

Contact: Krissy Webb
850-559-7612, krissy@studentacesforleadership.com
National: www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Student ACES Teaches Mental Health First Aid Training at Glades Central
Part of National Initiative to Increase Mental Health Literacy with High School Student Athletes

BELLE GLADE, Fla. (March 8, 2019) – On Friday, Feb. 22, Student ACES taught 30 Glades Central High School ACE students Mental Health First Aid training through a groundbreaking eight-hour course. This course, taught by Student ACES Executive Director Krissy Webb, gave the students the tools to identify someone who might be struggling with a mental health or substance use problem, and how to connect them with appropriate support and resources when necessary. Webb trained to be an instructor with the support of the Merrell Family Foundation. The foundation has partnered with Student ACES to reach their goals to increase awareness of mental health resources and eliminate the stigma of mental illness.

Just as CPR helps even those without clinical training assist an individual having a heart attack, Mental Health First Aid prepares participants to interact with a person experiencing a mental health crisis. Training participants learn a five-step action plan that guides them through the process of reaching out and offering appropriate support.

Over the course of the year, Student ACES plans to teach Mental Health First Aid to more than 75 high school seniors, who are student athletes. These athletes will be well equipped to identify a mental health crisis on their teams, place of work and in college.

Mental Health First Aid training comes at a crucial time. While one in five Americans has a mental illness, many are reluctant to seek help or might not know where to turn for care. Unlike physical conditions, symptoms of mental health and substance use problems can be difficult to detect. For friends and family members, it can be hard to know when and how to step in. As a result, those in need of mental health services often do not get them until it is too late.

In just 10 years, Mental Health First Aid has become a full-blown movement in the United States. More than 1 million people are certified in Mental Health First Aid, and that number is growing every day.

Mental Health First Aid is part of the overall curriculum Student ACES offers high school student athletes to ensure they develop into young men and women of character, honor and integrity, and will be outstanding future employees.

Student ACES is supported by many local organizations, including Juno Beach-based Florida Power & Light Company (FPL), which has been a partner of the nonprofit for several years.

FPL said it works together with the communities it serves to make Florida an even better place to raise a family and do business. According to the company, supporting Student ACES and its mental health initiative accomplishes just that.

“The mental health of our students has grown to be a great concern and priority among communities nationwide, as it should be. We’re partnering with Student ACES to engage students and empower them to speak up when they feel necessary,” said Pam Rauch, vice president of external affairs and economic development at FPL. “Our students are our community’s future leaders and it’s important we give them the tools to thrive.”

Founded in 2013, Student ACES conducts training and mentoring of student athletes, and implements character and leadership curriculum in school districts in South Florida. With the help of FPL, the nonprofit has committed to coach 37,600 students in the areas of leadership and character by the end of 2023.

###

To learn more about the Merrell Family Foundation visit <http://www.merrellfamilyfoundation.org>

To learn more about Mental Health First Aid USA, visit www.MentalHealthFirstAid.org.

About Student ACES

Student ACES, founded in 2013, is a 501(c)3 organization dedicated to providing character education programs, mentoring, community service and life skills for high school student athletes. The organization is impacting the lives of students who so desperately need it. Student ACES' focus is to inspire, train and mentor a community of Student ACES who exemplify leadership traits in athletics, community service and education. The inspiration for Student ACES is derived from a deep desire to see every student achieve a foundation of honor, character and integrity that will permanently generate positive outcomes in their schools and for the next generation. Student ACES relies solely on contributions. Students participate in the organization's programs at no cost to them. For more information or to donate, please visit: <https://student-aces.networkforgood.com/projects/51676-support-student-aces>

