



Kevin Hines "Be Here Tomorrow" at W.F. West April 25

Community Invited to Special Event

The Chehalis School District believes supporting the mental health of our staff and students is important. The district provides mental health support through: offering professional development opportunities; hiring mental health specialists and seeking partnerships that make them available to students; adopting social emotional curriculum for preschool through 12th grade; and welcoming professional speakers who have powerful stories to tell that can change lives.

All residents of Lewis County are invited to a special presentation called "Be Here Tomorrow" by speaker Kevin Hines:

7 p.m. Thursday, April 25
W.F. West High School gym
Free and open to the public

This event is sponsored by the [Drew North Foundation](#).

Who is Kevin Hines?

In 2000, Hines attempted to take his life by jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge. He is one of only thirty-six (less than 1%) to survive the fall from the Golden Gate Bridge. After his experience, he decided to dedicate his life to helping others. Kevin believes in the power of the human spirit and in the fact that you can find the ability to live mentally well. His mantra: "Life is a gift, that is why they call it the present. Cherish it always."



His story was featured in the 2006 film "The Bridge" by director and producer Eric Steel. Hines also released a memoir titled "Cracked Not Broken, Surviving and Thriving After a Suicide Attempt" as well as a documentary film called "Suicide: The Ripple Effect." He has also shared his compelling story with: colleges and universities; high schools; corporations; clergy; military; clinicians; health and medical communities; law enforcement organizations; and various industries.

Some of Hines' additional accolades include:

- 2016, Clifford W. Beers Award from Mental Health America
- Lifetime Achievement Award from National Council of Behavioral Health in partnership with Eli Lilly Voice Awards Fellow and Award Winner Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA)
- Achievement Winner from the U.S. Veterans Affairs and more than 30 U.S. Military Excellence medals as a civilian
- Board Member: International Bipolar Foundation (IBPF); the Bridge Rail Foundation (BRF); Mental Health Association of San Francisco (MHASF); Survivors Committee of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline; Northern California Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP); and San Francisco's Mental Health Board
- Speaker alongside Patrick Kennedy in congressional hearings in support of The Mental Health Parity Bill
- Ambassador to the National Council for Behavioral Health.



Bearcats Helping Bearcats

Hines' visit to Chehalis is possible through the work of W.F. West Senior Abigail Alexander. Spurred by the loss of classmates to suicide, as well as the mental health toll she saw in her peers during COVID, Alexander said she decided she wanted to do something meaningful to help.

"It was important to me to go out and help other students from a student perspective," Alexander said.

Alexander heard about Hines from her mother, a nurse with Providence, which uses Hines' messages as resources for its employees. Hines has dedicated a great deal of work with employees in high-stress jobs such as first responders, medical workers and members of the military. Alexander reached out to Hines through Instagram and was pleasantly surprised when he wrote back immediately and was interested in coming to Chehalis.

Alexander decided to approach the community to help fund the \$18,000 cost to bring Hines in for an entire day with the student population and then an evening event for the Lewis County community. Those who donated were: [Drew North Foundation](#), [Northwest Pediatric Center](#), [Dr. Jennifer Scalici](#), [Security State Bank](#), [Bethel Church](#), [Wagner Orthodontics](#), Mike and Sue Austin, The Eklund Family, The Alexander Family, [Chehalis Education Association](#) and [WEA Chinook](#). Drew North specifically paid for the entire cost of the evening event for the community.

"It's just amazing to see the community come together after a tragic few years. I think for my peers, it was mind blowing to see how supportive people were of this," Alexander said.

Stacey Cummings, who works with the student leadership team at W.F. West High School, was one of the W.F. West staff members who helped Alexander with her efforts. Cummings said she has been incredibly impressed by Alexander's passion and work ethic.

"It's cool to see a student who is passionate about something and works her tail off to make something happen," Cummings said.

In addition to the evening event for the community, Hines will spend the early part of the day on April 25 at W.F. West High School. There will be an assembly-style gathering for W.F. West students, followed by a question and answer session and then Hines will be present at the school afterward to talk to students. Additional counselors are also being brought in to the high school that day to be available for students who want to speak to someone about their mental health.

"I feel like Kevin Hines really has a strong message of health and resilience and I want people to hear about it. He's living a healthy and good life after a hugely traumatic incident," Cummings said.

Alexander said she hopes to see her peers and community members come together and listen to Hines and really benefit from his message.

"If this special event saves just one person, it will be worth it. Overall, if kids take something positive from it, it will be a success," Alexander said.

More Helpful Info

-More information, including videos and the documentary "Suicide The Ripple Effect" are available at [Kevin Hines' website](#)

-If you or someone you know is considering suicide, help is available by calling 988, by texting HELP to 741741 or at [suicide.org](#).

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