



**NEWS RELEASE**  
June 15, 2021

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## **Southwest Pa Says No More launches “Dear Men” video series at 8<sup>th</sup> annual Father’s Day Pledge**

*New series sheds light on the critical role men play in preventing domestic violence and sexual assault and harassment*

PITTSBURGH – Southwest PA Says No More launches “[Dear Men](#),” a new video series that addresses the critical role men play in preventing domestic violence and sexual assault and harassment – a serious issue that affects up to one in three women. The series is the centerpiece of Father’s Day Pledge 2021, an annual observance where area business leaders, public officials, and community members speak out against gender violence. Today’s ceremony was held virtually for the first time in its eighth year.

“The Father’s Day Pledge is an opportunity for more men to get involved in breaking the cycles of violence that devastate families and impact the safety and health of our communities and workplaces,” says Kristy Trautmann, founder of Southwest Pa Says No More and executive director of FISA Foundation. “Most men believe this is an important issue, and want to be involved, but are not sure what they can do to make a difference. This year, we offer simple ways to live the pledge and take action.”

“Dear Men” casts light on the abuse and harassment women experience every day and provides concrete examples for men, how a simple action – what they say or do – can make a difference. In the videos, eleven local men read letters from survivors of partner violence and abuse. They recount how a bystander, by simply speaking up or being there, made a difference to her, whether he knew it or not.

Filmed in Pittsburgh, the men – all volunteers – are visibly moved as they read the letters aloud and pledge to do their part to end violence. The letters are inspired by stories that often go untold, ranging from an abusive ex-boyfriend to harassment in the workplace, bar, bus, classroom, soccer field, and simple actions people took that made a difference.

“Dear Men” was created by Gordon Robertson, founder and creative director of Hullabaloo, with video production by Covalent. The series features five videos - one six-minute video and four two-minute videos, along with a companion video discussion guide, and additional resources at [SouthwestPaSaysNoMore.org/FathersDayPledgePA](https://SouthwestPaSaysNoMore.org/FathersDayPledgePA).

At today's gathering, Jim McQuade, president and CEO of Dollar Bank, led the recitation of the pledge joined by Kenyon R. Bonner, vice provost and dean of students at the University of Pittsburgh, and Mike McClaine, CEO of Aspirant. Lisa Perry, executive director of PAAR, also spoke about the impact of the pandemic and new, free, confidential services available around the clock. County Executive Rich Fitzgerald reinforced the county's long support of the pledge and programs for vulnerable families.

"Business and community leaders in our region support this important work year over year," says Bobbi Watt Geer, president and CEO of United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania. "Their staunch leadership on this issue is an inspiration for us all. Everyone has a role to play. Prevention work in Southwestern Pennsylvania serves as a model for communities across the nation. Thanks to all those committed to ending domestic violence and sexual assault and creating safe, healthy communities."

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#### **About Southwest PA Says No More**

Southwest PA Says No More is a growing community of organizations and individuals who are working to end domestic violence and sexual assault and harassment. FISA Foundation in partnership with United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania and The Heinz Endowments developed Southwest PA Says No More to showcase the important prevention focused work happening in this region and 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 Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh, Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern Pa, Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh, and UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.