



OP-ED: Suicide survivor's story offers hope, healing

by John Markley
March 26 2018 2:38 PM

On average, one person dies by suicide every six hours in Illinois. Suicide is the leading cause of death among our children ages 10-14, and the third leading cause of death for young people ages 15-24. Nearly twice as many people die by suicide as by homicide in our state.

For years, it was believed that you couldn't stop someone from ending his or her life. Research shows, now more strongly than ever, that this isn't true. Suicide is preventable, and through education, outreach and treatment, Centerstone is committed to reducing suicides in our community.

As a part of that commitment, we are proud to host a free screening of the film *Suicide: The Ripple Effect* at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) on Monday, April 9 at 7 p.m.

Suicide: The Ripple Effect shares the story of Kevin Hines, who at age 19, attempted to take his own life by jumping from the Golden Gate Bridge. He is one of only 36 individuals to survive this jump, and today, 17 years later, he has dedicated his life to sharing his story to help others find hope.

Kevin's story is an inspiration to us all, and we are honored that he will attend the screening and introduce the film before it is shown on April 9.

There are one million suicide attempts every year in the United States, and more than 40,000 deaths by suicide. Research has shown that a single death by suicide directly affects more than 115 people, and in *Suicide: The Ripple Effect*, Hines seeks to better understand the effect of his suicide attempt on his family, friends and even the first responders who saved his life.

By sharing stories of survival and recovery like Kevin's, we hope individuals will find the support they need to stay alive and heal. We believe this film will change lives.

Suicide does not discriminate, and prevention must be a community-wide effort. We all can learn common risk factors, warning signs and how to help. If you or a loved one needs assistance, please give us a call at (855) 608-3560.

We are proud to collaborate on this event with SIUE's campus suicide prevention program, iCare, as well as community partners like TheBANK of Edwardsville, the Wealthcare Group, Genoa Healthcare, GCS Credit Union, and OSF Healthcare, to bring SIUE faculty, staff and members of the community together for an important conversation about suicide prevention.

We hope to see you there.

John Markley is CEO of Centerstone, a not-for-profit health care organization dedicated to delivering care that changes people's lives.

The screening of Suicide: The Ripple Effect on April 9 is free and open to the public, but registration is required. For more information about the event and to reserve tickets, please visit <https://centerstone.org/events/foundation/the-ripple-effect-edwardsville-il>