

LLCC Domestic Violence Awareness Pledge

National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey data reports that on average, 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in the US. **This means that over the course of LLCC's 2016-17 academic year, 9,123,840 women and men will experience domestic violence.** 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men are the victims of severe physical violence by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime.

Despite its prevalence, the patterns of domestic violence are not fully understood by many bystanders. More than 90% of Americans fail to define repeated emotional, verbal, sexual abuse and controlling behaviors as patterns of domestic violence and abuse. More than half of Americans (54%) say they may have been in situations where they believed domestic violence had occurred, but they didn't act because they were uncertain and didn't know what to do. Without awareness of the pervasiveness of intimate partner violence and its signs, victims and bystanders struggle to fight against the patterns of abuse that millions experience every year.

I PLEDGE...

As members of the LLCC community, we pledge to use our education, our experiences, and our voices to speak out against gender-based violence. Gender-based violence includes physical, sexual, emotional, or economic harm or violence. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, but we pledge to take every opportunity, no matter the month, to promote awareness of the signs of domestic violence, support survivors, and use our knowledge to educate others.

In order to live up to this pledge that I am taking with the LLCC community, I vow to take the following steps:

I will educate myself and others on domestic violence.

To aid in the effort to increase awareness, **I will start conversations** with my classmates, instructors, family members, peers, and community members about the issue of gender-based violence.

I will encourage others to consider why our society questions the victim's behavior instead of the perpetrator's violent and abusive behavior.

I will support survivors. I will never blame them for what happened, and I will do my best to let them know that they are not alone. Knowing that an abuser's behavior often occurs in patterns of extreme violence and emotional manipulation and abuse intended to make the victim feel as though it is impossible or too dangerous to leave, **I will never make a victim feel as though it is their fault for not leaving their abusive partner sooner.** Commit to asking survivors, "What happened to you?" instead of "What's wrong with you?" Instead of "Just leave," you might ask, "How can I help you be safe?" In lieu of "Your story keeps changing," try "I know it's hard to remember the details, but I believe you."

Knowing the power of collective responsibility and bystander intervention, **I will find safe ways to intervene** when I see someone else in a potentially dangerous situation.

I take this pledge to help construct a safer and healthier future for my family, my friends, and my community members.

Name

Date