Many cases of sexual assault have been in the national news in the past few weeks. Even the White House has commented on the disturbingly high numbers of these incidents. Sadly, this problem also exists on campuses, affecting women most notably, but also men.

Imagine how difficult it might be to continue attending classes if one’s offender is on the same campus. Imagine how lonely a victim might feel not knowing where to go for information and understanding.

Any sexual act that lacks consent from both of the parties involved is a sexual assault. Sexual acts that occur when the individual is unconscious or otherwise unable to give his/her consent, possibly due to the use of alcohol or drugs, are sexual assaults and can be prosecuted.

The type of sexual assault we most often hear about is rape. Rape is defined as forced sexual intercourse between any two individuals. Forced oral or anal sodomy, between a man and a woman or two of the same sex are equal to rape in the eyes of the law. They are all felonies and a convicted offender could receive a lengthy prison sentence. There are also lesser forms of sexual assaults in legal terms, such as indecent exposure and touching of a sexual nature without any penetration. These crimes are misdemeanors and a convicted offender can also receive a fine and/or a jail sentence. Sexual assaults are also against the NOVA Code of Conduct because they are unethical and immoral.

We can lower the number of sexual assaults if we take a moment to intervene when we see a hostile environment being created. By becoming an active bystander and recognizing when someone is exerting unwanted power over another, when one is unable to give a clear, sober consent to sex, and by speaking up when in such a situation, we can make the difference in a potential victim’s life. The consequences of sexual assault are very serious. Immediate concerns of physical injury, pregnancy, and STIs are obvious concerns. Resulting emotional damage may be equally as serious, leading to social and personal concerns, as well as lower academic performance.

There are simple steps we can take to help victims of sexual assault. First, and foremost, “Believe the Victim.” Unless we are police or conduct administrators, our role is not to investigate or to be fact-finders. Rather, it is to say in effect “I believe you and I am so sorry this happened to you.” Additionally, tell the victim “I know a person you can call to help you” and advise them to contact NOVA Sexual Assault Services (SAS), at 703.338.0834, and/or the police, at 703.764.5000.

It is important for a sexual assault victim to report this crime and talk about it with someone who understands and who can assist the victim in getting needed legal and emotional assistance. NOVA SAS supports such victims. The SAS advocate can provide information on the issues of sexual assault dating/partner violence and stalking to members of the NOVA community. The advocate can explain the options a person has, either through the police/court process or the student conduct process. If a person only wants to talk through his or her feelings and perhaps get a referral to an off-campus therapist, the SAS advocate can facilitate that as well.

All NOVA SAS services are free and confidential. The advocate can be reached by email at nova.sas@nvcc.edu or at her 24-hour cell phone: 703.338.0834. For more information about this topic, contact Connie Kirkland, Director, Student Mental Health and Behavior (SMHB), at 703.338.2136. SMHB manages the NOVA SAS program.
New Office of Emergency Management Coordinator

NOVA welcomes its new District 2 Emergency Management Coordinator, Justin Miller. Prior to joining NOVA, Justin was a consultant for 8 years in the federal government sector. He led several initiatives in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) by creating, implementing, and maintaining their continuity of operation plans, comprehensive all-hazard emergency plans, and emergency operation procedures. Miller has an extensive background dealing with emergency management, information technology, and first responder experiences within federal and local government sectors.

Miller also brings first responder and emergency response experience to NOVA through volunteering as a Firefighter and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) in Fairfax County. Miller’s knowledge and practical experience of Fairfax County first responder procedures will help improve NOVA’s emergency plans through coordination with County first responders.

Miller has a Master’s degree from George Washington University in Engineering Management, focusing in Crisis, Emergency, and Risk Management and a Bachelor’s degree from The Pennsylvania State University in Information Sciences and Technology. Miller also has the following certifications: Associate Business Continuity Professional (ABCP), Certified Healthcare Emergency Professional (CHEP), Firefighter I/II, Emergency Medical Technician- Basic, Fairfax County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Hazardous Materials Operation Level First Responder, and FEMA Level I Professional Continuity Practitioner.

Miller will be responsible for OEMP operations at the Annandale and Medical Education Campuses. He can be reached at jjmiller@nvcc.edu.

NOVA Police Host VIN Etching Event to Deter Vehicle Theft

On May 31, 2013 at the Annandale Campus, NOVA Police partnered with Virginia State Police to help deter vehicle thefts by offering free VIN etching to the NOVA community. This is the second year NOVA Police held this event, and this year we doubled the number of vehicles that took advantage of this service. We hope to continue our partnership with Virginia State Police and hold more events in the future.
NOVA Police Participate in Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics

On June 6, 2013, NOVA Police officers, along with dispatchers and other NOVA employees, participated in the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Officers Torch Run. The run commenced at the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington. Beginning at seven points across the Commonwealth, more than 2,000 officers carried the Special Olympics Flame of Hope over 1,900 miles across Virginia. NOVA Police received the Torch from George Mason University Police Department and ran 2.3 miles before passing it to the next leg.

On June 7, officers gathered at a Final Leg ceremony at the State Capitol, and from there, more than 75 local law enforcement officers ran the Torch Run’s Final Leg into the University of Richmond’s Robins Center. Officers passed the Flame of Hope to a Special Olympics athlete, who then lit an Olympic Cauldron to open this year’s Summer Games.
The NOVA Police will be hosting a summer SAFE training session. Sexual Assault Free & Empowered (SAFE) is a free women’s self defense program offered by the NOVA College Police Department. SAFE is dedicated to empowering women with knowledge to reduce the occurrence of sexual assault crimes. The program provides effective options by teaching women to take an active and positive role in their own self defense and psychological well-being.

**Course Content**
- Risk awareness, risk reduction, crime prevention strategies and defensive concepts
- Hands-on training in physical defense techniques
- Simulated, controlled environment to test skills
- Courses taught by certified SAFE instructors
- Take home reference manual provided

**Location:** Alexandria Campus  
3001 N. Beauregard Street  
Alexandria, VA 22311  
AA Building, Room 158

**Dates:** July 17 and 18  
(Please indicate which date you will be in attendance.)

**Time:** 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM (both sessions)

- Due to space limitations, we can only register 30 attendees. Registration will be on a first come, first served basis. Please e-mail Community Outreach Officer Tony Ong at tong@nvcc.edu to register.
  * E-mail must indicate which date you wish to attend.
- Additional information will be provided to all registered attendees.