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NO MORE

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS UNITE AGAINST CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT

To view the series, visit southwestpasaysnomore.org/university-presidents.
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University Presidents and Community Leaders Unite Against Campus Sexual Assault
- Report on efforts to promote student safety and violence prevention -

PITTSBURGH, Sept. 14, 2017 – College and university leaders in Allegheny and Westmoreland counties united with community advocates and public officials on Monday, Sept. 11, to reaffirm their commitment and report on the region’s progress in addressing campus sexual assault.

The event at University of Pittsburgh marked the public launch of a video series featuring 13 area university presidents emphasizing the importance of addressing this issue, refusing to tolerate abuse on campus and encouraging students to report and seek assistance.

“Change starts with leadership from the top,” said Kristy Trautmann, executive director, FISA Foundation. “In Southwestern Pennsylvania, college and community leaders are stepping forward in bold new ways to work collaboratively with a focus on prevention, and ensure that victims of sexual violence are met with respect and support.”

The program included a video address from Gov. Tom Wolf, who vocalized his support for the Southwestern Pennsylvania universities and organizations working to prevent campus sexual assault. Pennsylvania Department of Health Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine, Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and Westmoreland County Commissioners Gina Cerilli, Ted Kopas and Charles Anderson, justice system representatives and victim service advocates were among those who spoke about the region’s collective commitment to this important issue, and Maggie Kennedy, a student at the University of Pittsburgh and member of the It’s On Us Task Force, shared her unique perspective.

Presidents and leaders from Point Park University, Chatham University, Carlow University, Seton Hill University, Robert Morris University and University of Pittsburgh were present to report on the collective policies and practices their institutions have implemented as part of their commitment to a safe campus culture.

“We’re not going backward in the importance of emphasizing this and continuing to address this as an issue on college campuses,” said Carlow University President Suzanne Mellon at the event.

To view the video series and access Title IX resources, visit http://southwestpasaysnomore.org/university-presidents/. For further information, see our press kit.

- More -
About Southwest PA Says No More
Southwest PA Says NO MORE is a regional movement of organizations and individuals who are working to end domestic and sexual violence. FISA Foundation, in partnership with The Heinz Endowments and United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania developed Southwest PA Says No More to showcase the important prevention-focused work happening in this region, and to make it easier for individuals and organizations to take action to stop gender-based violence. More than 25 organizations across the region have partnered with Southwest PA Says No More, including the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh, YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh, and Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh.

Photo by Brian Cohen. Carlow University President Dr. Suzanne Mellon speaks at Monday’s event. Standing next to her, from left to right, is University of Pittsburgh Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement Kathy Humphrey, Robert Morris University Provost David Jamison, Seton Hill University President Dr. Mary Finger, Point Park University President Dr. Paul Hennigan and Chatham University President Dr. David Finegold.

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COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS UNITE AGAINST CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT

In this video series, presidents from 13 colleges and universities in Allegheny and Westmoreland counties emphasize the importance of addressing sexual violence, refusing to tolerate abuse on campus and encouraging victims to report and seek assistance.

These statements reflect years of collaborative leadership between many of these college and university administrations as well as with rape crisis centers, community police departments and prosecutors, and other community partners. All colleges and universities should adopt policies and practices to keep students safe and to ensure that victims of sexual violence are believed and supported. We’re proud of those that do.

To view the series, visit southwestpasaysnomore.org/university-presidents.

FAST FACTS

- **Title IX** is a section of the federal civil rights law passed in 1972, which prevents sex and gender discrimination in education. In recent years, Title IX has been regarded by colleges and universities as a mandate to ensure all students are free from sexual assault and abuse. For a complete list of Title IX resources available at these schools, visit southwestpasaysnomore.org/university-presidents.
- More than 120,000 **students** attend the schools led by these 13 presidents in Allegheny and Westmoreland counties.
- Nationally, **one in five** female undergraduates and **one in 14** male undergraduates have reported experiencing sexual assault while in college, according to the Department of Justice.
- **More than 50% of college sexual assaults occur in the first four months of the fall semester,** and students are at an increased risk during the first few months of their first and second semesters in college, according to a campus sexual assault study published in the Journal of American College Health.
Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh – Campus Sexual Assault Collaborative Practices

Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh are committed to the safety and well-being of our higher education students in the area of sexual assault. Key stakeholders within the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County comprised of the Allegheny County District Attorney’s Office, the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, the forensic and medical community, PAAR, the foundation community and leaders and staff from the ten PCHE institutions have come together as partners, endorsing the following collaborative practices:

We are committed to supporting…

- Establishing a regional steering committee that meets at least four times a year for the first year, then twice a year then moves to annually or as needed. The steering committee would consist of representatives from the Allegheny County District Attorney’s Office, the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, forensic experts including SANE nurses, the Medical Examiner’s Office, PAAR, the foundation community and PCHE. Other community based support and advocacy groups can be added as needed. The purpose of the committee would be to review current practices, suggest quality improvements and address areas of opportunity.

- The offering ‘First Responder Training’ for all individuals that may come in contact with victims of sexual assault at or affiliated with a Pittsburgh higher education institution. This training will be led by subject matter experts with a particular focus on trauma, proper response to a victim, report writing, initial interview, forensics and understanding the victim’s mindset. Curriculum development and delivery of the training modules will be led by key Pittsburgh partners that will include but is not exclusive to the Allegheny County District Attorney’s Office, the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, forensic experts including SANE nurses, the Medical Examiner’s Office, PAAR, the foundation community and PCHE institutions’ staff.

