

# Rape: Advocacy, Prevention & Education Center



Syracuse University  
Division of  
Student Affairs

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## Center

Edited by Michelle Brisson

### The Power of Words — By Mariana J. Lebrón, director, Orientation and Transitions Services

“Break the silence!” These words by Don McPherson challenged new SU students to end violence by promoting honest dialogue and action. Don’s presentation “Orange You Glad We’re Talking?” was a highlight of *Syracuse Welcome 2004: A Slice of SU Life*, the University’s signature new student orientation program. His insight questioned assumptions and what society has taught us about the topics of gender, relationships, communication, and responsible sexuality, as well as how our own social and cultural influences have shaped our attitudes.



Don McPherson

Founder and executive director of the Sports Leadership Institute at Adelphi University and former Syracuse University all-American quarterback, Don has addressed thousands across the country about issues he believes are negatively impacting society today. He emphasized the power of words in shaping who we are and how we act. With a genuine honest approach and sense of humor, he engaged the audience by asking provoking questions through stories. He shared a story about a three-year old boy whose mother confronted him when he was crying in the airport by saying to him, “Act like a man.” Immediately, the boy stopped crying, indicating that even at three years old, this boy had learned that “real men” do not show emotion. In a world where there is high-pressure to “fit-in” and “be accepted,” the phrases “act like a real man” or “you throw like a girl” put down women and elevate men on a different playing field, resulting in behavior that hurts others mentally and physically. Instead, Don believes that words should promote the ideas that men do not have to be so rough all the time and that showing emotion is okay.

Dialogue among men and women must be facilitated to end these stereotypes in order to break the silence and stop behaviors that can lead to sexual violence. It is an equal responsibility shared by men and women not only to stop the violence currently occurring, but more importantly, to create a better society in which no one, male or female, has to live in fear of being attacked. One student left and said to me, “I never realized how much women have to watch their backs each time they walk to their car. That’s not right.” He discussed what he was going to do to stop that from happening—“talk about it with as many people as possible.”

### Meet the GA: Scott Morelli



Scott Morelli

Scott Morelli is the newest member of the Rape: Advocacy, Prevention and Education (R.A.P.E.) Center/Substance Abuse Prevention and Health Enhancement (S.A.P.H.E.) Office team. Scott joined the team in Fall 2004 as a graduate assistant. Scott, along with returning graduate assistant Beth Anne Roy, helps educate the campus community on issues regarding sexual assault, relationships, alcohol and other drugs, sexually transmissible infections, and wellness.

Scott is currently a graduate student in the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at the Maxwell School. Prior to coming to SU, Scott worked for three years as the Crisis Services Coordinator at Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine. He feels fortunate to be able to continue working in the anti-sexual violence movement and is excited about all that is in store for the 2004-05 school year. He has seen presentations by both Jackson Katz and Don McPherson, leaders in the field of men working to prevent men’s violence against women, and they have inspired him even more to continue to involve both women and men in this movement. Scott lives in Syracuse with his wife Elizabeth and 3-year-old daughter Olivia.

Scott is enjoying his many responsibilities as a graduate assistant, which include:

- Co-facilitating AMI: A Men’s Issue – A student group focusing on how men can change violent behaviors, including sexual violence
- Co-advising e5m – A student theater troupe that presents opportunities for audience members to examine societal and personal attitudes regarding sexual assault
- Assisting with planning Take Back The Night to be held April 13, 2005
- Presenting on issues surrounding alcohol, sexual assault, and consent

Although Scott has been involved in many facets of the rape crisis movement, some of these tasks will be new and challenging (and therefore exciting) for him. He is looking forward to spreading the message to members of the SU community as well as learning and growing himself.

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**Myth:** Choosing a major is the same as choosing a career.

**Reality:** Lots of first-year students stress about choosing a major. Being undecided is okay because it gives you an opportunity to try a variety of different classes. 46% of college students change their majors at least once during their college careers.

**Myth:** There is nothing to do at SU but drink.

**Reality:** There are 231 recognized student organizations at SU, and more than 60 official events each month. The D.O. is a great place to find out what's happening on the weekends. Also, look at the bulletin boards in your dorm or go to: [www.student.syr.edu/moretodo](http://www.student.syr.edu/moretodo)

### Featured Volunteers

#### Jessica Li



Administrative Volunteer

Volunteering at the R.A.P.E. Center in the past year has taught me a lot. Personally, it has made me a stronger person and helped me to grow both socially and intellectually. I have had chances to work with some of the nicest people on campus and been able to help out with causes that I strongly believe in. It has made me realize how big a difference a few people can make.

#### Caitlyn Steele



Administrative Volunteer  
Peer Educator

I volunteer at the R.A.P.E. Center because I want to help create awareness on this campus on a variety of topics. From volunteering here, I have a deeper understanding of societal issues and am now taking steps to create positive changes in the community.

