

The VIP Center

Reflecting on the 2014-2015 Academic year



# THE VIP CENTER ANNUAL REPORT

It happens here.

The 2014-2015 academic year provided for many changes in the Violence Intervention and Prevention, or VIP, Center. We settled into our new office in Brandeis Hall Room 101, next to the dining hall. This meant taking away formal desks and chairs and adding comfortable couches, fun pillows, a dedicated and welcoming nook for advocacy, and setting up our programming office for student use!

Lauren Ward began her role as the Associate Director for Prevention Education and Inclusion just before classes started in August. Her position involves serving as the advocate for students, faculty, and staff as well as coordinating our prevention efforts, including Green Dot. Among our most notable developments this year was the creation of *confidential* advocacy. With that, the VIP Center has seen a big increase in service utilization!

This is actually good news—we promise. It doesn't mean that more sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking is occurring. Rather, it is more indicative of the widespread awareness about the services that the VIP Center offers in conjunction with more individuals on our campus readily identifying violence and abuse as it is experienced. The goal is to eventually plateau and then see a decline in our statistics.

*"It was such a relief to have advocates who knew how to navigate tricky situations when I felt I had no idea what I should do. They were so caring, and they treated me like a dear friend even though I had just met them."*



Violence. Intervention. Prevention.

The VIP Center is a part of Creighton University's Office of Equity and Inclusion

Dedicated students hand out buttons and denim ribbons in the days before Denim Day and Take Back the Night



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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

“Survivors Speak Out!” segments feature quotes (with permission) from survivors served in 2014-2015 at the VIP Center and are sprinkled throughout this report

**SURVIVORS  
SPEAK OUT!  
WHAT WERE YOU  
ABLE TO  
ACCOMPLISH BY  
USING THE VIP  
CENTER?**

“I was able to feel comfortable standing up for myself and did not have to go through the process alone.”

“I was able to take control of what happened to me, so that I may find safety and peace.”

“I learned a lot more about what the university and court system are able to do in harassment situations - it was more than I thought! I also learned about the resources available to me through the Women's Center for Advancement, and was able to use some of them as I was applying for a Harassment Protection Order and going through the hearing for that.”

## 2014-2015 SERVICE UTILIZATION STATISTICS

We are often asked how needed the VIP Center and its services, especially confidentially advocacy, are needed and utilized here. Lauren Ward, our Associate Director for Prevention Education and Inclusion, says it's an honor to serve in this role at Creighton.

### **In 2014-2015, the VIP Center served:**

- 87 individuals
  - ◆ 54 primary victims
  - ◆ 33 secondary victims
    - \* 76 females
    - \* 11 males

⇒ For a total of 601 reciprocated direct contacts with the client

### **Type of victimization (can be more than one):**

- 39 dating/domestic violence
- 26 harassment
- 23 sexual assault
- 14 stalking
- 13 unsure/unknown/other
- 1 discrimination



*“[Receiving advocacy at the VIP Center] meant that my feelings were heard, I was taken care of, and that I continue to feel safe on campus.”*

*“It meant I could live through my experience without constant fear or worry.”*

ADVOCATE.  
SUPPORT.



## ADVOCACY OPTIONS OFFERED AT THE VIP CENTER

**Confidential advocacy** (1-on-1 support) in the VIP Center looks different for each person as it is **tailored to their current needs**. Advocacy is available to **primary and secondary survivors** and **all students, faculty, and staff**.

Here are a few examples of what we offer:

- ⌘ Support after sexual violence, dating/domestic violence, stalking, harassment, discrimination
- ⌘ Safety planning
- ⌘ Assistance to students with class absences, coursework extensions, and changes in housing
- ⌘ Assistance with transportation and working environment
- ⌘ Assistance with and info about reporting incidents—both at the University and in Douglas County/Omaha
- ⌘ Collaboration with Public Safety and/or Police
- ⌘ Accompaniment to court and hospital
- ⌘ Assistance and accompaniment reporting incidents – both on- and off-campus
- ⌘ Assistance applying for protection orders and other options
- Resources to assist a friend, partner, roommates, or family member
- ⌘ Campus and community referrals

## **SURVIVORS SPEAK OUT! WHAT WERE YOU ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH BY USING THE VIP CENTER?**

“I was able to accomplish realizing that what had happened to me was not right and that it wasn't my fault. I was able to become a strong person from them encouraging me to fight for what is right.”

“I was able to comfortably go to school and go back to my dorm without fear. It made me want to talk to other women about intimate partner violence, and I found out that it happens a lot more than we think.”

“I learned what options I have regarding confronting, processing, and reporting my experience.”





