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University Park,
September
08,
2022

GSU selected among first to host 'Send Silence Packing' suicide prevention event



University Park, IL - **Governors State University** (GSU) recently hosted the Active Minds' Send Silence Packing tour, which aimed to inspire action for suicide prevention through story and resource sharing.

Funded by the state of Illinois, GSU was one of nine Illinois schools selected—and the first Chicago area university—to host this event.

The event itself is a display of backpacks donated in honor of loved ones lost, as well as those who have survived suicide. Each backpack displays a photograph and a story of a young adult who was lost to suicide, and those who survived. The backpacks represent the issue of suicide among young adults, and the personal stories elevate the importance of speaking out for those who are struggling.

On college campuses, 39 percent of students experience a significant mental health issue, so the overall message of the display is: help and hope are available for those who suffer with mental health challenges and that everyone can play a role in changing the culture around mental health.

“It is a very important honor to be the first Chicago-area university to partner with Active Minds and further their mission to make mental health a comfortable, everyday conversation. It is our hope that the GSU community engaged with the Send Silence Packing display and came away with information and resources that could ultimately be lifesaving. The health and safety of our students and members of our community is always our top priority.” Dr. Cheryl Green.

Active Minds is the nation’s leading nonprofit organization promoting mental health awareness and education for young adults, founded in 2003 by Alison Malmon when she was a junior at the University of Pennsylvania following the suicide of her older brother, and only sibling, Brian.

[Crisis information](#) when you or a loved one need immediate support:

- Call or text 988 for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Free 24/7 support for anyone in suicidal crisis.
- Text BRAVE to 741-741 the Crisis Text Line. Free 24/7 support for anyone in crisis.
- Call 911.

The [Counseling and Wellness Center](#) is also available at GSU for students, faculty, and staff. In addition, employee assistance is available through the [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP). EAP can be reached at 1-833-955-3400 24/7/365 or TTY: 1-800-697-0353.