Write Love on Hers Arms (TWLOHA), which works to provide funding for mental health research and treatment for those struggling with mental illnesses and suicidal ideation. Between performances, the coordinating PACEr spoke about mental health illness and suicidal ideation. Before the entertainment began the coordinating presenter educated the students on the purpose of the program. The student had a friend who took his life; she wanted to do something in his memory and to raise awareness about mental illnesses in the hope that someday suicide, as an end to depression, might be erased. She also spoke about the signs and symptoms of the most common mental health illnesses and the work of TWLOHA. She shared the story of her friend’s struggle with depression, and reminded students that no matter their situation, there is hope. During the event, students had the opportunity to write “love” on their arms, write letters of thanks to their support groups of friends and family, and to describe their greatest fears and dreams in order to offer insight about the real, honest conversations that should be occurring to promote openness and discussion on mental health illnesses.

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION:

Although this is not a formal program, PACE makes sure to always include this concept into every program they present. They want their peers to take as much pride and ownership in their university community as they do.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH:

PACE knows that tackling this issue is not a “one group” effort but requires the efforts of the entire DeSales University community. Therefore, PACE utilizes every opportunity to partner with as many other offices on campus as possible. They have worked with everyone from Student Conduct to Campus Ministry, from the Center for Service and Social Justice, to Student Engagement and Leadership and many others. Most often will work directly with Residence Life to provide in-residence programs.

THE “C” IN PACE:

Pace serves as peer counselors for those students who are more comfortable talking to a peer rather than a professional counselor. In particular, they are sure to attend as many programs as possible in order to be able to process difficult topics with students following speakers and presentations.

SUMMARY:

DeSales University is a 50-year-old Catholic Institution grounded in the teachings of St. Francis de Sales. In addition to its strong academic curriculum, DeSales University also focuses on educating students morally, socially, and spiritually through out-of-the-classroom programming that enriches the entire human being.

In a world that has become increasingly desensitized to how we as human beings treat others and how we perceive others who have different beliefs, cultures, lifestyles, etc., every division within the University’s student life department is intentionally committed to cultivating an environment based on Christian Humanism, kindness, selflessness, tolerance, service to others, social awareness, moral consciousness, ethical leadership, and responsibility. Through its intentional programming, DeSales seeks to instill in its students the personal role they play within their local and global communities.

Again, I would like to thank Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Murray, and Members of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee for this opportunity to showcase the student driven prevention efforts of DeSales University.