## Panhellenic Council Adopts R.A.P.E. Center

by Karen Snyderman, Public Relations Chair, SU Panhellenic Executive Council

The Syracuse University Panhellenic Executive Council has adopted the SU Rape: Advocacy, Prevention and Education (R.A.P.E.) Center as its first-ever Panhellenic Council-wide philanthropy.



The Panhellenic Council acts as a governing body for the twelve Greek social sororities at Syracuse University. The Council is made up

of 13 highly motivated women, representing several of the chapters. These women work together to develop initiatives that will benefit not only Greek women, but also the entire Syracuse community.

Because rape is one of the most prominent and pressing concerns for women, the R.A.P.E. Center is an excellent complement to a women's organization such as the Panhellenic Council. Since Spring 2004, the Panhellenic Executive Council leaders have worked closely with staff members of the R.A.P.E. Center to develop a strong relationship and to create meaningful programs that are beneficial to all women in the Greek Community.

The Panhellenic Council and the R.A.P.E. Center kicked off the philanthropy initiative with a program on Saturday, October 2nd, at the Hall of Languages. This interactive program, featuring the R.A.P.E. Center peer theater troupe, e5m, addressed such topics as rape awareness and prevention, as well as how to care for our sisters and friends after a sexual assault.

The event proved to be a success. Many of the women in attendance, who were not previously fully aware of the services offered by the R.A.P.E. Center, discussed with the Panhellenic Executive Council how positively they now view this resource.

The Panhellenic Executive Council looks forward to a continuing relationship with the R.A.P.E. Center.

## Upcoming Student Leadership Opportunities

by Patrick McPeak

The Office of Judicial Affairs is looking for students to participate on the University Judicial Board/Peer Education Team. The mission of the University Judicial Board /Peer Education Team is to participate in judicial hearings and develop programs that encourage civility and good citizenship. The University Judicial Board provides an opportunity for students to serve the University community, develop life-long skills in facilitation and conflict resolution, and promote civility and citizenship within the University community.

Syracuse University is comprised of a diverse student body; therefore it is imperative that the board reflects that diversity. Students of all backgrounds, interests and abilities, are encouraged to apply.

Applications for, and more information about, the 2005-06 University Judicial Board/Peer Education Team will be made available on the Office of Judicial Affairs' website after January 1, 2005.

<http://students.syr.edu/judicial/index.htm>

### Did you know?

- 85% of SU men say it is **NOT OK** to pressure someone to drink or use other drugs in order to improve their chances of having sex with them. (93% of women)
- 83% of SU men say they would **NOT** have sex if their partner did not want to. (93% of women)

Source: 2004 Syracuse University Health Survey

## The Campus Disciplinary System is Not a Substitute For the Criminal Justice System

by Juanita Perez Williams, director, Office of Judicial Affairs



Juanita Perez Williams

Campus judicial systems were never intended to replace or act as a substitute for the criminal justice system. However, most campus judicial systems, independent of criminal prosecutions, allow for student sanctioning of serious code of conduct violations such as physical injury, theft of property, and sexual assault. This article focuses on how a campus judicial system is different from the criminal justice system and why some colleges and universities have reconsidered campus disciplinary resolution of sexual assault complaints against student-offenders.

A university judicial office, traditionally a unit within a student affairs division, is utilized to promote student development through educational sanctioning that fosters good citizenship, character, and respect for community. Additionally, a judicial system is responsible for responding to student behaviors that pose a serious risk to others on or off campus. A judicial system typically allows for sanctions that can include suspension or expulsion. Moreover, judicial affairs procedure is administrative in nature allowing for discretionary use of evidentiary rules and a burden of proof (usually preponderance of the evidence) that allows for judicial hearing panels to evaluate all the evidence. Such evidence can include the credibility of the parties and witnesses, when the crime was reported and under what circumstances, any physical evidence that may or may not exist, and whatever else will assist the trier of fact in understanding what transpired. Consequently, unlike the criminal system that requires a higher burden of proof (i.e., beyond a reasonable doubt), a finding of guilt at the campus judicial level does not result in a public record of guilt, the resulting sanction cannot be enforced off campus, and most importantly, it cannot result in confinement.

A criminal investigation and prosecution can be beneficial for both the victim of a sexual assault and for the campus judicial system. Criminal investigation and prosecution provides the victim with access to resources that can protect him or her from the alleged student-offender. Furthermore, the criminal investigation

and prosecution allows the university to authorize an immediate but temporary action restricting the student-offender from campus pending the resolution of the criminal case. More importantly, if the criminal case is successfully prosecuted and the student-offender is convicted of sexual assault or any other serious crime, the campus judicial system can sanction the student-offender so as to reduce the risk the offender poses to the campus community and the victim.

