



# Awareness Month PROCLAMATION

Supporting Survivors and Preventing Sexual Violence

- Whereas,** the United States has recognized April as **Sexual Assault Awareness Month**;
- Whereas,** sexual assault impacts our community, as seen by statistics indicating that one in five women and one in 16 men will have experienced sexual assault by the time they complete college; and
- Whereas,** current estimates suggest as few as one in five sexual assaults will be reported to law enforcement; and
- Whereas,** the University of Central Florida shares a critical concern for survivors of sexual violence and a desire to support their needs for healing and justice;
- Whereas,** we must work together to educate our community about what can be done to prevent sexual assault and how to support survivors; and
- Whereas,** research documents that when survivors who disclose their attack are met with doubt, shame, or blame, they suffer additional negative affects on their physical and psychological well-being; and
- Whereas,** the **Start by Believing** trauma-informed approach is designed to improve the responses of friends, family members, and community professionals, so they can help survivors access supportive resources and engage the criminal justice system; and
- Whereas,** April 26 has been declared **Denim Day**, an opportunity to don denim to unite behind survivors of sexual violence and communicate the message that there is never an invitation to rape; and
- Whereas,** with leadership, dedication, and education, we can reduce sexual violence and support survivors at the University of Central Florida;

**Now, therefore,** the University of Central Florida recognizes the month of April as **Sexual Assault Awareness Month**, and will observe the first Wednesday of April as **Start by Believing Day** and April 26 as **Denim Day** to show our support for survivors in our community and beyond.



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