

# March 31, 2020

Project name: CWU Suicide Prevention Through Education

Project award period: January – December 2019

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## Executive Summary

The CWU Suicide Prevention Through Training and Education project funding has provided critical training to mental health professionals and first responders at Central Washington University and in the community of Ellensburg, Washington. As a regional institution in a small, rural town, often professionals are required to wear many hats: an academic advisor ends up with a student discussing their recent depression diagnosis; a faculty member in the music department is approached by a student who is seeking resources following sexual assault; or a financial aid officer is the first response for a tearful student whose mother just died. The need for these individuals to have training and support around how to appropriately respond to students in distress is acute in a community where mental health providers are at capacity.

We also know that our students are suffering from mental illness, disproportionate to their peers at other institutions. CWU students are more likely than nationally surveyed students to report both overwhelming anxiety and to have seriously considered suicide within the last 12 months (NCHA, 2018). 5% more CWU students (than national average) have been diagnosed or treated by mental and medical health professionals for anxiety and/or depression in last 12 months (NCHA, 2018). Twice as many students as compared to the national cohort report being treated in last 12 months for a substance use disorder (NCHA, 2018). An estimated 40% of students (<4,800) at Central Washington University are experiencing at least one significant mental health problem, such as depression, anxiety disorders, suicidal thoughts, self-injury, or symptoms of eating disorders (Healthy Minds, 2017).

While our students experience increased need, we do not have increased resources or support available. Our region does not have the same density of mental health resources and treatment that exists in the more populated western Washington communities. Over the past five years, new counseling clients at CWU have **increased 243%**, from 220 to 755 students in an academic year. Our counselors on campus see roughly 10% of our student population.

To address these issues, we used WSAC funding to grow the number of trained gatekeepers, improving both their confidence and resilience. We doubled the certified Mental Health First Aid course instructors on our campus, increasing the capacity for providing in-person, customized training courses to lay-people. There have been over **80 staff and faculty** members who have been certified as Mental Health First Aiders during the funding period. We coordinated training on new, evidence-based suicidality assessment and treatment protocols for a dozen mental health professionals on our campus and in our community. We launched a customized, brief online training that is easily accessible for students, faculty and staff members – to date **335 CWU students** have used the program to learn how to help a friend experiencing a mental health problem. We also have had **154 faculty and staff** complete the training.

We are excited about the opportunities WSAC mental health funding has provided. We remain committed to educating and training as many members of the CWU community and beyond – an effort that can help to reduce the number of suicide deaths in Washington State.

## Project Activities Descriptions

Activity	Evaluation
Suicide Prevention Team Meetings	The funding supported materials/supplies and space rental for a monthly taskforce team meeting. Representatives include faculty and staff members from across campus departments and disciplines as well as some students and community members. This team met monthly and implemented and evaluated campus efforts toward suicide prevention. There were an average of 20 attendees at the monthly meetings. The team is divided into sub-groups with the intention of assessing, improving and evaluating campus suicide prevention efforts in these areas: means restriction (e.g. auditing existing residence halls for danger, limit access to firearms, maintain permanent drug-takeback location); campus policies and protocol (e.g. enact "medical leave" policy with support and protection for students who leave school temporarily, adopt "death of campus member" protocol); mental health access (e.g. reduce wait time for students requesting a mental health appointment, innovate through use of technology, cross-train disciplines across campus); and life skills development (e.g. promote programs that improve resilience and educate about support, encourage skill building in areas that increase independence; offer, promote and evaluate 'self-care' resources and programs offered like recreation/exercise, social engagement and more). These meetings occurred throughout the duration of the funding.
Training mental health providers on CAMS suicide assessment and treatment protocol	Three Ellensburg community providers and seven CWU staff/faculty members were certificated as CAMS practitioners. They received registration, tuition, a textbook and attended pre/post training sessions on this new modality. This training and associated meetings were completed in July 2019.
Suicide prevention support/resources marketing	A sub-group of the Suicide Prevention Team designed and launched three campus-wide campaigns during the funding period. One poster/social media campaign outlines signs/symptoms of suicidality and highlighted local and national resources and offices. The next campaign aimed to reduce stigma about mental illness and help-seeking behavior. The final campaign reiterated campus support offices and resources. These campaigns ran throughout the funding period.
Certified MHFA Instructor	We sent a CWU staff member, Director of Veterans' Services Ruben Cardenas to a 40-hour training on Mental Health First Aid. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is offered as an 8-hour course for faculty, staff and students to be certified in. Those who complete the training are able to respond effectively during a mental health crisis or when encountering an individual experiencing mental health problems. Ruben has not yet taught a MHFA course, but will complete three courses (up to 25 participants at each training) over the next year.
MHFA Training Manuals	Training manuals for 200 campus staff and faculty. 80 staff/faculty/students were trained as Mental Health First Aiders during the funding period. Mental Health First Aid is offered about two times per quarter.

Kognito <i>At Risk</i> training for staff/faculty and <i>At Risk</i> training for students	With the ability to train staff, faculty and students in person, we chose to diversify our training capabilities and extended a license with the company Kognito. We launched a customized, interactive mental health support training course. To date, nearly 500 CWU members have completed the course. We incentivized CWU students to complete the training by offering Amazon gift cards.
Online mental health screening tool	The purchase of our online, customized, anonymous screening tool. This tool increases our ability to refer at-risk students to mental health support. Students are able to complete the instrument, which uses validated screening content, online and based on their responses they are referred to appropriate national and local agencies/offices for support.

