Students dedicate day to Fibromyalgia awareness
By Katie Rossomano | No Comments
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This year’s Fibromyalgia Awareness Day was celebrated at Cal State Fullerton on Saturday with an all-day event, "Make Fibromyalgia Visible." The day included a Wellness Fair, educational seminars, walks to raise awareness and musical performances. The event was hosted by the National Fibromyalgia Association in coordination with CSUF’s Fibromyalgia Research and Education Center. The event began at 11:30 a.m. and continued until 8:00 p.m.

According to FMA’s website, Fibromyalgia is a chronic pain illness that effects about 10 million Americans and approximately three to six percent of the world’s population. Diagnostic criteria includes a “history of widespread pain in all four quadrants of the body for a minimum duration of three months, and pain in at least 11 of 18 designated tender points when a specified amount of pressure is applied.”

Jordan Aquino, a CSUF health science major, is the Research Coordinator at CSUF’s Fibromyalgia Research and Education Center, and is also Research and Program Manager for NFA.

He said that while the cause of FM is unknown, there is often, “Some type of trauma (physical or emotional) that can trigger it.”

The illness can affect people of any age or ethnic background. Stephanie Untalan, a CSUF student majoring in health science, was a volunteer at the event.

“I was surprised to see a little boy who had Fibromyalgia,” Untalan said.

A Wellness Fair with over 20 exhibits was available all day, and included health screenings, information about FM, family activities, massages and product and food samples. A few of the exhibitors present were the Aadara Yoga and Healing Arts Studio, Apex Research Institute and the Arthritis Foundation. The event
also included 25 free educational seminars presented by experts on a variety of topics related to FM such as “Nutrition and Brain Function,” “Spirituality: The Wellness Connection,” “Role of the Caregiver” and “Therapeutic/Restorative Yoga.”

After the seminars, the third annual 1k and 5k “Walk(s) of FAME (Fibromyalgia Awareness Means Everything)” began. Participants walked around campus and were cheered on by friends, family and event volunteers.

Yoshimi Kawano, a CSUF kinesiology major who volunteered at the event, was inspired by the Walk of FAME participants.

"The running people were active, having fun, (which demonstrated that) exercise reduces stress,” Kawano said.

According to FMA’s website, this was one of hundreds of community walks that were organized internationally around May 15.

The walk was followed by dinner and the “Lights of Hope” celebration. During the celebration, 10 large cranberry-colored candles were lit in honor of over 10 million people in the U.S. who are affected by FM. White candles were lit to honor individuals who suffer from the illness.

According to FMA’s website, the white candles were provided following a $20 donation to FMA. The names of the individuals represented by the candles were read during the program.

According to a pamphlet provided at the event, "The light of all these candles will brighten the evening sky – just as the joint efforts of the fibromyalgia community are brightening the future for all people suffering with this chronic-pain disorder.”