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January 16, 2020

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Governor Wolf's 'It's On Us PA' Awards \$1 Million to 36 Colleges, Universities to Combat Sexual Assault

Harrisburg, PA – State and national leaders of the “It’s On Us” initiative joined Secretary of Education Pedro A. Rivera today to announce nearly \$1 million in grants from the Wolf Administration to combat campus sexual assault at 36 colleges and universities. The governor is a steadfast supporter of campus safety and established It’s On Us PA, the nation’s first statewide campaign, four years ago.

“Every student, teacher, administrator and visitor to our campuses deserves a safe environment free from harassment,” said Governor Wolf. “This is the fourth year that my administration will be working with students, schools and communities to build programs to raise awareness about and stop sexual assaults. We must never tolerate this behavior on our campuses or a culture that allows it.”

It’s On Us is a national initiative championed by President Barack Obama. With today’s announcement, the Wolf Administration has invested a total of nearly \$4 million for It’s On Us grants.

“We thank the leadership at our colleges and universities for providing students and employees with the critical programs and skills to prevent and end sexual violence on their campuses,” said Education Secretary Rivera. “Through Governor Wolf’s continued commitment to this important initiative, we are implementing strategies that elevate awareness, engage communities and improve institutional campus climates.”

It’s On Us Executive Director Tracey Vitchers joined Secretary Rivera for today’s announcement and thanked Pennsylvania for its leadership.

“The nearly \$4 million in It’s On Us Pennsylvania grants allocated over the last four years have and will continue to empower colleges and universities across the state to do the critically important work of preventing sexual assault within their communities, and responding in a trauma-informed way with survivors when it sadly does occur,” Vitchers said.

Colleges and universities use the grants to create programs ranging from campus-wide training

for students, faculty and staff, to institutional campaigns to raise awareness of the reporting process and the resources available to survivors of sexual violence.

The 2019-20 It's On Us PA recipients include public and private institutions in every corner of the state. The colleges and universities enroll a total of nearly 250,000 students. Of those students, more than 62,000 live on campus.

Last July, Gov. Wolf signed legislation, championed by Rep. Dan Frankel and Sen. Lisa Baker, that requires post-secondary institutions to offer online, anonymous options for students to report sexual assaults. Many of this year's grant recipients will be using the funds to implement those systems, which must be in place by the end of June.

"The fight against abuse in schools and on campuses is a serious one requiring deeper awareness and stronger action," said Sen. Baker. "These grants show an increasing commitment to protecting students against unconscionable emotional and physical abuse and to promptly investigating complaints and appropriately sanctioning perpetrators."

"I want to thank the governor for his leadership in prioritizing the safety of our college and university students," added Rep. Frankel. "These grants help create an atmosphere where young people can feel protected and supported as they navigate a new chapter in their lives. By providing for training and awareness campaigns, the administration is ensuring that my newly passed legislation to require schools to offer online, anonymous reporting options for students is immediately put into use."

Also, this year was the first time schools could apply for a research grant. St. Vincent College in Latrobe was awarded a \$15,000 research grant to assess the statewide impact of the It's On Us PA grant program and provide recommendations to improve it.

The 36 postsecondary institutions selected for grants include:

Albright College
Bloomsburg University
Bryn Mawr College
Butler County Community College
Chatham University
Cheyney University
Clarion University
Community College of Allegheny County
Curtis Institute of Music
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania
Gannon University
Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine
Holy Family University
Immaculata University
Indiana University of PA
Keystone College
Lehigh University
Lock Haven University
Lycoming College
Manor College

Marywood University
Mercyhurst University
Millersville University
Peirce College
Penn State University
Point Park University
Rosemont College
Saint Francis University
Saint Joseph's University
Shippensburg University
South Hills School of Business & Technology
St. Vincent College – Research
Thiel College
University of Pittsburgh
Waynesburg University
Wilkes University

The governor invited everyone to take the [It's On Us PA pledge](#). Thousands of students, teachers, families and communities have made a personal and public pledge to help prevent, address and respond effectively to sexual violence.

Note: Photos and video from this event will be available at www.pacast.com.

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