

**PARENTS AND FAMILY ASSOCIATION
GRANT PROPOSAL**

Program Title:

Women's Resource Center: Safety and Empowerment

Submitted by:

**Associated Students of the University of Arizona (ASUA)
Women's Resource Center**

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OVERVIEW OF ASUA'S WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER:

The ASUA Women's Resource Center is dedicated to increasing awareness of issues that impact women on the UA campus, in the broader Tucson community, and in our increasingly globalized world. Through a variety of programs and services, we seek to serve individual women in need, while also working to eradicate the broader social and institutional barriers that continue to impact women's lives.

PROPOSAL ABSTRACT

The Women's Resource Center seeks to enrich women's lives within the campus community by addressing issues regarding safety and empowerment. We will continue to provide Safe Walk, a program that runs Monday-Friday between the hours of 7:30-11:30pm to provide free, safe, escorted walks from one point on campus to another point on campus. By providing stipended internships Safe Walk not only keeps our campus safe, but it also provides paid professional development opportunities on campus. Through increased student involvement, the WRC will continue to identify alternative funding, recruit more interns to be part of our internship program, and conduct programming that can be implemented on a large scale for years to come. Most importantly, we will begin to create a Center that is well-known and well-respected on campus, one with institutional history, future goals, sustainability, and the ability to compete with the Women's Centers at comparable institutions.

STATEMENT OF NEED

The vast majority of major U.S. universities have a sizeable and well-established Women's Center. Among Pac 10 schools, this trend is also observable. To remain academically and institutionally competitive, the University of Arizona needs a more visible and competent Center. UA enrolls approximately 37,000 students. The majority, approximately 53%, are female. To put this in perspective, the 1,000 African American students on campus comprise just 2.8% of the student body and have a well-organized, resourceful African American Student Affairs center with academic support, leadership development, and many programs throughout the year. The vast differences in these percentages should not suggest that the AASA is not needed, but rather, that women students are also in dire need of greater support.

Oppression of women continues to exist throughout our world, and through the prevalence of sexual assault on our campus, this issue remains a serious concern for college-aged women. Women on campus are harassed by men everyday, and there have been numerous assaults on campus that go unreported and others that are under-publicized. According to Mary Koss, a University of Arizona Regent Scholar and internationally renowned expert on sexual assault, 1 in every 4 college-aged women are victims of rape or attempted rape¹. Although this study was conducted two decades ago, the numbers have sadly remained constant in all subsequent studies, pointing out that these issues do not stop at the border of our campus. In fact, most women understand

¹ Koss, M.P., Gidycz C.J. and Wisniewski, N. "The Scope of Rape: Incidence and Prevalence of Sexual Aggression and Victimization among a National Sample of Students in Higher Education. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 55 (1987): 162-70.

what can best be described by the term “sexual terrorism,” or the constant fear of rape, sexual assault, and even walking alone at night. Because 25% of college-aged women experience sexual assault, almost all women have either been victimized, or know friends, sisters, or classmates that have experienced this trauma. All women understand the culturally pervasive and constant threat of sexual assault, whether or not it has been individually experienced. This begins to explain one dimension of the disempowerment of women at a societal level.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Women’s safety and empowerment must be promoted on our campus and in our communities. Thanks to grants provided by the Parents and Family Association Grant in spring 2007 and 2008, the Women’s Resource Center has been able to provide safety programming at the University of Arizona. Our highly successfully self-defense classes and annual Take Back the Night rally serve to inspire and empower women with self-defense workshops and an upcoming Take Back the Night rally. However, it is truly our successful Safe Walk program, generously funded by the Parents and Family Association that is most widely recognized for keeping our campus safe.

The Safe Walk Program builds on the idea of “safety in numbers” and has two students available every weeknight to walk students from one point on campus to another point on campus. Women’s Resource Center interns would be “on-call” from 7:30-11:30pm, Monday through Friday. The program includes 10 regular students who divide the Safe Walk Program time during the school year and receive a stipend of \$500 each per semester. Other materials necessary for the program are flashlights, Safe Walk t-shirts and badges, advertising materials, and a cell phone for communication between students, and, if needed, Campus Police.

