What is MEN OF STRENGTH?

University of Hawaii at Hilo is establishing a new organization designed to acknowledge, celebrate, encourage and honor the unique role and responsibility that men have to make a positive difference in their own lives and in the lives of their friends and families. MEN OF STRENGTH is based on the educational principles developed by Men Can Stop Rape for their “Strength Campaign” (http://www.mencanstoprape.org/info-url2696/info-url.htm) but is adapted to be culturally relevant to UH Hilo and to Hawai’i Island. MEN OF STRENGTH is now recruiting founding members. Here is a chance for you to become a leader for your campus and your community – to be a part of starting something new.

Why is it important for me to be involved in MEN OF STRENGTH?

Our community faces a wide range of social and health problems, ranging from violence to drug abuse, teenage pregnancy to homelessness, and poverty to racism. In recognition that men are both part of the problem and part of the solution to many of these challenges, MEN OF STRENGTH is committed to four major goals:

1. Building a campus, community and world free of unnecessary violence, based on mutual respect and social justice;
2. Empowering and educating men to make choices that enable them to lead healthier, more fulfilling lives;
3. Eliminating the traditional emotional and conversational barriers that exist between boys and men, fathers and sons, men and women, etc., so that every individual has the ability to achieve their full educational and personal potential; and
4. Fostering a broader definition of manhood and maleness for boys and men that does not emphasize only physical strength as a way to demonstrate one’s masculinity.

How can I get involved in MEN OF STRENGTH?

MEN OF STRENGTH is hosting its inaugural event on Thursday, February 11th, 2010 from 3:00 – 7:30 PM in University Classroom Building, Room 127. A light meal will be served in conjunction with this half-day training seminar. Joe Samalin from Men Can Stop Rape will be our featured speaker; he will help participants explore what men can do to help reduce the incidence of sexual assault and other forms of violence against women on our campus and in our community. Students must be nominated by a member of the Advisory Board of faculty and staff mentors to be a founding member.

What kind of commitment is expected of me to be part of MEN OF STRENGTH?

MEN OF STRENGTH is designed to allow members to participate as much or as little as they are able to, depending on their available time and comfort level. However, members do need to be active participants in some meaningful way, or else positive change will be difficult to achieve. Founding members will be expected to attend regular organizational meetings on a monthly basis during the first year. An Advisory Board of UH Hilo faculty and staff mentors is available to support students in their activism, educational and service efforts; these mentors are willing to share their own experiences and professional wisdom with students as they work to create healthier communities and lead healthier lives.

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Who are the Advisory Board members for MEN OF STRENGTH?

- Harald Barkhoff, PhD, Chair & Associate Professor in Kinesiology & Exercise Sciences, College of Arts & Sciences (harald@hawaii.edu)
- Will Concepcion, PhD, Interim Director & Counseling Psychologist, Counseling Services (wrconcep@hawaii.edu)
- Kurt dela Cruz, MEd, Advisor, Advising Center (kdel@hawaii.edu)
- Tommy Hamilton, PhD, Associate Director, Campus Recreation Department (rhamilto@hawaii.edu)
- Jubilee Kuewa, MS, Assistant Director, Office of Affirmative Action & EEO (jkuewa@hawaii.edu)
- Jim Mellon, MA, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs & Dean of Students, Division of Student Affairs (mellon@hawaii.edu)
- Kallen Miyataki, Assistant Director, Office of Intercollegiate Athletics (kmiyatak@hawaii.edu)
- William Steiner, PhD, Dean, College of Agriculture, Forestry & Natural Resource Management (steiner@hawaii.edu)
- Zachary Street, Coordinator for National Student Exchange, Dean of Students Office (zstreet@hawaii.edu)

What are some of the realities that MEN OF STRENGTH is working to change?

- Compared to women, men are 1-1/2 times more likely to die from accidental deaths, and 2-1/2 times more likely to die from motor vehicle crashes – the most common type of accidental death. For college-age men, accidental death is the leading cause of mortality.
- Among those ages 15-24, six out of seven suicide victims are male. Men are four times as likely as women to commit suicide, but also much less likely to utilize mental health services or seek help.
- Men comprise 80% of all homicide victims in the US. The risk of homicide increases for men of color.
- Two and one-half times more men than women die from chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, commonly associated with alcohol abuse and high-risk drinking.
- Men comprise the overwhelming majority (nearly 90%) of perpetrators of interpersonal violence against women and against each other.

Source: Men’s Health Consulting, 2009

What resources can help me better understand the work of MEN OF STRENGTH?

BOOKS:

WEBSITES:
- American Men’s Studies Association: http://mensstudies.org/
- Centers for Disease Control Men’s Health Information: http://www.cdc.gov/men/
- Men Can Stop Rape: http://www.mencanstoprape.org/index.htm
- Men’s Health Network: http://www.menshealthnetwork.org/
- National Organization of Men Against Sexism: http://www.nomas.org/
- Walk A Mile In Her Shoes: http://www.walkamileinhershoes.org/

Where can I get more information about MEN OF STRENGTH?

Contact Luoluo Hong, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (luoluo@hawaii.edu), Zachary Street, MEN OF STRENGTH Advisor (zstreet@hawaii.edu), or any of the Advisory Board members listed above.

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