The problem with criminal prosecutions is they can take several months or years to resolve and can be intimidating and intrusive for the alleged victim. Above all, criminal allegations are often difficult to prove as the burden of proof is beyond a reasonable doubt and strict evidentiary rules are enforced. Arguably, a judicial process may be more appealing to a student-victim. However, it is necessary to clarify for victims the differences between the judicial and criminal systems noting how the latter, although more demanding, can provide the most profound outcome.

Recently, some universities and colleges have required alleged victims of sexual assault to come forward with some form of corroborating evidence before subjecting the alleged offender to the judicial process. These new requirements of corroborating evidence are designed to discourage victims from resolving sexual assault incidents at the campus judicial level, and in the alternative, to encourage them to file complaints with local police. Specifically, some schools will not consider allegations of sexual assault unless the victim can provide "some" evidence in addition to his or her testimony. For instance, a victim would be required to provide names of witnesses who observed the assault or a medical test reporting physical trauma suffered from the assault.

Requiring more evidence from a victim of sexual assault implies the victim is not telling the truth. Additionally, the requirement implies that without evidence beyond a victim's statement, a judicial panel may find the offender undeservedly responsible. It is the responsibility of

triers of fact or judicial panelist, however, to look at the totality of the circumstances, which might include many factors beyond the victim's testimony.

Questions could be posed such as what

the parties were doing prior to the incident and reactions of parties and witnesses following the incident. Simply put, to require more evidence from the victim implicitly heightens the burden of proof making it inappropriate for an administrative hearing (that cannot impose sanctions equivalent to the criminal justice system). A judicial hearing is an administrative hearing and the burden of proof should remain commensurate with that forum regardless of the alleged violation.

Moreover, to require additional evidence from victims of sexual assaults, who are already reluctant to report, may further deter such victims from reporting. Recent research relating to victims of sexual assault reflects that most fail to report sexual assaults to campus or local police. Many agree this could be attributed to victims knowing their offender and feeling their actions may have contributed to the incident. Of the few that do report, most choose not to go forward with an official complaint. Moreover, national data indicates that as compared to other crimes, sexual assault allegations are least likely to be false. As such, the above suggests that requiring victims of sexual assault to produce more evidence than is required of other victim types may increase the number of sexual assault victims who choose not to report.

The campus judicial system was never meant to be a substitute for the criminal justice system; they have different burdens of proof and different consequences. We should remain mindful that a judicial system is an administrative setting where the victim and the accuser should come in on equal footing, and not allow the administrative setting to evolve into a criminal prosecutorial process.

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## Syracuse University R.A.P.E. Center

Free, confidential services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

### **Advocacy: (Medical, Legal/Judicial, Counseling, Academic, Residential)**

R.A.P.E. Center advocates are available to:

- Discuss all available medical, counseling, legal, criminal, and judicial options with survivors
- Accompany students to area hospitals
- Accompany students to area police departments and/or the Syracuse University Department of Public Safety
- Accompany students to the Office of Judicial Affairs
- Facilitate referrals for follow up health care
- Facilitate referrals for counseling
- Facilitate academic assistance through academic deans
- Facilitate referrals to the Office of Residence Life and/or the Housing Office regarding residential concerns
- Assist friends and family members of survivors.



### **Prevention and Education:**

R.A.P.E. Center programs promote healthy sexuality/relationships, dispel myths about rape, examine gender roles and how they relate to sexual violence, provide suggestions for risk reduction, advise students of available resources and explore what each of us can do to end sexual violence.

### **Become a R.A.P.E. Center Volunteer:**

- ~ Work as an administrative volunteer.
- ~ Staff information tables at campus events.
- ~ Train to become a peer educator.
- ~ Help staff plan special events.
- ~ Help market and publicize programs & events.

### **R.A.P.E. Center Staff**

Dessa Bergen-Cico, Associate Dean  
Janet Epstein, Associate Director  
Jill Sneider, Sexual Health Coordinator  
Michelle Brisson, Administrative Asst.  
Scott Morelli, Graduate Assistant  
Beth Anne Roy, Graduate Assistant

### Contact Information

#### On Campus Resources

Emergency- Dial 711  
University R.A.P.E. Center-443-7273  
University Health Services-443-2666  
Public Safety-443-2224  
Counseling Center-443-4715  
Hendricks Chapel-443-5044  
Psychological Services Ctr.-443-3595  
Goldberg Couple and Family  
Therapy Center-443-3023  
Judicial Affairs-443-3728

#### Community Resources

Emergency-Dial 911  
Upstate Medical University-464-5540  
Community General Hospital-492-5011  
St. Joseph's Hospital-448-5111  
Syracuse Police Department-442-5111  
Onondaga County District Attorney's  
Office-435-2470  
Victim Resource Center-422-7273  
Rape Crisis Center of Syracuse-422-7273  
Onondaga County Sexually  
Transmissible Disease Clinic-435-3240



**R.A.P.E. Center**  
**Syracuse University**  
**111 Waverly Avenue**  
**Syracuse, NY 13244**  
**(315) 443-RAPE**