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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Health educator's violence prevention course awarded grant

AMHERST, MA – A \$3,500 grant from UMass Amherst's Faculty Senate General Education Council will support expansion of a violence prevention course developed and taught by Tom Schiff, Ed.D., of University Health Services' Health Education department.

The three-credit "Voices Against Violence" course and a companion outreach project challenge all forms of violence, particularly men's violence against women. The expansion will make the course eligible for General Education status, in the category of social and cultural diversity, potentially as early as September, 2008.

"Voices Against Violence uses a 'bystander' approach, empowering students to confront abusive or violent peers and to view violence systemically," Schiff said. "There's a great deal of research showing that bystander response can have tremendous impact on the de-escalation of actual and potential violence. In addition, we want students to understand the many ways they can affect their environment." The highly popular course has been fully enrolled for the past five semesters, with many more students seeking to participate.

Schiff specializes in violence prevention, outreach, men's health and tobacco education, oversees the UHS' Student Health Advisory Board and is an adjunct faculty member in the university's Social Justice Education program.

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INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY:

- Tom Schiff, Ed.D., Health Educator, UHS; creator, "Voices Against Violence"