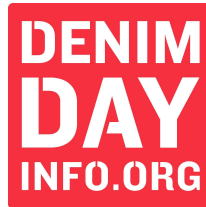


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PAVE x IFC x PHA to host Denim Day march

A new event to the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus, several student organizations have come together to host a survivor-centered march

MADISON, WI: PAVE UW-Madison (Promoting Awareness and Victim Empowerment), IFC (the Interfraternity Council) and PHA (the Panhellenic Association) are hosting a survivor-centered march in honor of Denim Day and survivors of sexual-assault on April 24, 7:30pm beginning at Library Mall. Members from each of the organizations as well as local community members are invited to attend.

Denim Day is an annual event where people wear denim in support of victims of sexual violence. It happens at the end of April, which is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Our aim is to protest sexual violence on the UW campus, city, state and throughout the country. We want to “Take Back the Night” and ensure that everyone on the UW campus feels safe walking at night and does not have to live in fear of sexual violence.

“As an organization whose aim is to uplift collegiate women, a demographic substantially affected by sexual assault, we are marching to show our support of fellow survivors who have historically felt disenfranchised,” said Chirawan Murphy, President of PHA.

Everyone at the march and throughout the day is asked to wear denim and is required to wear a mask and maintain social distancing standards/guidelines while at the march. The route will begin at Library Mall, travel down Langdon street and will turn right at Wisconsin street, ending at the Wisconsin State Capitol. While at the capitol, several survivors and members of PAVE will speak about the importance and history of Denim Day.

Those who are unable to march are encouraged to share resources on social media and gather along the route to support those marching as a demonstration in opposition to rape, rape culture, victim blaming and sexual assault on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. The slogan of the day and event is, “There is no excuse and never an invitation to rape”.

Key facts:

- Every two minutes in America, someone is sexually assaulted

- Approximately 1-in-5 women are raped during their lifetime and youth under 18 accounts for about 44% of all reported
- At least 25% of women experience sexual harassment in the workplace
- About 75% of harassment victims experience retaliation when they reported it
- 63% of sexual assaults are never reported to the police. #denimday
- 1 in 6 men experience abusive sexual experiences before the age of 18
- Almost two-thirds of rapes are committed by someone the victim knows
- Women who have been raped in the military have a higher rate of PTSD than men who've been in combat
- Around the world, 1 in 3 women will be raped or beaten in her lifetime
- According to @CDCgov, nearly 1 in 71 men in the US reported being raped at some point in their lives.

“It is important for us to ground ourselves in the reality of gender-based violence in our community and challenge systems of power that perpetuate violence against our community members. Ending sexual violence goes hand-in-hand with ending racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, state violence and other systems of oppression that out groups in our community. This march is a testament to the people of our community taking a firm stand against a sexual violence that harms our community and shows survivors that they are not alone. We see you, hear you and believe you. You will never walk alone. We need to end sexual violence in our community and support those people healing from such violence ,” Eli Tsarovsky, Chair of PAVE-UW.

*The story regarding the history and legacy of Denim Day along with descriptions of the organizations involved are attached below.

If you have any further questions or concerns feel free to contact Caitlin Geurts, the UW-Madison Panhellenic Association Vice President of External Affairs, through phaleadership@wisc.edu or at 414-379-7071.

PAVE UW-Madison is a student organization dedicated to preventing sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking through education and activism. We reach out to students through our interactive peer education workshops, volunteer and all-campus events, and awareness-raising campaigns. Our vision is a campus community that practices healthy sexuality, expects and offers respect, and celebrates pleasure so enthusiastically that is incompatible with violence.

Join us as we build a community on campus against the violence that empowers its members to be the change they want to see!

The Panhellenic Association is the governing body for the 12 National Panhellenic Conference women's sororities, as well as 2 associate women's sororities on campus. Elected chapter delegates meet regularly with the PHA Executive Board to facilitate open communication and collaboration. The PHA sponsors events such as Formal Recruitment and All Dressed Up, an event that enhances the high school experience for students in the Madison area. Panhellenic women proudly strive for individual excellence in scholarship and leadership, and promote community building through citizenship and fellowship.

The Interfraternity Council is a self-governed student organization at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The IFC consists of 28 member chapters and over 2,000 undergraduate men. The IFC council works closely with the University and chapter leadership to promote brotherhood, academic excellence, health and wellness, racial awareness, community service, and philanthropy.

History of Denim Day from <https://www.denimdayinfo.org/why-denim>. The Denim Day story begins in Italy in 1992, when an 18-year old girl was raped by the 45-year old driving instructor who was taking her to her very first driving lesson. He took her to an isolated road, pulled her out of the car, removed her jeans and forcefully raped her.

She reports the rape and the perpetrator is arrested and prosecuted. He is then convicted of rape and sentenced to jail. Years later, he appealed the conviction claiming that they had consensual sex. The Italian Supreme Court overturned the conviction and the perpetrator was released. A statement from the Court argued that because the victim was wearing very tight jeans, she had to help him remove them, and by removing the jeans it was not rape but consensual sex. This became known throughout Italy as the "jeans alibi."

Enraged by the verdict, the women in the Italian Parliament launched a protest wearing jeans on the steps of the Supreme Court. This protest was picked up by international media which inspired the California Senate and Assembly to do the same on the steps of the Capitol in Sacramento. Patti Occhiuzzo Giggans, Executive Director of Peace Over Violence, saw this in the media and thought everyone should be wearing jeans to protest all of the myths about why

women and girls are raped. Denim Day in LA was born. The first Denim Day in LA event was held in April of 1999, and has continued annually since.

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