

The first-year project of GCSU's mental awareness campaign is coming soon. By the end of next semester GCSU is planning to introduce students to the Serenity Den.

The Serenity Den will be located on the bottom floor of the Magnolia Ballroom and is aimed at giving students a comfortable place to decompress and find mental health resources.

"Students have overwhelmingly said they would use more support from the school," said Liz Newlin, senior mass communications major. "The Serenity Den will offer a lot of information to students on different methods to help improve their mental health."

There are plans, per project coordinator Emily Jarvis, to have many different types of resources that will be informative about how students can better aid their own mental health and combat some of the common difficulties experienced while in college.

Posters on the walls and information packets/pages will be some of the many useful resources offered within the Serenity Den. There will also be information about other campus resources such as therapy offered at West Campus, but the goal is to better equip students with the ability to help themselves.

Students are also encouraged to utilize the room itself. There will be different types of furniture for unique sitting experiences throughout the room. Another plan for the Serenity Den is the inclusion of different textured rugs scattered throughout the room.

Sitting on, laying on, or just feeling some textures can have a positive experience on some people's mood and the Serenity Den is aiming to tap into that correlation. By offering students with the ability to explore those materials in a comfortable and free space, it allows them to decide what textures they enjoy over others.

"We're so excited to have a space focused on us as students," said Trinity Pahl, senior mass communications major. "There are lots of places to sit on campus but having a room specifically to relax will be amazing."

Mental Health is among the college's top focuses and the Serenity Den is the first step in the five-year plan to transform the university's mental health infrastructure for students. The plan means GCSU will continue to add more mental health related resources to students and make the university more inclusive and accepting.

“The university has never really had anything like this before,” said Abby Pollock, junior mass communications major. “We need more spaces focused on relaxing and helping students upkeep their mental health.”

College is an extremely stressful and isolating time for a lot of people. Studies by the Mayo Health Clinic have found that 44 percent of students in college report symptoms of depression. Depression in general is a rising concern amongst people 25 and under regardless of enrollment status.

Having GCSU take initiative and focus on students' wellbeing is an important of inclusivity as well. The Serenity Den will be another step in the direction of proving all students are welcome on campus and encouraged to be the best and happiest they can be in every aspect of life, and that they will have university support while working to achieve those goals.