- The offering ‘Title IX (Non-University) Community training’ that gives an overview of university/college’s requirements in the area of sexual assault as outlined by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, to our community partners (non-university police departments, DA’s office, advocacy groups such as PAAR, SANE nurses, etc.) This would include supplemental training and or communication notifying our community partners of any changes that may be announced by the DoE OCR.

- Facilitating and participating in regular meetings by Title IX Coordinators and others as appropriate from each PCHE institution to share policy, protocols, best practices and new ideas. This includes creating a PCHE Title IX sub-committee to lead discussions and initiatives in the community, and
creating a PCHE Title IX email distribution list to exchange relevant or pertinent information related to Title IX and Pennsylvania legal issues.

- Communicating to our respective communities when PCHE institutions partner in the area of prevention, investigation and response programming.

- Leveraging and drawing upon the rich, local resources and expertise on sexual assault in the areas of support, training, prevention and education within PCHE institutions. PCHE schools will also utilize one another to stay current and accountable for providing top notch prevention and response.

- Communicating as permitted and appropriate with key stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, information that is relevant to investigations and developments on sexual assault cases. Any communications would be done within confidentiality guidelines and requirements for all parties involved.
PCHE – Background of Collaboration to Address Campus Sexual Assault

- In February 2015, the 10 PCHE Presidents declared **campus sexual assault to be a priority** across Pittsburgh’s campuses.

- In May 2015, the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights holds a Title IX Training at University of Pittsburgh for the region. External stakeholders are invited to participate including members of the foundation community, District Attorney’s office, city police detectives, victim advocacy leaders and forensic nursing leaders.

- In June 2015, key stakeholders across multiple sectors were assembled to author the ‘Allegheny County and City of Pittsburgh Campus Sexual Assault Collaborative Practices’ document. All 10 PCHE presidents signed and supported the implementation of this protocols document.

- In spring of 2015, PCHE’s Executive Director Karina Chavez began convening Title IX coordinators on a quarterly basis to review and coordinate policy, best practices and training.

- In January 2016, Duquesne University, led by its Chief of Police Tom Hart, hosted a ‘Sexual Assault Investigator Training for Initial Responders’ for PCHE public safety officers and regional police officers. Over 110 first responders attended the training.

- In January 2016, the first SA Regional Steering Committee was assembled to coordinate and guide efforts in prevention, response and investigation of campus sexual assault. The SA Regional Steering Committee continues to meet quarterly to review ongoing priorities and assess progress.

- In March 2016, the PCHE steering committee identifies “priorities” via a survey to refer on to Title IX coordinators for discussion.

- In March 2016, Holly Hippensteel, Title IX Coordinator at Carnegie Mellon University, Elizabeth Rosemeyer, Title IX Coordinator at Point Park University and Katie Pope, Title IX Coordinator at University of Pittsburgh, presented their Title IX colleagues with an overview of campus climate surveys, methodology, planning and open discussion.
In August 2016, our 10 member institutions are sponsored an all-day Title IX Training hosted by Robert Morris University covering advanced Title IX topics such as Informal Resolutions, Disclosure of Information, current trends and Title IX law, Investigator vs. Panel hearing models and more.

In November 2016, PCHE schools partnered with FISA Foundation and Heinz Endowments to screen ‘Audrie + Daisy’ and host a panel discussion.

In April 2017, over 100 staff from across all 10 PCHE schools participated in a three-day Green Dot bystander intervention program training. Each university will develop its own plan for implementing the model on their campuses beginning in school year 2017-18. Additionally, there will be collaboration and peer learning across campuses in implementation and evaluation. This is the first time an entire community, across multiple universities, has committed to collaborative adoption of this best practice prevention model.

In August 2017, Presidents of Carlow University, Carnegie Mellon University, Chatham University, Community College of Allegheny County, Duquesne University, La Roche College, Point Park University, Robert Morris University and University of Pittsburgh all participated in a film project about campus sexual assault as a leadership issue.
Westmoreland County efforts to change the culture to prevent violence

Blackburn Center provides services to victims of domestic and sexual violence and other types of violence and crime in Westmoreland County. Services are free and confidential.

In 2007, Blackburn Center and Seton Hill University initiated an institutional partnership to address and prevent sexual assault and domestic violence on campus. They sought to discover: *What does it take to change the attitudes and behaviors of a diverse cohort of college students to prevent sexual assault and domestic violence from happening? Working together, could we prevent these crimes?*

A project team was formed to lead the university-wide initiative. Dubbed STAR (Social Transformation through Awareness and Resolve), it is comprised of administration, student life professionals, faculty across departments and Blackburn Center staff. Over a decade of work, the project now encompasses all facets of the Seton Hill campus and culture, including:

- providing support to faculty across disciplines in integrating gender violence into curricula;
- developing strategies to engage men (including athletes) in meaningful ways;
- training all students, faculty, staff and administration in bystander intervention;
- educating students about their rights and the services available to them – taking great care to ensure that appropriate responses to victims are in place and that perpetrators are held accountable;
- updating university policies and enhanced university training for residence life staff and other key players in this area;
- reviewing university HR policies (e.g., those related to family leave and equal pay) to address more global issues of equity.

STAR’s Assessment Team focuses on developing tools to gather and analyze data and quantify their success, and it has developed quantitative and qualitative tools to assess the impact of campus programming. The primary method of quantitative evaluation is a survey that tests the effectiveness of class-based and campus-wide strategies intended to change attitudes and beliefs about gender-based violence.

Seton Hill faculty have presented on this project at several national conferences, leading the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg to join the STAR effort in 2014. Pitt Greensburg is following Seton Hill’s example, and researchers are working together to measure the impact of prevention activities.

Blackburn Center has established a goal of full participation by all college campuses in Westmoreland County. Initial efforts are underway at Saint Vincent College and Westmoreland County Community College.