UConn Women's Center to hold domestic violence vigil today



Candles will be lit tonight at a vigil for domestic violence on the Student Union Mall. The Women's Center organized this event to bring awareness to domestic violence. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF GETARCHIVE.NET.

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The University of Connecticut Women's Center and United Services' Domestic Violence Program will be holding a candlelight vigil today at the Student Union Mall in honor of domestic violence awareness month.

The event takes place from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and will be run by Paige Briggs, an advocate from the United Services' Domestic Violence Program, a nonprofit behavioral health center that provides prevention and education programs throughout the state, according to their website.

Nuratu Quarshie, the Women's Center interim violence against women protection program director (VAWPP), said that this event is aimed to bring awareness to domestic violence.

"It's just to highlight people's stories and bring awareness that, you know, these are the things that happen in the world, and we're trying to do a lot of prevention work to avoid these stories from becoming prevalent," she said.

This event is held annually along with the United Services' Domestic Violence Program. Their aim is to highlight the lives of those that have been lost to domestic violence, Quarshie said.

During the event there will be a moment of silence, survivor speaker reflections and a candle lighting, according to the UConn events website.

"We read out specific stories from people who have passed away in the past in Connecticut, or people who have experienced domestic violence in certain ways," Quarshie said.

These stories are meant to demonstrate that domestic violence can happen at any age no matter what your gender is or where you live, she said.

One of Quarshie's responsibilities as interim director is to train facilitators on consent workshops.

She said she finds this event important because she has seen people who have been affected by domestic violence and sexual assault.

"I think it's very important because people go through this every day, and sometimes people don't even know where to start from when they do encounter these things," she said.

The Women's Center has multiple resources to help people dealing with domestic violence such as a peer-led support group called In-power.

She said it is a great resource for students to talk about their experiences concerning domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking. She said the group meets every Thursday in the Women's Center.

Students also have the opportunity to talk to a full-time staff member one-on-one to connect them with resources. Quarshie said she's the first person of contact when someone wants to talk.

"I want to be a helping hand to direct them to the proper resources and to bridge that gap between people that are affected and the resources that we have on campus or even just listening areas," she said.

The center also has spaces for students to study and is open to all, Quarshie said.

During October there will also be other events by the Women's Center including Love Should Not Hurt, The Clothesline Project and Greeks Against Sexual Assault, she said.



The UConn Women's Center is hosting a vigil tonight on the Student Union Mall in honor of domestic violence awareness month. Resources are provided at the Women's Center for those dealing with domestic violence. FILE PHOTO/THE DAILY CAMPUS.

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