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DLI offers classes on dealing with grief, confronting radical Islam

Saturday, March 24th, 2018

Jeff Anderson Special to The Times



The front gate of Schreiner University invites all to “Enter with Hope.” This bold invitation is carved in stone and speaks to the long history and future commitment of Schreiner to resilience of all sorts.

The Soaring Spirits Resilience Center at Schreiner University was founded upon this promise. Schreiner’s Resilience Center is first of its kind in the U.S. to focus primarily on grief and resilience, based on research conducted with widowed people. The center pairs the innovative organizational knowledge of Soaring Spirits International with the academic integrity of Schreiner University.

The resources available through the center benefit a variety of grieving populations, while offering resources and

tools for building resilience through any of life’s challenges to both the Schreiner student body and the Texas Hill Country community.

On April 3, from 10 to 11:30 a.m., Dynamic Learning will host “Resilience in Grief and Life’s Challenges: Building your Toolbox.” This DLI class will take place at Schreiner University and will be led by Carrie West, who serves on the advisory board of Soaring Spirits International and is the director of research for Soaring Spirits Resilience Center at Schreiner.

West received her doctoral degree in communication studies from the University of Denver, where she focused on interpersonal and family communication.

SSRC at Schreiner University is dedicated to researching and providing evidence-based resources for widowed people and to the people who support them. The backstory on this partnership between SSI and Schreiner University came about when West approached SSI about conducting a research project that involved collecting data from widowed people attending Soaring Spirits' Camp Widow program. Camp Widow is a weekend-long program that offers widowed people access to a peer community and provides resources and tools to rebuild their lives following the death of a spouse or partner.

“At the time, I was interested in communication processes widowed people use to construct resilience,” West said. “My research revealed maintaining hopefulness was the biggest predictor of a person having a positive outcome after being widowed.”

West's research led to other research projects and was useful to SSI in developing and improving the Camp Widow weekend, as well as the five other peer-support programs offered by SSI. In thinking “big picture,” SSI and West began exploring the idea of developing practical tools based on the valuable research they'd already collected with a goal of making the tools available to a larger population of widowed people who were trying to work through their grief on their own. As the conversation continued, the idea for developing a full-time Resilience Center that would be a resource for not only those grieving, but for anyone evolved.

Losing a spouse or loved one is among the most challenging experiences we face in life. The sadness of loss is

unavoidable; however, it doesn't have to be devastating. Researchers have affirmed that we are naturally resilient when confronted with traumatic events.

We each possess the ability to bounce back in the face of adversity and, in some ways, be even stronger after working through loss. The good news is resilience isn't something you either have or don't have. Regardless of where you start, resilience, or grit, can be improved through certain skills. Researchers have identified tools that can be developed through practice.

These tools can be applied to grief as well as other challenging life events, and can enhance well-being and personal growth. In this course, West will identify tools resilient people use, and how those tools can be developed through practice in everyday life. After this course, participants will have a better understanding of how to be resilient in grief and how to support others when they are working through loss.

The Dynamic Learning Class host will be DLI Vice Chairwoman Kathleen Maxwell-Rambie. The cost to attend the April 3 class is \$20 per person. To register, call 792-4044 Mondays through Fridays, or register online at www.clubed.net.

The classroom is located in the CCAC Ballroom — building No. 2 on map at <http://schreiner.edu/campus-info/campus-tour/index.aspx>. Parking is next to the building in parking lot A.

LEARN ABOUT RADICAL ISLAM

Radical Islam is considered the No. 1 terror threat to the United States. The FBI tells us there are more than 1,000 open cases regarding radical Islamic extremists in our nation.

On April 5, Kerrville is privileged that retired U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jeffrey F. Addicott, the director of The Center for Terrorism Law, will lead a DLI presentation on “Radical Islam: Why? Confronting Jihad at Home and Abroad.” “In any conflict, success cannot be achieved unless the enemy can be identified,” Addicott said.

He will focus his message on helping you gain a better understanding of the tactics of terrorism in general and the motives of radical Islamists who engage in the tactics.

Addicott is a professor of law at St. Mary’s School of Law. An active-duty Army officer in the Judge Advocate General’s Corps for 20 years, he served as the senior legal advisor to the United States Army’s Special Forces. As an internationally recognized authority on national security law, Addicott has delivered more than 700 speeches across the globe. He has also testified before Congress on a variety of legal issues.

He is a regular contributor to national and international news media outlets including Fox News Channel, MSNBC, CNN, BBC, The New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal and USA Today. He has given more than 5,000 media interviews.

Addicott has published more than 60 books, articles and monographs on a variety of legal topics.

The premise of “Confronting Jihad at Home and Abroad” is to explore the nature of the enemy forces arrayed against us so that we can understand better ways to confront them. Addicott believes that “the Trump administration has done a fantastic job in blunting the

scourge of radical Islam — both domestically and internationally.”

The class host will be DLI founding board member Bob Carey. The cost to attend the 6-7:30 p.m. class at the Dietert Center is \$20 per person. To register, call 792-4044 Mondays through Fridays, or register online at www.clubed.net.

WHAT IS THE DYNAMIC LEARNING INSTITUTE?

DLI is a Kerrville community partnership between the Dietert Center’s Club Ed, Schreiner University, SERV Kerrville and the Dynamic Learning Institute Board of Directors. Dynamic Learning aims to provide the Kerrville area with fun, interactive and stimulating learning experiences.

More than 850 participants have joined DLI classes this semester to discover the joy of learning from dynamic instructors with a lifetime of subject experiences to share. There are no tests, no grades and no papers — just the opportunity to explore interesting topics and develop new interests.

About Anderson

DLI Chairman Jeff Anderson is servant pastor of SERV Kerrville, a nonprofit collaborating with community partners to empower lifelong learning