*The Silent Witness Project was on display in the VIP Center for the entire month of October*

## EVENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Throughout the academic year, **81 presentations and events** were offered on campus by the VIP Center that reached **over 6,127 people**. Some of these included:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Biweekly New Employee Orientation through Human Resources | Awareness Month events                      |
| Green Dot Bystander Trainings                             | Monthly Faculty/Staff Brown Bag Discussions |
| Department Trainings                                      | Fall Forum Title IX Presentation            |
| Residence Hall Floor Presentations                        | Stalking Awareness Month Event              |
| RA and RD Trainings                                       | Sorority Presentations                      |
| Welcome Week Green Dot Trainings                          | Rape Culture Talk Back                      |
| Professional and Medical Schools Orientations             | Sexual Assault Awareness Month Activities   |
| Student-Athlete Orientation                               | Take Back the Night                         |
| Skutt Shutdown Activity Fair                              | Denim Day                                   |
| Dating/Domestic Violence                                  | Summer Preview Tabling                      |
|   | ...and so many more!                        |

## SURVIVORS SPEAK OUT!

*HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR EXPERIENCE MIGHT HAVE DIFFERED IF YOU HAD NOT WORKED WITH THE VIP CENTER?*

“I would not have felt as empowered to address the situation and confident in the decisions I was making.”

“I would not think my situation was important enough to report, much less receive help throughout the process.”

“I believe that I would have continued to feel alone and emotional for the rest of the school year.”

“I am confident that had I not had the opportunity to speak about my experience confidentially, that I would not have shared it with any entity at the university.”

“I wouldn't have the validation I have now, or the knowledge about my options.”



**DVAM**

Dating violence awareness came to campus tables during Dating Violence Awareness Month with a huge power and control wheel

## VIP CENTER HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR!

- ⌘ Launching an It's On Us PSA on YouTube and social media featuring over 65 Creighton student leaders
- ⌘ Restroom and residence hall floor awareness campaign which included making quick-hitting information about the VIP Center and campus reporting options available with "tear-off" contact information
- ⌘ The creation of a lending library for student survivors and their supporters
- ⌘ Over 900 faculty, staff, and students participated in our first annual Denim Day to stand with victims of sexual assault and against victim blaming
- ⌘ Over 200 people attended the *Take Back the Night Rally* and *After-Event*
- ⌘ Creation of a pamphlet for survivors and their supporters
- ⌘ Launched a satisfaction survey to be administered to those who utilized advocacy services once per semester

## SURVIVORS SPEAK OUT!

### WHAT DID RECEIVING ADVOCACY AT THE VIP CENTER MEAN TO YOU?

"It meant that Creighton cared about these issues enough to create a center to deal specifically with them and also create awareness on campus."

"A Resource, A Trustful Employee, A True Advocate"

"That I finally had control over the situation, which in turn, put me at ease! Being able to find peace over a horrible situation is absolutely amazing!"

"It meant so much. My advocate was always there for me and checking up if I needed anything at all."

"I was not prepared at the time to engage in action, and the VIP Center provided a safe space for me to fully express my experience and concerns."



## The Incredible Return of *Take Back the Night* and the Inception of the After-Event and Denim Day

After a deliberate sabbatical from hosting *Take Back the Night* at Creighton, a planning committee of students, faculty, and staff carefully and intentionally planned its return in 2015. As part of April's Sexual Assault Awareness Month festivities on campus, *Take Back the Night* was planned for the end of April.

The rally brought over 200 attendees hailing from Creighton, other local colleges, and the community at large. After a few campus-based keynote speakers, the open mic

portion began. *Take Back the Night* is an event where we create and hold a safe space for survivors of violence and abuse to rally and speak out about their experiences. The open mic lasted nearly an hour with survivor after survivor bravely taking a stand.

We wanted to make sure the event felt whole. *Take Back the Night* is

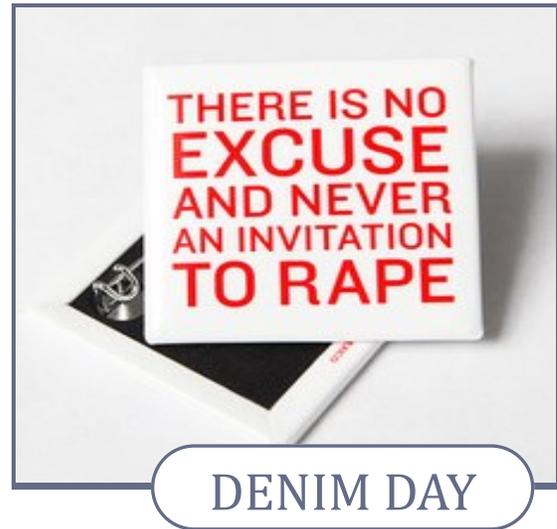
compelling to bear witness to and we leave reminded of why we care so deeply about this. But then what? What do we do with that inspiration?



