



Featured in this issue: Campus Sexual Assault

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From the Executive Director

Every year, thousands of college students are sexually assaulted on campus. As within the general community, few perpetrators of campus sexual assault are held accountable, while few survivors feel safe enough, or informed enough, to report these crimes.



Once again, New York State has taken the lead on this national issue. In an effort to implement a set of uniform sexual assault response protocols statewide, Governor Cuomo developed a SUNY-wide policy that he proposed to extend through legislation to every college and university in the state. This effort, which was passed in June 2015, was part of the Governor’s “Enough is Enough” campaign to create a statewide definition of affirmative consent on college campuses as part of a law to combat sexual assaults.

This issue’s feature article by Andrea Stagg and Joseph Storch explains the development and implementation of these new sexual assault prevention and response policies on their SUNY Albany campus. Our Q&A, conducted with Carol Stenger, Chantelle Cleary, and Lisa Evaneski, compares and contrasts the training, enforcement, and day-to-day policy implementation realities between SUNY Albany’s larger campus population and Oswego’s comparatively smaller but equally diverse faculty and student body.

I believe you will find this issue useful as you continue to work with the campuses in your communities and within your networks. I wish you all a safe and happy summer.

Gwen Wright

Governor Cuomo Screens *The Hunting Ground*

In June 2015, Governor Cuomo hosted two screenings of [The Hunting Ground](#), a documentary written and directed by Kirby Dick and produced by Amy Ziering.

[The NYC screening](#) on June 2 at Lincoln Center was also attended by the founders of [End Rape on Campus](#) (EROC), [Andrea Pino and Annie E. Clark](#), survivors of sexual assaults committed against them while they were students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. [The Albany screening](#) on June 8 at the [NYS Museum](#) featured guest speaker and sexual assault survivor [Meaghan Greeley](#), who is now a domestic violence and sexual assault advocate at [Vera House](#) in Syracuse, NY.

Through a series of firsthand accounts and survivor interviews, the film exposes and systematically explores campus sexual assault and the subsequent lack of response and support that survivors face when they report to or seek help from their universities. The film ends with several recommendations for prevention and response, including legislation that proposes to mandate all campuses nationwide to prioritize victim safety and perpetrator accountability over institutional reputation.

NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline

1-800-942-6906

English & español, Multi-Language Accessibility

Nat’l Relay Service for Deaf or Hard of Hearing: 711

In NYC: 311 or 1-800-621-HOPE (4673)

TDD: 1-866-604-5350

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OPDV’s Campuses Page

The [College Campuses](#) page on our website offers resources for students, administrators, and security, as well as parents and bystanders.



October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month! What are you planning to turn purple this year? Check out our [Toolkit](#) for ideas. During DVAM, post on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram with the hashtags [#ShineTheLight](#) and [#NYSpurple](#).

Did You Know...

A 2014 study of 483 first-year female students attending a college in Northeastern United States revealed that “between 8% and 11% of women experienced rape in each semester during their first year in college.”

[McCauley, Heather L., & Casler, Adam W. \(2015\). College Sexual Assault: A Call for Trauma-Informed Prevention. Journal of Adolescent Health. Volume 56 \(Issue 6\), pp.584–585.](#)

SUNY Institutes Statewide Policy for Sexual Violence on Campus

[Andrea Stagg](#) and [Joseph Storch](#), both Associate Counsel for the [SUNY Office of General Counsel](#), served as coordinators of the Chancellor's Temporary Working Group on Sexual Assault Prevention Policies

[The State University of New York](#) is a longstanding leader in sexual and interpersonal violence prevention and response. Historically, each of the sixty-four SUNY campuses spanning the Empire State has followed its own set of policies and procedures, based on best practices, state and federal laws, and internal SUNY guidelines, while SUNY has provided system-wide, broad-based training to help employees identify and appropriately respond to violence on campus. However, the evolution of the legal and regulatory landscape has inspired the need for more standardized sexual and interpersonal violence procedures statewide.

The Solution

In October 2014, [Governor Cuomo](#) attended a SUNY Board of Trustees meeting for the passage of a [Resolution](#) that called for a [set of policies](#) to be adopted by every SUNY campus regarding sexual assault prevention and response. Although each SUNY campus currently maintains its own code of conduct, every campus within the state, from the [Fashion Institute of Technology](#) (SUNY FIT) in New York City to the [University at Buffalo](#) (SUNY UB) has now adopted the Resolution to establish statewide, system-wide uniformity in identifying, reporting, and responding to sexual assault.

The Process

To develop the policies, [SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher](#) organized a working group of campus professionals, students, faculty, and outside experts. Additionally, SUNY reached out to advocates and experts from state and national organizations during the policy-drafting and implementation planning processes, so that the policies would be guided by experts in the field such as [Robin Braunstein](#), retired Division Director of [Services to Aid Families](#), [Gwen Wright](#), Executive Director of the [Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence](#), [political activist Libby Post](#), and SurvJustice founder [Laura Dunn](#).

