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We have you covered

THE SPEND MORE TIME WITH YOUR SONS ISSUE

Olympic High class tackling teen suicide

BY NICK TABOREK
 Daily Press Staff Writer

OLYMPIC HIGH With teen suicide a growing concern across the country, students at Santa Monica's Olympic High School are getting an added amount of attention, courtesy of a

SEE SUICIDE PAGE 10

Bley betting on appetite for change

BY NICK TABOREK
 Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN Change may be a popular buzz word for candidates in elections around the country this year, but can it work in Santa Monica?

After all, the effects of the recession here have left services largely intact, and even the school district, which has suffered because of the state budget crisis, is weathering the storm better than most, thanks to reserve

SEE CAMPAIGN PAGE 11



SHE KNOWS HOW TO PICK 'EM

Caitlin Hachem, 2, looks for the best pumpkin at Shawn's Pumpkin Patch on the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and 23rd Street on Friday afternoon.

Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

New community initiative launched to stem violence

BY KEVIN HERRERA
 Editor in Chief

CIVIC CENTER Community leaders are embarking on a new mission to stem the violence in Santa Monica by changing the way boys think about manhood, trading traditional views of masculinity that can be harmful to both sexes for an emphasis on positive, non-violent definitions of male strength.

The Male Violence Prevention Project —

a community initiative led by Santa Monica Police Chief Tim Jackman, the Westside Domestic Violence Network, Sojourn Services for Battered Women and City Hall's Human Services Division — borrows heavily from the teachings of Dr. Jackson Katz, an internationally recognized expert in the field of gender violence prevention education for males and one of America's leading anti-sexist activists.

Katz was the keynote speaker at a conference held Friday at Rand Corporation enti-

tled "The Macho Paradox: The Next Generation of Domestic Violence Prevention." The conference, which focused on male stereotypes and the influence of the media on boys, was attended by representatives from various nonprofits, public schools, law enforcement and the faith-based community. All groups participated in hopes of reducing the number of violent acts — such as spousal abuse, bullying in

SEE PREVENTION PAGE 8

Squirm Night Online

For those of you who were unable to attend the Daily Press' candidates forum, more commonly know as Squirm Night, check out all the action ONLINE at:

www.youtube.com/SMDailypress

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SUICIDE

FROM PAGE 1

couple of UCLA graduate students with plans to make a difference in the mental health field.

After being awarded an Albert Schweitzer Fellowship, Ashley Roberts and Anne Sutkowi, both master's degree students in UCLA's Department of Community Health Sciences, co-founded a program for youths they call STRIDES.

Launched a month ago as a pilot program at Olympic High, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District's continuation campus, the goal is to give kids at risk of falling into bad habits that can eventually lead to suicide new strategies for dealing with stress and depression.

The curriculum, which is taught twice weekly during students' regular health class,

has both a psychological and a physical component. Lessons focus on topics from goal setting and stress management to things like nutrition, anatomy and old fashioned physical fitness.

"We hope that this program will bridge that gap that seems to exist in most high school health classes that focus on physical health but don't incorporate mental health as much," Roberts said.

The co-founders' ambition is to do their part to prevent suicide — the third-leading cause of death among teenagers — but they also hope the lessons they're teaching will have a broader impact on promoting healthier lifestyles.

"The class is technically a suicide prevention program, but all of the issues we're talking about are relevant in these kids' lives," Roberts said.

To Marcia Gecht, a teacher at Olympic for 35 years, welcoming STRIDES into her

health class is an example of how curriculum flexibility at the continuation school benefits students.

"It's always good to have additional programs that come to us without costing money," she said.

While the subject matter may not seem earth shattering — and indeed, Gecht said she's taught similar lessons to health students before — it can have a big impact.

One 17-year-old in the class, she said, had never gone on a jog until she was encouraged by Roberts and Sutkowi to participate in group runs.

The students, she said, have responded to their teachers' enthusiasm.

"[The kids] actually look forward to it, because they're making them rise to the occasion," she said.

Another of STRIDES' goals is to raise awareness among the broader public that teen suicide is preventable.

Toward that end, the course will culminate with a 5K run/walk event on Nov. 21 at Dockweiler Beach in Playa del Rey that is open to the public. Organizers said 200 people are expected to participate.

For Roberts, who hopes to continue the program after the initial 10-week course at Olympic, there have already been personal growth benefits to the project as well.

Getting a skeptical group of high school students on your side, she's learned, is a difficult undertaking.

"They don't necessarily welcome you with open arms," she said. "It's been a challenge trying to break through and build that trust, but it's really rewarding when they do come around."

For more information about the STRIDES and the 5K event, go to www.strideslosangeles.blogspot.com.

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VOLLEYBALL

FROM PAGE 3

"Kasia Eatherton was our coach last year and she just had twins and decided it was too difficult to coach with having babies just before the season," explained Athletic Director Kevin Kelsey. "Billy Allen coached our JV team a few years ago and did a great job. He has also coached varsity before in the past, so he was a natural choice to bring in as the new coach this season."

Pacifica trails Milken Community High School by one in the win column in the California Interscholastic Federation Southern Section Heritage league — Pacifica has a 2-0 record after starting league play last

week while Milken leads the league with three wins and no losses.

The five-team Heritage league also includes Faith Baptist, Hillcrest Christian, Santa Clarita Christian.

Pacifica is ranked seventh in the CIF-SS Division 4A, which is impressive considering the team lost four starters and two all-CIF players last season to graduation. They have also moved up from being a Division 5 school for the last four years to now being in the tougher Division 4.

"We're looking good, it's my first year as head coach so every game I have to ask the girls about the next team we're facing," Allen said. "As far as our team, we've been doing good. We have a pretty young team, with only a few seniors that are stepping up and making it easy for me to

come in as a first year coach and a pretty talented group of underclassmen who are playing pretty well."

Drawing from a student population of just 182 students, the 12-player varsity roster at Pacifica includes three seniors, four juniors, four sophomores and one freshman. The three seniors on the team are Brittney Clemens, Hannah Hamilton and Monica Miller.

"Our upperclassmen are working very hard, and are enjoying playing well," said Allen. "We do have some younger girls that are up and coming that are pretty talented, so we should have a strong program at [Pacifica] for the next couple years."

Allen lists among the team goals making the CIF-SS playoffs again, hopefully winning

their first round game and challenging Milken for the top spot in the league. Milken is generally the toughest team in the league, however Pacifica beat the Wildcats twice last year.

"From what I hear Milken is good, they are pretty deep and they work hard and kind of scramble for everything, they have a never-give-up attitude," said Allen. "Yea, they'll definitely be a tough team."

Pacifica's next game is Saturday, Oct. 16 at 7 p.m. at home against Hillcrest Christian High School from Granada Hills.

The Seawolves play rival Milken on Tuesday, Oct. 19 at the Crossroads High School gym 6:30 p.m.

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