



Tom Barrett
Mayor

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Mayor Barrett Issues Call to Action During Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Mayor Barrett and UW-Milwaukee Zilber School of Public Health Dean Magda Peck urge college campuses, local workplaces, and residents to pledge support for Denim Day Milwaukee

MILWAUKEE – As April 1 marks the start of Sexual Assault Awareness Month nationwide, Mayor Tom Barrett and Dr. Magda Peck, Dean of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Joseph J. Zilber School of Public Health, are calling for the Milwaukee community to pledge support for local survivors by marking their calendars for Denim Day, an international awareness day, on April 23.

“The statistics around sexual assault are sobering,” said Mayor Tom Barrett. “Denim Day is about survivors and community members standing together to support those who have been assaulted and making a statement against the misconceptions that surround sexual assault. I encourage employers, organizations, and individuals throughout the community to get involved.”

In the United States, one in six women and one in 33 men, along with one in five college students, are victims of sexual assault. The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that more than half of rapes and assaults go unreported. The reasons many go unreported vary, but a common thread is that many victims feel they won’t be believed or they will be blamed for their attack. Raising awareness around assault and victim-blaming is the first step toward prevention.

“Sexual assault is a public health issue that can result in a lifetime of consequences for survivors, including depression and post-traumatic stress, which are linked to higher college drop-out rates,” said Dr. Magda Peck, Dean of the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee Joseph J. Zilber School of Public Health. “I applaud my colleagues in higher education who have already pledged support for Denim Day on their campuses, and ask the entire Milwaukee community to join.”

Local college and university campuses that have signed on to participate during Denim Day 2014 include the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Marquette University, Alverno College, Mount Mary University, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Bryant & Stratton College, Concordia University Wisconsin, and the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Denim Day Milwaukee is coordinated by a collaborative group of organizations and supports the work of The Healing Center, Pathfinders, and Aurora Health Care’s Sexual Assault Treatment Center.

For more information, including tool kits and materials to coordinate Denim Day activities at work, on campus, or among your friends, visit www.denimdaymke.org.

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