

Eating disorder centre opens on Whyte

SEAN STEELS
Senior News Editor

Often portrayed as solely a sickness of young, self-conscious women, eating disorders have grown along with the media and cultural pressures to encompass a wider distribution of the population than ever before, affecting men, women, young, and old.

But those struggling with the burden of disordered eating will have one more option for help this September thanks to the presence of Me Without Measure (MWM): an Eating Disorder Organization on Whyte Avenue and 104 Street.

The location will serve as a hub for awareness related initiatives and support groups — one for those suffering from eating disorders, the other for friends and family members of those afflicted, explained Maggie Brennan, Program Director of MWM and masters student of counseling psychology at the University of Alberta.

Support group sessions, which are free and fully confidential, will focus on how to equip participants with the tools to battle the over-idealized false reality presented in mass media, Brennan described.

"We try to help participants develop a critical mind, question what they're seeing, and educate people about how photos are touched up in magazines and how they're used to sell you things. Big business wants you to feel bad because then

you need their product," she said.

"It all boils down to how you feel about your body, and 90 per cent of women and 50 per cent of men just don't feel very good about their bodies."

The origin of disordered eating, often regardless of gender or background, lies in self-perception and body image, explained Helen Vallianatos, who is an assistant professor in the University of Alberta's Department of Anthropology and board director at the MWM. Vallianatos specializes in how social determinants shape health.

"There aren't uniform ideals for what a beautiful body is. [In North America] you could argue that lean, muscular bodies are the beauty ideal for men and women," she said.

"We need to introduce people to the idea that a healthy body is not any particular body size and that people have different norms. We need to foster body awareness and acceptance of health at any size."

In addition to support groups, MWM also plans to divert time and resources towards expanding the canon of literature around eating disorders and body image. In the coming year, graduate students working under Vallianatos will get a chance to perform research at the MWM.

In the opinion of Peggy Szucs, MWM's Executive Director, an increase in the amount of research done on eating disorders has been a long time coming.



PETE YEE

BUILDING CONFIDENCE MWM staff hope that the centre will shed light on eating disorders.

"Statistics in Canada and the United States: there are practically none that are recent and relevant," she said, adding that because so many eating disorders go undiagnosed and because they can be so hard to identify, a realistic estimation of how many are affected is impossible.

"Someone who is bulimic might not have physical signs as opposed to an anorexic, and people affected by something that hasn't entered the health care dictionary yet, like bigorexia — obsessive compulsive body-building — would almost never be thought of as having body image issues."

Another area of focus for the MWM will be developing a support group specifically targeting men with eating disorders. Approximately ten per cent of those with eating disorders are male.

"There's more attention starting to be paid towards young men," Vallianatos said. "There might not be that much out there in terms of publication, but awareness is a start."

CAMPUS DIGEST

CAMPUS BUILDINGS EVACUATED DUE TO BOMB SCARE

Around 9:30 a.m. on August 26, College Plaza at 112 street and 82 avenue was evacuated following a bomb threat.

Edmonton Police arrived on the scene and closed surrounding roads and businesses as the explosives unit investigated.

After searching the building, nothing suspicious was found and staff were eventually allowed to return to the building.

STUDENT AWARDED FUNDING FOR FOOD PRESERVATIVE RESEARCH

A graduate student in the University of Alberta's Department of Agricultural, Food & Nutritional Science has been awarded a \$33,000 fellowship from the Canadian Wheat Board.

Brenna Black, a graduate student, will use the fellowship to explore the antifungal properties of bacteria found in wheat and barley seed.

The bacterial compounds harvested may also provide an alternative to irradiation and atmospheric packaging to extend the shelf life of food.

AGEISM DEVELOPS EARLY ON

Researchers at the U of A have found evidence for ageism in children as young as two years old.

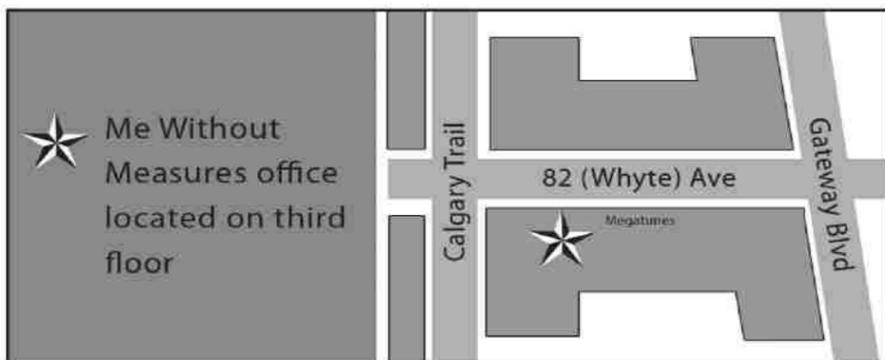
Researchers Kwong See and Elena Nicoladis with the Department of Psychology have shown that toddlers can develop negative stereotypes about those older than they are and that the effects of such development could last into their own old age.

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING AWARDED

A \$22.5 million fund has been awarded to the University of Alberta from the federal Knowledge Infrastructure Program.

The program is designed to fund projects ready for construction to additionally stimulate the economy.

A portion of the infrastructure funding will be used to renovate the Chemical and Materials Engineering Building and construct resource facilities in the Health Resources Innovation Facility.





Laurie Blakeman

MLA Edmonton-Centre
Your Official Opposition Critic for Environment, Culture and Human Rights
Helping students who live downtown

Phone:
780-414-0743

Website:
www.laurieblakeman.com

Email:
blakeman@laurieblakeman.com

Address:
#3, 9908-109 Street

Hours: 10-4

YOU'VE READ THE NEWS.
NOW HAVE YOUR SAY.
DISCUSS TODAY'S ISSUE AT

www.thegatewayonline.ca

FIRST POST!!!1!!11!!

SINCE 1910