



PENSACOLA
STATE COLLEGE

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Florida Blue Foundation awards Pensacola State a \$300,000 grant

Funds to be used for mental health services and case management on Warrington campus

Grants from the Florida Blue Foundation will help Pensacola State College improve services to students on the Warrington campus.

Last fall, the College was awarded \$300,000 from the Florida Blue Foundation to be used over four years to offer students mental health and case management services as well as mental health training to community members and caregivers.

PSC will use the grant to offer full-time mental health and case management services on the west Pensacola campus.

“There has been a growing need for these services on the Warrington campus as many students in our health-related fields face increased stressors and complex mental health issues,” said Lynsey Listau, the College's executive director of Institutional Equity and Student Conduct.

“Many of the students in our health programs also can only work limited hours due to class and clinical schedules, so there is an increased need for case management services such as the food pantry and transportation assistance programs.”

The initiative – The Pirates CARE: Holistic Approach to Community Health Program – provides trauma-informed counseling and case management services to low-income, high-need, at-risk students (teens, adults and seniors) and mental health training to parents and caregivers across Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.

A Pirates CARE Student Resource Center satellite site is already open on the Warrington campus in the Student Services area of Building 3600. The location includes a campus food pantry and the Campus Career Closet.

Brandi Wallbrown has been hired as PSC's Wellness Services Specialist at the Warrington campus. She will hold counseling sessions and case management intake meetings in an office space in the Pirates CARE Student Resource Center satellite office located in Building 3600 from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The free services include trauma-informed mental health sessions, group counseling, peer support programs, connections to on-campus and off-campus resources, wellness programming and other events.

Mental health training also will be available for the College's faculty, staff, students, community members, and caregivers.

The enhanced resources are expected to serve 135 Warrington campus students in the first year and 200 students annually in years two through four.

"Providing counseling services makes a difference in the academic success of PSC students as well as their overall wellness and emotional well-being," said PSC President Ed Meadows. "Eighty percent of students who received mental health services in 2022-2023 either re-enrolled at PSC or graduated."

The need for mental health and case management services continues to rise at the College.

"Compared to Fall 2022, this academic year (Fall 2023), we saw a 110 percent increase in the number of counseling sessions we have provided to PSC students. We have also seen a 50 percent increase in student referrals for case management services and a 114 percent increase in the number of food bags we have provided through our campus food pantries," Listau added.

Last fall, the Florida Blue Foundation, the philanthropic affiliate for the state's Blue Cross Blue Shield plan, announced a \$3.1 million investment to enhance mental health for children, teens, families and older adults.

Pensacola State is among 10 Florida nonprofit organizations to share in the investment, which supports community-based programs and partnerships that will increase access to mental health services and support.

"Because of barriers like access and stigma, it often takes years for someone struggling to reach out for help," said Florida Blue President and CEO Pat Geraghty in a prepared statement. "It is our duty to ensure critical services like mental health support are available to those who need them. That's why we are proud to partner with these organizations, making a meaningful difference for our neighbors."



A PSC counselor meets with students on the Pensacola campus. The College now offers full-time mental health services to students on the Warrington campus.



A Pensacola State College student receives grocery items from the PSC Campus Food Pantry. The Warrington campus also has a Pirates CARE Student Resource Center satellite location with a food pantry and a career closet.