

GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

12 Littleville Road Huntington, MA 01050

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo Caption: (left to right) Hampshire County District Attorney David E. Sullivan and Tom Schiff addressed students at Gateway Regional High School, as part of a student-led White Ribbon Campaign.

Gateway boys address gender-based violence

Huntington - In 1991 the Hubble Telescope was launched, the Cambodian civil war ended, and the United States announced a major nuclear weapons cutback; however, what many people don't know is that 1991 marked the formation of the White Ribbon Campaign. Formed by a group of Canadian men from Ontario, the White Ribbon Campaign marked a revolutionary grassroots call to action after 14 women were killed in a gender-based massacre in Toronto in 1989. Since then, the initiative to end gender-based violence has flourished into an internationally involved program spanning across 60 countries.

On March 7, with the help of Sebastian Gonzalez, Dylan Nicolle, Marc Lacharite, Brandin Therrien, and Jaeger Wozniak, Gateway was able to honor the work of the campaign with an assembly led by Tom Schiff of Phallacies, Inc. and Hampshire County District Attorney David E. Sullivan to address gender-based violence and the goal of the White Ribbon Campaign.

At the beginning of the presentation, Schiff introduced himself as the advisor to the group leading the White Ribbon Campaign at Gateway this month. This group is an opportunity for members to join together and organize powerful events like bringing in DA Sullivan to speak about gender-based violence. Sullivan described the importance of raising awareness of domestic and dating violence and made a call of action for students to be "active bystanders" when they witness any signs such as: extreme jealousy, controlling behavior, manipulation, physically inflicting harm, or telling somebody to do things they don't want to do.

Approximately 1400 cases of dating/domestic violence were reported in Hampshire County last year, spanning from a shove to homicide; however Sullivan estimates anywhere from double to triple that amount more accurately represents the total amount of cases including those of which go unreported.

The assembly marked the end of the three-day campaign, which included distributing white ribbons to students and staff taking the pledge to end relationship violence and a series of social media posts that shared the warning signs of relationship violence, the rights of victims, and contact information on area services that can help.

If you or anybody you know is a victim of dating violence contact:

Safe Passage

Northampton: 24 hours 888-345-5282

**Hilltown Safety at Home:
Russell: 413-212-8885**

**Center for Women and Community 24-hour hotline: 888-337-0800
Elizabeth Freeman Center
Pittsfield: 24 hours 866-401-2425**

**Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project
Statewide: 24 hours 800-832-1901**

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