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Campuses Respond: Two Examples: Sexual Violence Prevention at Canisius College

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Campuses Respond – Two Examples

The Advocates Initiative at Loyola New Orleans

By M.L. “Cissy” Petty

Stone, Patton, and Heen in their seminal work *Difficult Conversations* write: “A difficult conversation is anything you find hard to talk about.” A difficult conversation does not begin to cover the vast emotions when dealing with a victim of sexual assault. The conversation between the victim and the responder is not only difficult, it is often extremely painful for the victim and oftentimes uncomfortable for the responder. Like colleges and universities across the country, Loyola University New Orleans has many programs and processes in place that offer direct support to victims. One program in particular stands out and in turn was honored by the Jesuit Association for Student Affairs as a “best practice.”

The Advocates Initiative, established at Loyola University New Orleans in fall 2010, is a network of students, faculty, and staff who are trained to become sexual assault re-

sponse advocates. The Advocates Initiative is oriented by and committed to *cura personalis* and to five core Jesuit values: dignity, excellence, wholeness, inclusiveness, and compassion. The goal of the Advocate Initiative is also to continue to raise awareness and increase bystander intervention surrounding gender-based violence.

Advocates recognize that surviving a sexual assault can create a range of disturbances which impede students in their journey of fully developing their abilities and talents. Advocates work to minimize this potential disturbance by providing immediate empathic support, connecting to short-term and long-term resources, and informing students about reporting options, both on and off campus.

Recently, a survivor reached out to an advocate after becoming triggered by content in one of her classes. The advo-

cate was able to provide empathetic support by phone and also connect the survivor with other direct service providers. Providing accurate information regarding resources and offering individualized support is the most common utilization of the Advocates Program. That said, advocates also frequently

attend events outside of the classroom where survivors may be triggered. The advocates serve a significant role during specific university programs, such as Take Back the Night, Sexual Assault Non-violence Week, and the Clothesline Project.

In the future, we will expand the program to offer medical advocacy in the immediate aftermath of sexual assault.

M.L. “Cissy” Petty is the vice president for student affairs at Loyola University New Orleans.

Sexual Violence Prevention at Canisius College

By Eileen Niland and Terri L. Mangione

The Canisius College Sexual Violence Prevention Team has developed a comprehensive program which addresses sexual assault, dating and relationship violence awareness, and stalking behaviors. Since 2014, all new students are required to complete an on-line program,

Think About It, that addresses risky student behavior in order to prevent sexual misconduct.

In fall 2015, the Step Up! Griffs Peer Education program was developed in the spirit of *cura personalis*, where upper-class and graduate students encourage first-year students to