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Good morning!

A couple of reminders to share:

**Locked Classroom Doors** – Our friends in Safety and Security would like to remind us that classroom doors should be locked once it's time for class to begin. This recommendation is based upon best practices in campus safety and helps ensure the safety of everyone in the room. The crisis management plan policy is being revised, and once that is complete, red alert trainings will be conducted at all OTC locations. Until then, please make it a practice to lock your classroom doors.

**Voices from Vietnam Premiere** – A reminder that on Friday, OTC will host the premiere of a documentary featuring one of our long-time adjunct faculty, Larry Rottmann. Larry is a Vietnam veteran who has written numerous books, films and stage plays chronicling his experiences during and since the war. The documentary *Voices from Vietnam* is the culmination of over 30 years' worth of those creative efforts. The film has screened at several festivals recently, winning Best Pro Documentary at the Real to Reel International Film Festival. The premiere will be held on **Friday, November 12 at 8 p.m. in LCN 211**. The event is free and open to the public. The film runs just under an hour and will be followed by a short Q&A with the filmmakers. Please see the promotional flier attached.

**MCCA Convention** – The annual MCCA convention begins Wednesday in Branson. I hope you are able to participate either in-person or virtually. We have several colleagues who are presenting at the conference and sharing their knowledge with others around the state.

**OTC Cares** – I've been reflecting lately on the **holistic** pillar of OTC Cares. The term "holistic" means that something is comprehensive, which feels really big. But I'm reminded of one of my favorite quotes, which was painted on the Berlin Wall: *Many small people, in many small places, do many small things, that can alter the face of the world.*

As I think about "holistic" care for our students, how we attend to their mental health is one of the first things that comes to my mind. We are experiencing a mental health crisis. There is a dire shortage of mental health care professionals, and access is a serious issue. Last week, I shared the [Happier U website](#), which has videos and other resources designed to help bolster mental health. I hope you'll share these resources with your students, but we need to go beyond this. Very few of us are licensed counselors, and sometimes we feel powerless when students open up to us about struggles with their emotional and behavioral health. We all know that we can fill out an OTC Cares report, but how do we respond in that moment? I have found that affirming their decision to talk about their struggles is a great place to start. Thank them for trusting you enough to share with you, and assure them they have done the right thing by opening up. These messages will not solve their problems, but they often provide a level of relief – a lifting of some of the shame they likely feel.

This feels like a really small thing, but it's these small things that build up to create our culture of care.

Have a great week!

**Tracy M. McGrady, Ed.D**

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