According to ASUA’s Safe Ride Director Brittany Smith, a student will wait an average of twenty-five minutes (ten minutes to get through on the phone, five minutes on hold, and ten minutes for the car) before a Safe Ride driver will arrive. For students that need a ride off-campus, it is often worth the wait. But for students that just want to get from one location on campus to another, they often decide to walk alone rather than wait twenty-five minutes. In response to this Safe Walk proposal, Brittany Smith stated, “I bet if there was a different option in addition to Safe Ride, especially for on-campus security, students would use it.”

Since December 2007, Safe Walk has been an important part of our campus. Only one full year into the program, Safe Walk walked 127 callers in the Fall 2008 semester alone! It is typical for callers to use our service many times throughout the semester and for some multiple times each week. Safe Walk provides a necessary service to students and also increases the visibility of the Women’s Resource Center. By continuing to implement Safe Walk, we are increasing the number of everyday safety tools for campus women. In addition to providing Safe Walk, this grant allows us to distribute safety tools to women. In the past year alone, we have distributed 4,000 key chains that are both flashlights and whistles to female students during our outreach events. Furthermore, we equipped women with pepper spray to use in the event that they are subject to assault.

In a conversation with Rebecca Levy, a former Residence Hall director, she stated that there is a general feeling of fear around sexual assault, as several threats of assault occur each semester. She explained the benefit to letting freshman know about the threat of assault on campus, resources for preventing it, and when this doesn't work, resources to help students cope with the aftermath of assault. She stated that the students in the dorms really responded to getting the whistle and flashlight key chains in the past. Because the Women's Resource Center information will be printed on both the key chains and pepper spray, this will also serve the additional function of promotion of the Center, our services, and broader campus and community resources. These resources are a necessary component of an aggressive advertising campaign. Over the last year, we've realized that Safe Walk calls easily double after we are featured by the press or after we widely distribute Safe Walk promotional materials. This suggests that Safe Walk would be even more widely used if more students knew about the service.

Thus, the focus of this project is not only to provide a year's worth of necessary safety programming, but also to increase overall involvement with and knowledge of the WRC. Furthermore, we will assess the effectiveness of these programs and services, and learn from women students what additional issues they need addressed to feel safer and empowered on this campus and in their lives.

SUCSESSES

Upon receiving funding from the Parents and Family Association in November 2007, the WRC has operated a successful Safe Walk program. In addition to Safe Walking callers, Safe Walk interns are required to work on Women's Resource Center related material. This has not only added extra help to the Center, but it has also enriched the lives of Safe Walkers from their investment with the Center and the Campus community.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

In order to assess the impact of WRC programming and services, verbal evaluations are conducted with every person that calls Safe Walk. This information is then used to evaluate where and how the Safe Walk program can improve. The numbers of students utilizing Safe Walk has increased each semester since its inception. We will assess our success, then, not only through evaluations but also through the numbers of students that utilize this service.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST
SAFE WALK	Student stipends to run “Safe Walk” program (\$500 stipend/semester for 10 student interns X 2 semesters + ERE costs) ²	\$15,000
SAFE WALK COMMUNICATION	Cell phone for students on call for safe walk (\$60/mo X 12 mo contract)	\$720
MARKETING	Advertising and marketing to students and community about the Safe Walk Program	\$3,000
SAFETY MATERIALS	Safe Walk uniforms for each intern \$15 X 20 plus set-up charges.	\$500
	Pepper Spray (1,000 X \$2 each—this low price is only available through a connection that Safe Ride has)	\$2,000
Total Budget Requested		\$21,220

Potential Funding Sources:

- National, State and Local Women’s Organizations (E.G. Third Wave Foundation)
- Commission on the Status of Women
- Corporate Support (E.G. Ikon Grant, Xerox Grant)
- Graduate and Professional Student Council

Additionally, the WRC was granted approximately a \$6500 budget for the 2008-2009 academic year through ASUA’s Programs and Services Branch. We also continue to receive outside grants and funding for the center for programming. Nonetheless, this amount of money is insufficient to meet the needs of approximately 20,000 female students on campus. We know this program is not only important to the WRC but also to the general campus community. Thank you for your time and consideration of our proposal, and your commitment to creating a safer campus community where young women can become empowered leaders!

² Last year, we stated in the Safe Walk grant submitted to the Parents and Family Association that we would pay Safe Walk interns a stipend of \$500 per semester. Unfortunately, we did not figure in mandatory ERE costs, and this cost had to be taken out of the internship stipends, reducing the overall amount given to the students. To avoid this issue, we are now asking for \$750 per student stipend per semester to cover both the ERE costs and the \$500 student stipend.