## Project Evaluation

We had to pivot at the beginning of our project from training significantly more people as Mental Health First Aid instructors to just one person being trained and this resulted in an amendment to our original proposal. We still had one critical member (Veterans' Affairs program director) trained as our second MHFA instructor. This allows us to reach twice as many individuals to train on campus. Additionally, we were able to expand the modalities used to train via Kognito's *At Risk* customized staff/faculty and college student training modules. The importance of training a critical mass of university members cannot be understated. Training can help reduce stigma, increase self-efficacy around intervention behaviors and encourage individuals experiencing their own suicidal thoughts to seek help. The primary goal of our project was to increase the amount and options for suicide prevention training and mental health support on our campus.

We also provided continuing education for mental health professionals with the *CAMS* suicide assessment protocol and treatment certification. This training not only assisted providers in maintaining CEU's required for licensure, but it brought into alignment the screening, assessment and treatment protocol for suicidality in our community. There were practitioners from different offices across campus combined with community providers who were trained. The use of a singular lethality assessment and treatment plan for suicidal ideation allows for better continuity of care for individuals who may see providers across the community. It supports a shared and common language for referrals and makes collaborative case management easier.

The biggest benefit of this funded project on our campus has been bringing together disciplines and offices from across campus and our community in a collective effort to improve mental health of CWU students and prevent suicide.

## Expenditure Report

See Appendix A.

## Next Steps

CWU is committed to maintaining the high expectations for student suicide prevention developed during the WSAC funding period. We plan to continue collaborative conversations, expand the trainings we offer and number of individuals trained annually, and innovate in methods to reach out to and support CWU students. Our university will continue to hold “CWU Suicide Prevention Team” meetings monthly. This group, and the sub-groups it supports, will meet monthly to assess, plan and evaluate cross-campus efforts that promote mental well-being and reduce suicide risk and prevalence. We will continue to offer Mental Health First Aid, QPR and Kognito *At Risk* trainings. Our Wellness Center and Veteran’s office will work together to co-host and facilitate MHFA courses. The Wellness Center will provide the budget for continuing to offer MHFA and Kognito trainings.

We plan to stay connected to JED Campus and Forefront to stay on top of education, access state resources and adapt evidence-based strategies.

## Certifications

*The undersigned certify, to the best of their knowledge, that this report is accurate and complete. If employed by a postsecondary education institution, the undersigned also certify that the institution they work for completed the data survey outlined in Substitute Senate Bill 6514 and plans to complete future data surveys resulting from the bill.*

*Marissa Howat*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Project Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Marissa Howat  
Print Project Director Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Health Promotion and Wellness  
Print Project Director Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
March 28, 2020  
Print Date Signed

If applicable (add as many lines as necessary for multiple co-directors):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Project Co-Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Project Co-Director Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Project Co-Director Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Date Signed

## Appendix A

### Expenditure Report

**23053 WSAC Suicide Project 2019**  
**Marissa Howat**  
**1/18/19 - 12/31/19 (no-cost extension)**

	<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>Budget Modification</b>	<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	
Subawards	\$ 43,000.00	\$ (43,000.00)	\$ -		
Consumables	\$ 16,800.00	\$ 29,468.00	\$ 46,268.00	\$ 56,495.84	
Travel	\$ -	\$ 4,250.00	\$ 4,250.00	\$ 1,826.53	
Incentive	\$ -	\$ 9,282.00	\$ 9,282.00	\$ 700.00	
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$ 59,800.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 59,800.00</b>	<b>\$ 59,022.37</b>	<b>\$ 777.63 De-Obligation</b>

Date	Amount	Line Descr	Posted	Year
10/7/2019	\$ 52.74	Suicide Prevention Team	10/7/2019	2020
10/24/2019	\$ 75.00	MHFA SESS-EQ/2019-ABTLZC	10/25/2019	2020
8/31/2019	\$ 75.00	CAMS TRAINING REVIEW-R- ESS-AV	9/5/2019	2020
3/4/2020	\$ 317.58	PUB Suicide Prevention	3/5/2020	2020
8/6/2019	\$ 1,075.00	CAMS suicide prevention traini	8/7/2019	2020
8/6/2019	\$ 522.75	Education materials	8/7/2019	2020
8/6/2019	\$ 2,025.00	Online curriculum for 15 staff	8/7/2019	2020
10/21/2019	\$ 2,200.00	MHFA Ruben Registration	10/22/2019	2020
10/7/2019	\$ 1,004.35	MHFA Training books	10/7/2019	2020
8/29/2019	\$ (1,075.00)	CAMS suicide prevention traini	8/29/2019	2020
10/7/2019	\$ 97.53	MHFA Staff training refreshmen	10/7/2019	2020
10/7/2019	\$ 36.03	Suicide Prevention Team - MHFA	10/7/2019	2020
8/2/2019	\$ 41,319.48	SERVICE: Institution-Wide Lice	8/2/2019	2020
8/2/2019	\$ 7,870.38	SERVICE: Institution-Wide Lice	8/2/2019	2020
8/6/2019	\$ 900.00	Mental health screening tool	8/7/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$ 131.08	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$ 133.20	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$ 61.00	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$ 45.00	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$ 45.00	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$ 45.00	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$ 45.00	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$ 46.00	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$ 151.93	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020



12/2/2019	\$	151.93	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$	151.93	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$	151.93	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$	151.93	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
11/25/2019	\$	35.00	AIRFARE CARDENAS 14405	11/25/2019	2020
11/25/2019	\$	420.60	AIRFARE CARDENAS 14405	11/25/2019	2020
12/2/2019	\$	60.00	CardenasR-MHFA 10-20-19	12/2/2019	2020
1/7/2020	\$	530.00	Amazon cards WSAC suicide	1/8/2020	2020
1/27/2020	\$	170.00	Amazon cards	1/27/2020	2020
		\$	59,022.37		