One-woman play calls attention to addiction

‘Insides OUT!’ portrays personal battle

BY BRIAN LEE

The Institute of Urban Health Research this year will play a part in combating addiction.

First up is its sponsorship of a one-woman play by Katie Rubin, a 28-year-old graduate of Amherst College and master of fine arts candidate at the University of California-Davis.

The play, “Insides OUT!” is an acclaimed, hour-long story of Rubin’s battle with multiple addictions during her collegiate and young professional years. It will be held at Blackman Auditorium Sept. 29.

“It’s funny and heavy at the same time,” said Rubin by phone from Oakland this week. “It moves all over the place, through poetry, drama and singing.”

Influenced by psychoanalyst Carl Jung, the story is told through the voice of seven archetypes — the addict, the critic or judge, the wise woman, the child, the prostitute and the poet. “They all collectively tell the journey into and out of addiction,” she said.

Rubin said she’s recovering from “all of it — drugs, alcohol and manifestations of food disorders, though I’m not anorexic or bulimic. I work with a lot of women who are.”

Rubin said her addictions grew “insane” when she moved from Amherst to New York City.

But she’s since learned to cope through performing, and earlier this year completed a nine-week production at the Sacramento Theatre Company. She said she mostly performs at recovery homes, but has increasingly told her story to college students. “It feels like I’m supposed to tell it,” Rubin said.

Bouvé Distinguished Professor Hortensia Amaro keynoted an alcohol and drug programs convention in California last year and was impressed by Rubin’s performance.

The institute will follow the performance with a more research-based component on addiction Nov. 30. Nora Volkow, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, a segment of the National Institutes of Health, discusses drug addiction in the brain during Student Activities period.