

Dear Members of the Hamilton Community,

Many in our community were present last Monday evening or read the minutes from the Student Assembly meeting when Dean of Students Terry Martinez reiterated the College's commitment to increase student wellness and provide specific support for students experiencing anxiety and depression. Dean Martinez also outlined some of the ways we continue to improve upon those services and programs as new ideas and practices become available.

Among the actions taken by the College in the past year are the following: an external review of our processes and structures for supporting students of concern by a team from Duke University; the move to a case-management model to assist students of concern and the hiring of an associate dean of students for student support services, as recommended by the external review; additional work by the College to implement recommendations from the JED Foundation, an organization devoted to suicide prevention; the institution of gatekeeper training for faculty and staff and a student-implemented model for the same to help community members recognize and respond to students in distress and refer them to mental health resources; an expansion of the physical space in the new counseling center, with additional programming and personnel, including the decision to conduct a search for a full-time psychiatrist; and adoption of the Community of Care Initiative. Ongoing discussions around student mental health may lead to additional action.

These initiatives are part of a continuing evolution, and we have also welcomed the input of students and parents, such as Mr. and Mrs. Burton, the parents of Graham. Graham's death was a terrible tragedy for his family, friends, and our community, and the Burton family continues to have our deepest sympathy for their loss.

We continue doing all that we can to ensure the safety and welfare of our students. There are many resources available to you or any member of our community in need of support. The most immediate ways to seek assistance are to contact the Counseling Center (315-859-4340), the Dean of Students Office (315-859-4020), or Campus Safety (315-859-4141).

Sincerely,

David Wippman