Owls get a head start at the Edge Fair

By Mackenzie Byerlee
Features Editor

The "Southern Edge Fair" brought outside vendors and university clubs together to show students the importance of networking face-to-face. Held in the Adanti Student Center Ballroom on Oct. 28, the fair aimed to get students connected with companies and university organizations to understand the actions they will need to take to get a job in the future.

Graduate Intern of the Office of Career and Professional Development Heidi Atuaful shared that the fair allows students to apply the skills they have learned in real world settings.

"It's really important to get learning outside of the classroom too to just figure out what you want to do with your life," Atuaful said.

The ballroom was filled with tables for students to visit and meet those that could help them potentially get a job later on. The Officer of Career and Professional Development put this event together with a focus on exposing students to experiential learning.

"Experiential learning is massive; sometimes we think of experiential learning as just an internship or a clinical placement but it also exists in clubs, organizations and leadership positions around campus," Associate Director of the Office of Career and Professional Development Aimee O'Shea, said.

The Officer of Career and Professional Development has a multitude of services available for students regarding their futures. They offer workshops, individual meetings and employer events such as various fairs that they hold throughout the semester.

With such easily accessible resources, students are able to receive the support they need when it comes to figuring out their lives after college.

Finance major Tanner Rooney, a sophomore, said that he appreciated the opportunity to connect with people in person.

"Networking is the biggest part," Rooney said. "I just wanted to meet people, see the different opportunities and get my name out there a little bit earlier."

While Rooney shared that he is not looking for anything quite yet, he recognized that it is never too early to meet potential employers.

The "Southern Edge Fair" also brought in vendors including Target, Coca-Cola and the YMCA to show students the wide range of options they have after graduation.

Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies Jennifer Sparano was representing the university's graduate programs and showcasing the importance of higher education.

"We want students to know that the graduate school is here and that they could possibly stay at Southern and be either a double or a triple Owl," Sparano said.

The university offers over 100 graduate programs and certifications, giving students even more options if they choose to continue their education after completing their undergraduate studies.

Whether students were looking for volunteer opportunities, ways to get involved on campus, future jobs or higher education options, the "Southern Edge Fair" had something for everyone.

"This is something where students can explore the opportunities that exist right here in our own home, our community, our campus," O'Shea said. "I hope that students leave with someone to contact for an experiential learning opportunity or at least knowing that it exists."



PHOTOS | WILLIAM GAGNÉ

Students networking with various representatives at the "Southern Edge Fair" in the Adanti Student Center Ballroom on Oct. 28.



TheCoderSchool representative Kyra Singh, sitting at a booth during the fair.



National Mental Health Corps representatives Nina Nhatavong and Kripa Patel.

QPR breaks the silence on suicide

Noah Nunez
General Reporter

Suicide is one of the deadliest killers the country is facing. With looser gun restrictions and the stigma surrounding suicide, hopelessness is very common.

With the fight against suicide feeling just as hopeless, this is where the Question Persuade Referral initiative comes in with the goal of helping people learn the skills needed to prevent suicide, with the training held on campus being presented by Ashley Simon, a graduate.

"I want people to feel cared about," Ashley said. "I like helping people change their thinking. I like helping them understand that there's more to life than maybe the thoughts that they can have for a little bit of time."

The presentation and training began by addressing stigmas surrounding suicide and how those who are near suicide may be seen by not only those close to them but those who want to help too.

Namely, the beginning was about denouncing many of those stigmas and how their proliferation in society can do more harm to those already in danger.

"The more clues and signs that you observe, the greater the risk that someone may be suicidal, and when we talk about suicide risks and signs, we want to make sure that we view attention-seeking behavior as a myth people hesitate to support because they may be viewed as attention-seeking," Simon said.

Now, each aspect of the QPR initiative is important in its own way. However, the one that tricks up people the most would be the persuading aspect.

It is one thing to build up the courage to ask the questions and learn what someone who is having these thoughts intends to do. It is another thing altogether to act on them and get them to reflect on why they are thinking this way.

"I know how uncomfortable it is, and I do want everyone to feel comfortable being able to ask. Like I said, if you're not the best person to ask there is other people that can. I know it feels invasive and I know it feels uncomfortable, but it is life or death, quite literally," Simon said.

After the presentation, those in attendance were given a certification that confirmed their practice and training with QPR, but being in the situation can be very different than the training may appear.

Suicide is still a tough subject for many out there, and so discussing it in these ways may lead to fear in the viewers, but they often respond with a grateful attitude to the program.

"Not everyone has the training and education and the comfort to ask. People seem very grateful, and then a lot of people too disclose that they know someone that they think is struggling and they want to find the ways to have these conversations with them," Simon said.

Many attribute the issues surrounding suicide to our society's discussion of it and the stigmas surrounding it, and how they feed them every year.

However, that is not the real issue; the real issue is choosing not to face those stigmas, choosing not to go and learn how to talk about it, choosing to stay comfortable and ignore the uncomfortable questions.

CVS brings vaccines to Owls

By Bryce Mougey
Contributor

With flu season approaching, it is important for the campus community to protect themselves against viruses. This includes getting vaccinated.

The Morrill Hall Breezeway was transformed into a vaccine clinic on Oct. 28, as students and staff waited in line to get vaccinated for flu, meningitis ACYW-135, Hepatitis A, B, or AB, COVID-19, Human Papillomavirus, measles and other vaccines.

"Well I think of it as a courtesy to others. It's important to keep a healthy learning community, because when people are not out in the classroom, they're not learning," Heidi Loiseau, adjunct professor in the physics department, said.

Loiseau said she visited the clinic to be vaccinated for pneumonia and flu.

In a collaboration with CVS, Health Services hosted the "Vaccine Clinic" as an accessible way the campus community can get vaccinated.

"Vaccines do make a difference and a lot of times we can save lives, by giving vaccines. But the patients can't always come to us in the pharmacy. So, we try to go into the community to bring vaccines to patients," Valentino Cruz, a longtime pharmacy manager for CVS, said.

This time last year, Connecticut did not have any recorded flu-related deaths, according to data from the Department of Public Health, as there have been six cases since September.

Data also shows that flu cases in the state have risen more than 22% since Oct. 20, and flu-related hospitalizations have increased more than 64%.

"We're already seeing a lot of sickness in a community, our antiviral prescriptions, COVID, we're already dispensing a lot of them," Cruz said.

Students and staff were able to receive vaccinations by bringing their insurance cards to the walk-in appointment.

"It's here already, so they can take a vaccine," Cruz said. "It takes 10 to 14 days to really kick in, so now is prime time to get the vaccine against the seasonal illness. It's not too late."

Health science major Fatima Martinez, a senior, said she received her flu shot.

"I think it just prevents disease or just to protect yourself," Martinez said.

For those who missed the pop-up clinic, Cruz said there will be more opportunities in the future for people to get vaccinated on campus.

"We are basically coming to Southern and about once every month for clinics," Cruz said. "One of the things we do is when we come, we bring all the best we have."



PHOTO | BRYCE MOUGEY

Heidi Loiseau, adjunct professor in the physics department, in the Morrill Hall Breezeway signing in at the desk to get her vaccination on Oct. 28.



PHOTO | PIXEL JONES

CVS Pharmacy sign.



PHOTO | SELF MAGAZINE

Closeup of a doctor administering a vaccination.