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PALO ALTO COLLEGE

NEWS RELEASE

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Palo Alto College receives grant as Minority Serving Institution for substance abuse, HIV, Hepatitis awareness

Palo Alto College has launched Proyecto Saber y Salud, a peer-led program to raise awareness of substance abuse, HIV, and hepatitis in the Southside community. The program is funded through an \$85,000 grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The grant was awarded by SAMHSA through the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) as a Minority Serving Institution Initiative for Substance Abuse, HIV, and Hepatitis Prevention. The goal of the initiative is to directly increase access to comprehensive, integrated substance abuse, HIV, and hepatitis prevention services and early detection of HIV on campuses of Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

With grant funds, Proyecto Saber y Salud (Project Knowledge and Health) will be able to hold monthly workshops and community events, partner with local health agencies, provide on-campus testing opportunities with community partner Hope Action Care, and develop a virtual health information center on the Palo Alto College website.

"We're excited about the opportunity to provide our students with access to these preventive health resources," said Dr. Michael Flores, Vice President of Student Affairs at Palo Alto College.

The MSI Technical Assistance Center reported research that suggests college students are at a higher risk for contracting Hepatitis B and 75 percent of undergraduates have a risk factor for Hepatitis C, while as many as one out of every 200 college students may be HIV positive. In 2009, the rate of HIV infection for Hispanics ages 20-24, regardless of the stage of disease at diagnosis, was four times higher than their Caucasian counterparts.

Palo Alto College, one of the Alamo Colleges, is a fully accredited community college located on the Southside of San Antonio with 9,000 students. It awards associate degrees and short-term certificates and offers non-credit continuing education classes. The campus is located at 1400 W. Villaret Blvd. at I-410 and Texas Hwy. 16 or online at alamo.edu/pac.

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