

**RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER 11, 2006**

**SUBJECT: PROGRAMS ON DEPRESSION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

**SOURCE: Wendy Marchese, Counselor 866-0300, ext. 8374**

Herkimer, NY—Ross Szabo, Director of Youth Outreach for the National Mental Health Awareness Campaign, will present two programs at Herkimer County Community College on Tuesday, October 17.

“What Happy Faces are Hiding: Talking About Depression” will be presented at 11 a.m. in the McLaughlin College Center room 288. Diagnosed with bipolar disorder at the age of 16, Ross Szabo candidly discusses how this mental illness entered his life and how he deals with the disorder while living a productive, optimistic life. The program provides the audience with a better understanding of mental health conditions and depression. It is a valuable tool for those looking to better understand their family members or friends who are facing depression or mental illness.

Szabo will present a second program on “Mixed Drinks, Mixed Emotions: Alcohol and Mental Health” at 12:30 p.m. in the McLaughlin College Center room 288. This program addresses the ties between substance abuse and mental health. Students will learn about mental disorders, positive coping mechanisms and the best ways to open communication amongst their peers.

Szabo has put a face to a problem confronting one in every five teenagers and young adults in the United States. He has addressed over 400,000 young people, speaking with his experience, energy and youth. “I am speaking for a generation,” Szabo said. “The older generation was quiet about mental illness. It is time for us to stop losing to old ways of dealing with mental health issues and start winning the battle,” he said.

The programs are open to the public free of charge. For more information contact Counselor Wendy Marchese at (315) 866-0300, ext. 8374.

-30-

#24—10/11/2006-07

FOR MEDIA ONLY—FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT KATHERINE MONTANO, 866-0300 OR 888-GO 4-HCCC, EXT. 8259.