## Take Back the Night After-Event

We decided to host a *Take Back the Night After-Event* to follow the rally. This *After-Event* was in the style of a fair and boasted tables where participants could:

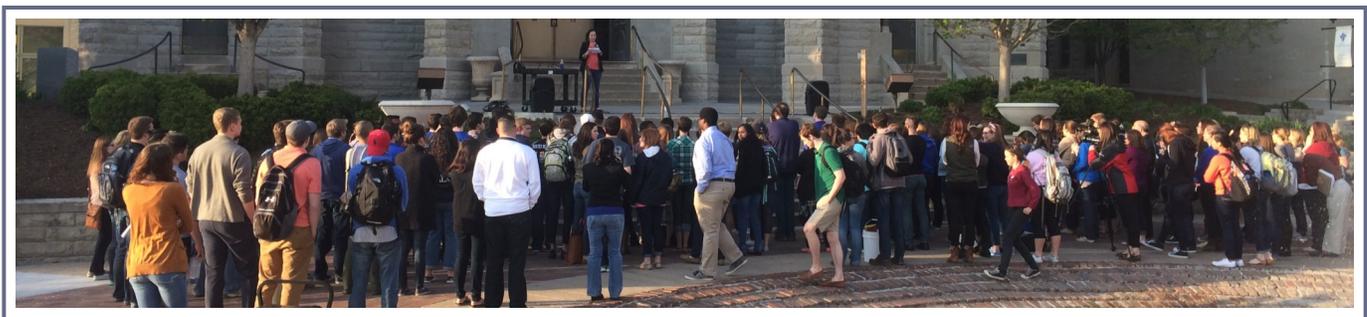
- Write victim-blaming statements they've heard on a piece of paper and crumple them up, rip them up, and throw them in the trash
- Spin the Consent Trivia Wheel to learn about consent through Hollywood movie examples
- Play Green Dot Jeopardy and learn how to be an active bystander when witnessing a situation that could lead to violence
- Write what they would say to a friend who experienced sexual assault on a four foot tall teal (the SA awareness color) ribbon
- The event culminated in an *It's On Us* table where participants took the pledge, had their photo taken, and received a placard to decorate and display



Over 1,000 Denim Day buttons were distributed to faculty, staff, and students

### ***Lauren Ward of the VIP Center reflects:***

*I'm still taking it all in... that over 900 of our Creighton community wore denim and buttons/ribbons today. That over 200 came to Take Back the Night. That the open mic portion of TBTN lasted almost an hour. That our students are so brave, motivated, positive, and involved. That our After-Event in Skutt 104 had a line that reached the mall. I just... I'm so moved. Thank you. Thank you so much to all who were involved in every single way. I have never felt more connected to Creighton than I do tonight.*



Lauren Ward welcomes the crowd to the *Take Back the Night Rally* on the steps of St. John's

Over 200 people attended the Take Back the Night Rally and After-Event from campus, other colleges, and the community

## The VIP Center

The VIP Center focuses on advocacy and violence prevention for the University. The VIP Center is a confidential resource for Creighton students, faculty, and staff. We provide advocacy, information, resources, and support in addition to programmatic efforts around violence prevention.

We're here for you!

## PARTNERSHIP WITH THE WCA

Creighton's violence prevention program, Green Dot, is a nationally-recognized program focused on reducing incidents of power-based personal violence by engaging bystanders. Funding for Green Dot at Creighton has been provided by a Violence Prevention Grant through CHI Health administered in partnership with the Women's Center for Advancement. Our grant concluded this summer.

We are proud to announce that a new grant has been awarded through CHI Health that enables this partnership to continue to bring violence prevention, in an expanded way to include Green Dot, to continue on our campus.

This funding also creates an opportunity for Creighton and the WCA to bring prevention education to local middle schools!



### **So, what is Green Dot?**

*A Green Dot is a moment in time when someone makes the decision to do something in a situation that could lead to violence. Green Dot provides people with a variety of options to make our campus safer, both directly and indirectly, as well as reactively and proactively.*

100% of those surveyed would recommend the VIP Center to a friend.

94% of students, faculty, and staff surveys said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the VIP Center advocacy services.

## **SURVIVORS SPEAK OUT!**

### **WHAT DID RECEIVING ADVOCACY AT THE VIP CENTER MEAN TO YOU?**

“It made me feel safe again. I was being harassed by an ex-boyfriend and in going through the VIP Center, I was able to have control over my life again. It allows students to create a conversation about what is healthy and what the options are. If it was not for the VIP Center, I would still be in an emotionally abusive and controlling relationship.”

“Being validated and finally being able to talk about what happened with someone who can actually help me help myself.”

“It meant that I did not feel alone – and was much more confident in my decision to report a potentially problematic situation.”



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