Through several meetings and ongoing email communication, the working group presented town hall-style webinars to provide all SUNY employees and students an opportunity to read the policies and provide feedback via online forum, from which the group received hundreds of comments. Additionally, the Governor's Executive Chamber helped arrange three meetings with upstate and downstate community organizations including the [New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#), the [New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault](#), the [New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault](#), and [Legal Momentum](#), so that the essential perspectives of survivors and advocates were included in all policy considerations. All working group decisions were by consensus, not majority vote.

What Does the Resolution Do?

The resolution includes implementing a uniform, system-wide response to sexual assault on all SUNY campuses by:

- Defining "consent" that must occur between participants prior to sexual activity;
- Providing an immunity policy to protect students who report a sexual assault;
- Providing statewide training for campus police and administrators;
- Increasing awareness among students and parents through a public campaign;
- Providing a uniform Sexual Assault Victims' Bill of Rights.

Some victims and survivors of sexual assault may never disclose, or may disclose confidentially to a counselor, advocate, or health care provider. Others may seek remedies in the criminal justice system and/or the campus conduct system. Although the SUNY website describes the options in some detail and includes contact information for each, the adjudication systems can be difficult to navigate, and SUNY seeks to make the process as straightforward as possible while providing guidance and support.

For more information, please visit SUNY's [Sexual Assault Prevention Resources](#) webpage.

SUNY Albany Responds to Sexual Assault
[SUNY Albany's Advocacy Center for Sexual Violence](#) opened its doors in January 2014, after President Robert J. Jones approved a proposal to establish comprehensive support and advocacy services for victims/survivors of sexual violence.

The Center, which is among the first of its kind nationally, employs professionals who offer:

- **trained advocates who are available to faculty, staff, and students, as well as families and friends of victims/survivors,**
- **academic and residential accommodations,**
- **health care options (including accompaniment to the hospital if necessary),**
- **assistance in pursuing student conduct and/or criminal charges,**
- **advocacy throughout the judicial or criminal process,**
- **prevention and educational programs,**
- **awareness events on sexual violence and sexual health issues.**

The Center also houses a 50-member, peer-education program entitled [Project SHAPE: Sexual Health and Peer Education](#), which presents more than 100 programs each year, as well as a bystander intervention training program based on the national model developed by [Mentors in Violence Prevention](#).

Q&A: Implementing Campus Sexual Assault Policies

This Q&A was conducted with [Carol Stenger](#), M.Ed. & M.A., Director, Advocacy Center for Sexual Violence, SUNY Albany, [Chantelle Cleary](#), J.D., Title IX Coordinator, SUNY Albany, and [Lisa Evaneski](#), Title IX Coordinator, SUNY Oswego

Q What is your university's policy for reporting and responding to sexual assault?

A Albany: We have adopted the [SUNY-wide Sexual Violence Response Policy](#) and supplemental [sexual violence response policy](#).

Oswego: We have adopted an extensive set of [Sex Discrimination, Sexual Assault and Violence Policies](#).

Q Who is trained on the policy?

A Albany: We aim to train the entire campus community in person. However, due to the large size of our institution, we also utilize supplemental online training tools.

Oswego: Since 2011, we have offered [Title IX/VAWA sexual violence prevention and awareness sessions](#) to all students and employees. Those with reporting and response-related duties receive annual required training.

Q Who provides the training?

A Albany: The full-time [Title IX Coordinator](#) and the [Director of the UA Albany Advocacy Center for Sexual Violence](#) provide trauma-informed, victim-centered training. They also instruct faculty to refer all victims in active disclosure to the [Advocacy Center for Sexual Violence](#) for specialized assistance.

Oswego: [SUNY General Counsel's Office](#) provides training to [Title IX/VAWA staff](#), who then collaborate with [Services to Aid Families](#) to provide trauma-informed, victim-centered training to the campus community.

Q Have there been any implementation challenges?

A Albany: Due to our large

campus and [a federal mandate](#) that requires annual training of all faculty, staff, and students, it is difficult to reach the entire community. We are addressing this challenge by supplementing in-person trainings with online training tools.

Oswego: Establishing funding and determining a reporting structure for the Title IX position has been challenging. We are using recent guidance from the [Office for Civil Rights](#) (OCR) to suggest changes in reporting structure.

Q Does the policy require that a report of sexual assault on campus be shared with University police and/or local or State law enforcement?

A Albany: Our policy doesn't require us to share information with anyone, and stipulates that victim confidentiality must be maintained *unless* there is an immediate threat to the victim or campus community.

