

For Immediate Release

August 31st, 2015

Press Briefing by Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Felicia McGinty, Ed.D.

Campaign Launch of *"The Revolution Starts Here. End Sexual Violence Now."*

I want to echo what my colleagues have said and thank you very much for attending our briefing this afternoon. My name is Felicia McGinty and I serve as Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs here at Rutgers-New Brunswick. I also want to emphasize the importance of addressing the issue of sexual violence head on and will be speaking with you briefly about the action plan we have created to address key findings in our Campus Climate Survey.

The students spoke and we listened. It is clear that we have challenges to overcome to combat sexual violence on our campus. We accept this challenge wholeheartedly and will be working collaboratively to bring about change to our campus culture regarding sexual violence. Rutgers University New Brunswick's Office of Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance and their student initiative SCREAM Theater have been recognized for their outstanding prevention work since 1991. We are proud of their accomplishments and want to do more to build on the strong foundation they have created.

Our action plan goals are tied directly to the key findings from the Campus Climate Survey and include the following: Increase awareness of resources available for survivors of sexual assault and their loved ones. Increase the use of campus resources by survivors of sexual violence and their loved ones. Increase active bystander intervention and ways

bystanders can support survivors. Finally, we want to help our students to understand the dynamics of healthy relationships.

It is our intention to achieve these goals through outreach, education, and programming. I'm going to share some highlights from the action plan with you now.

We launched a yearlong campaign this week entitled "*The Revolution Starts Here. End Sexual Violence Now.*" This campaign was introduced to all new students through a public service announcement shown during Convocation. The PSA features Rutgers-New Brunswick administration and student leaders in a call to action for the entire New Brunswick community 'to join the revolution to end sexual violence'.

Students need to understand and be familiar with our resources in order to access them. To better communicate this important information to our students, we have created new brochures and handouts and distributed them to all students living on campus, and to students living off-campus within the New Brunswick community. We have also created a new website, endsexualviolence.rutgers.edu, that provides students with a one-stop-shop for information and resources regarding prevention, reporting, and survivor services. The website will also provide information about University events connected to the campaign and information about the Campus Climate Survey.

As educators, we believe in the transformative power of higher education. We recognize that students and staff *can learn about the importance of sexual violence prevention*, if we teach them. Therefore, all students will be asked to complete an online learning module entitled "Not Anymore." This online education program covers topics including: consent; healthy relationships; bystander intervention; university resources, policies, and reporting options; and will be available for students to take from September 14 through September 28th. All staff in the Division of Student Affairs are undergoing training regarding sexual violence and how to help students who come to them for assistance. In addition, our Counseling Center staff have received additional training in treatment of PTSD

in survivors of sexual assault, and our Health Centers will now include screening questions about anxiety, past trauma and sexual violence as part of the personal health history that patients are asked to complete routinely.

Educational programming is a major aspect of our campaign. We will offer a year-long series of events focused on sexual violence prevention and bystander intervention. We will be showing the “The Hunting Ground” documentary on campus on October 1st. In addition, we invited two of the women featured in the documentary to speak to our community following the film about their journeys from victim, to survivor to advocate.

As previously stated, sexual violence is not just a woman’s issue and it is not just a campus issue. It is an awful epidemic that often begins long before students arrive on college campuses. As part of our on-going effort to positively influence the culture here at Rutgers NB, we will be adding additional staff to our Violence Prevention Victim Assistance Office. The focus of this new position will be to lead education, advocacy and programming with an emphasis on engaging men and healthy masculinity. To help us kick off this new men’s engagement initiative, we have enlisted the support of men within our community and friends of Rutgers. In fact, Don McPherson, former NFL player, anti-sexual violence advocate and self-described feminist, has been invited to New Brunswick to speak to targeted groups about men’s roles in addressing sexual violence. Rutgers-New Brunswick has also signed an MOU with the Army to establish a partnership between our campus and the Army regarding strategies to prevent sexual violence. We are reaching out to many different partners on campus to make sure events are well attended and our community members are hearing consistent messages regarding our policies, expectations and commitment to end sexual violence.

We recognize that our efforts to change campus culture will only be successful if we can hold perpetrators accountable for acts of sexual violence. To this end, and to comply with regulations that surround this area, the university has developed a comprehensive

policy to address student sexual violence, relationship violence and stalking. This policy defines all behaviors that constitute sexual violence; clearly explains the university's response to reports of sexual violence; and, notably, includes a new, affirmative definition of consent.

Rutgers University-New Brunswick has a long history of providing support and prevention education to our students. We believe in continuous learning and improvement, for the betterment of our students and their experience. We will stay the course to make advancements in both research, response and prevention efforts. Over the course of this campaign, *The Revolution starts here. End sexual violence now*, we will gather data and evaluate our success with an eye toward improvement and an ever-present commitment and vigilance to this issue.

Thank you for your time.