

# BULLYING

*We all have a role to play in ending this disturbing behavior*

Dr. William A. Howe, Connecticut State Department of Education, Linda Wolfson, Housatonic Student support Services Counselor, and HCC student, Darren Guerrucci, participated in a panel discussion, *Bullying: Understanding and Prevention* on May 5<sup>th</sup>. The event was sponsored by the Diversity Awareness Committee.

While bullying is most often associated with students' K-12 experience, the tragic suicide of Rutgers University Student Tyler Clementi brought bullying on college campuses, and among adults in general, to wider attention. The HCC program offered community members an opportunity to consider the contexts in which bullying could occur on our campus.

In his presentation, Dr. Howe stressed creating a physical and emotional environment in which bullying cannot flourish. In part, he explained, this means recognizing that the social dynamic of bullying includes the bully, the victim *and* the witness. When peers intervene, Dr. Howe explained, bullying stops, so everyone should speak up when witnessing a bully at work.

Linda Wolfson founded Housatonic's Diversity Awareness Committee, in part to address issues related to individual difference often targeted by bullies. She noted that the hidden effects of psychological abuse such as bullying "doesn't leave black and blue marks." Further, she said, the more confident and assertive the bullied person acts, the less easy it is for the bullying to continue." Reporting and documenting incidents of bullying are essential and can empower the person being bullied. She reiterated that bystanders need to stand up not turn the other way.

A familiar face was put to the victims of bullying by HCC student Darren Guerrucci who openly discussed his own painful experiences with being bullied. Guerrucci suggested that people who are bullied typically look at their own inadequacies and start to believe that they are defective and as a result become more vulnerable. A bullied person, he said, can begin to internalize a bully's taunts. **Continued next page.**

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KUDOS

**HCN asked you how you have been coping with the uncertainty created by the economy, state budget, etc. Here are two responses.**



For me, being a single parent and the youngest of 11 children, I've always trusted in "God to Provide". Not only in these trying times – but always. Also, my daughter, family, friends and church family help to keep me grounded. I like to read motivational and inspirational books that help to keep me uplifted. And, finally, I also reflect on what Thomas Paine said – "These are the times that try men's souls".

**Deloris Curtis**

Director of Admissions

**John Sopchak**

Associate Professor of Psychology

The economy is a huge factor in our lives. The majority of the population is somehow affected by it in good times and bad times. I know at this point in my life that there are no guarantees in anything. However, as the old saying goes, "if you have your health and family, you have everything you need." I try to remain grateful for what I have and try my best to stay positive and hopeful during these uncertain times. I stay away from the self-defeating and self-destructive behaviors. They only lead to more difficulty eventually. As educators, we are in a position to bring hope to the students at Housatonic. I do my best to bring this positive message to them through example and in a most humble manner.

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**Bullying cont'd.**

Agreeing with Dr. Howe and Linda Wolfson, Guerrucci said, "The psychological effects are amplified by the audience that allows the bullying to happen." Witnesses, although they believe they are passive, can be complicit in a bully's attack. Guerrucci introduced an idea that enthused many in the audience—an "Acceptance Day" at HCC—a day to "accept commonalities and embrace difference."

The Diversity Awareness Committee will continue the dialog in the fall.

*"By spreading awareness, the empathy does grow."*

Darren Guerrucci,  
HCC student

## KUDOS

You will know where to find Associate Professor of Biology, **Tony Pappantonio**, this summer. For the past two years he has guided Housatonic students through field research at the Audubon Society of Fairfield County. Students interested in environmental studies have joined Professor Pappantonio in collecting demographic data on fish and turtles, their size and weight, for example. The work has been key in giving students real life experience and helping them determine what further work they might pursue in the discipline. Students are benefitting from Prof. Pappantonio's professional background. He has a Ph.D. in Ecology Behavior and extensive experience conducting stream surveys up and down the East Coast of the United States. Eventually, he hopes to share collected data with the Audubon Society and local scientists.

Another project of Prof. Pappantonio has been guiding student Jason Van Fleet through his honors research project on tissue culture technique in carnivorous plants. The work will be highlighted in a poster presentation at the North Eastern Biology Conference.



**Mary Katherine Clark, Ed.D.**

Director of Academic Advising, **Mary Clark**, has completed a Ph.D. at the University of Bridgeport. Her dissertation is *A Comparative Analysis of Transformational Leadership Behaviors of Academic Guidance Counselors in Urban, Suburban and Rural Connecticut Colleges*.

**President Anita Gliniecki's** nomination of **Brandon T. Bisceglia**, former editor of *Horizons*, the college's newspaper, resulted in him being named a Coca-Cola New Century Scholar in the All-USA Community College Academic Team competition. The honor comes with a \$2,000 award.

## **Amherst Recruits from Community Colleges**

On National Public Radio's *On Point*, outgoing president of Amherst College, Anthony Marx, told host Tom Ashbrook:

"We use the vast majority of our transfer student [slots] at Amherst now for community college students because we know that more than a million students in America are going to community colleges and you can't tell me that there aren't amazing students there who need a way to get through to the bachelor's degree. Nobody else in our industry, certainly not the top of the industry where Amherst is, is looking for those students. We use the majority of our spaces for those students."

## **Need a Scholarship? Ask Lesko?**

Calling the community college system "the best investment value in America," Mark Lesko, known for his relentless infomercials promoting access to government grants, has found a new source for community college scholarships—social security funds. Lesko announced the "I Don't Need My Government Money Scholarship" sourced by his monthly social security payment, a subsidy he says he can live without. Lesko hopes that others who can afford it will contribute their unneeded social security income to the fund as well. The scholarship program, begun at Frederick Community College in Maryland, is slated primarily for college students who are also single parents.

## **Review: Academically Adrift: Limited Learning in College Campuses**

**By Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa, *University of Chicago Press***

One of the most provocative discussions taking place in higher education today revolves around what students are learning. As a college degree becomes more and more a necessity on the pathway to gainful employment and success, in *Academically Adrift*, Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa investigate the quality of education at four-year colleges and universities. What are students learning and how well can they express those skills? Students, they say, demonstrate no significant difference in critical thinking, complex reasoning and writing skills during their first two years of college. Ultimately the authors mandate reform, including more rigorous instruction across the board.

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**Housatonic Community News welcomes articles, photographs, announcements and feedback.**

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