Oswego: Our policy explains confidentiality requirements and limitations, and we educate our community about what those concepts mean and how they actually support victim and campus safety.

Q Does your policy address students who live off-campus?

A Both: Yes. If students or employees are victims/survivors of sex discrimination, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and/or relationship violence, we are obligated to respond. And we do.

Q How and when are students informed about the policy?

A Albany: During mandatory [new student orientation](#), all students receive a one-hour training on the

policy and resources, with ongoing programs throughout the semester in residence halls, academic classes and for student groups. There are web sites detailing both [Title IX](#) and [Advocacy Center](#) services. Special trainings are also conducted with specific groups, such as student athletes, members of fraternity and sororities, student government leaders and student staff.

Oswego: Through mandatory [new student orientation](#), email campaigns, and other presentations to parents, evening students, and online degree students. We also provide written materials to all graduate students upon admission.

Q Does the policy inform all students about the process that will take place if/when they are reported as *perpetrators* of a sexual assault?

A Both: Yes. It is outlined in student codes of conduct, distributed in hard copy and online.

Q Do all students receive information and guidance about their role as bystanders to sexual assault?

A Albany: During new-student orientation and through the Advocacy Center's training based on the national bystander intervention program called [Mentors in Violence Prevention](#).

Oswego: We currently provide bystander intervention sessions, and beginning in fall 2015, we will be offering the sessions to student organizations and requiring all student organization officers to attend. Trainings include several excellent [videos](#), in addition to [our training program](#), which we adapt to meet the needs of each audience.

Turn New York State Purple!

We don't want to rush summer, but as you know, [October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#), and it isn't far away!

Once again, we want you to help us connect communities across the state by participating in the annual "[Shine the Light on Domestic Violence](#)" campaign. Already in its eighth year, the campaign has evolved into a movement that now includes purple streets and awareness-raising parades, special social media profile pictures and music jams, domestic violence-themed book clubs and colorful bake sales, and, of course, wearing purple clothing.

Thanks to the individuals, communities, professional organizations, and even the

pets who take part in this effort, the color purple shone even brighter [last year](#) than in previous years. But we know you can top it in 2015!

Have you participated before? If so, then crank it up a notch this year by doing something even bigger and brighter, or by adding more people or organizations. If this is your first time getting involved, then just jump right in and embrace your inner purple. Our website is full of great resources, and we've even created a [Toolkit](#) full of suggestions, ideas, and tips for how to "go purple." And please keep in mind that "NYS Wear Purple Day" is always the third Wednesday of October, so this year it's October 21.

Post your efforts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram using the hashtags [#ShineTheLight](#) and [#NYSpurple](#). It's free to share your ideas, and you could be helping to save lives in the process.

Remember: Don't Do Nothing!



OPDV Welcomes Associate Counsel Christa M. Book, Esq.



Hello. I am Christa Book, and I have the privilege of being the new Associate Counsel at the NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence.

I came to OPDV in March of 2015, after over nine years as the Bureau Chief of Domestic Violence and Special Victim's Unit at the Rensselaer County District Attorney's Office, where I worked on all levels of domestic violence cases from prosecutions of violation offenses to homicides.

After such extensive hands-on work in the field, I am pleased to bring a recent prosecutorial perspective to OPDV, where I am now able to work on policy and legislation.

I plan to utilize my prosecutorial experience to assist in effectuating policy and legislative changes to

benefit survivors of domestic violence, while working in memory of the lives lost. In that vein, I am honored to be a part of the NYS Fatality Review Team coordinated by our Office, and to assist in producing the Team's first report, to be released this year.

I think some wonderful, beneficial changes are on the horizon in the field of domestic violence, and I thank Gwen Wright for this opportunity! I am so grateful to be a part of the professional, knowledgeable team at OPDV.

"Enough is Enough": The New York State Police Response

"Enough is Enough" Campaign

In 2014, [Governor Cuomo](#) created the "[Enough is Enough](#)" campaign to provide information about the ways in which a uniform response to campus sexual assault would enhance victim safety and allow campuses to hold perpetrators accountable. Although SUNY implemented the policies last year, the new legislation extended the policy to all colleges statewide.

Partnering With the NYS Police

In addition to the development of response protocols and training courses to share with campus partners, the NYS Police operate a dedicated hotline, at 1-844-845-7269, where callers can report sexual assaults on college campuses to specially-trained responders who are on-call 24 hours a day.

With more than 3,000 sexual assaults to investigate across the State every

year, the State Police remain an active partner with all SUNY police and public safety departments.

Additional Resources

For more information, please visit [the Enough is Enough website](#), which features students, advocates and elected officials discussing New York State's commitment to addressing sexual assault on college campuses.

NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence www.opdv.ny.gov

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