

From: [noreply](#)
To: [Kiersten Lael Tavares \(she/her\)](#)
Subject: Evolving Responses to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Violence
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The University
of Vermont

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

March 31, 2023

Dear UVM community,

We write today in advance of April, **Sexual Assault Awareness Month**, to reaffirm that at UVM, we care deeply about and prioritize the safety and wellbeing of all members of our community. Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) “calls attention to the fact that sexual violence is widespread and impacts every person in the community,” according to the [National Sexual Violence Resource Center \(NSVRC\)](#). It is a time to educate and empower, support and reflect.

At UVM, we center the voices of survivors and recommit to shared planning and action in preventing sexual violence. Rooted in our caring is a commitment to work toward the eradication of sexual violence and a recognition that each of us has an important part to play in creating a campus community that is healthy and safe. We do this by supporting those who share their stories, and by educating ourselves about resources and best practices for prevention and response. Those of us leading prevention and response efforts take great care to review, align, and modify our work to ensure that it recognizes the unique needs of our community.

Community knowledge of the support and resources available is important, and UVM is committed to providing a range of resources to survivors of sexual violence and anyone who is impacted by sexual or gender-based misconduct. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with these resources, which include:

- Reorganized [online information](#) that is comprehensive and easier to navigate than prior web pages. We will continue to update these resources moving forward.
- The engagement and prevention work of our Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Coordinator, [Elliot Ruggles](#), who joined our team in February 2022.
- The [LiveSafe app](#), which includes [features \(pdf\)](#) such as SafeWalk and Virtual Bluelight.

SAAM is also an opportunity to highlight some new initiatives being rolled out at UVM now and in the near future. These include:

- A **unified reporting system** for incidents of all kinds; it will be simple to use and easy to find. Stay tuned for more on this improvement.

- A new **drug testing initiative** to help detect suspected “date rape” drugs.
- An **anti-tampering drink cover initiative** led by UVM's Student Government Association and co-sponsored by UVM's Safety & Compliance and Student Affairs divisions.
- A faculty position in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, with the responsibility of creating a **peer-to-peer education program** that is self-sustaining and of high impact.
- **Events** will be listed throughout the month and aimed at increasing awareness and prompting action, so please keep checking in to see how you might get involved.

We want to thank you, our UVM community, for your commitment to understanding the harm experienced when a sexual assault occurs, and the support needed. Please continue to take care of each other, access our resources, and work toward making our campus a safe and healthy place for all.

Respectfully,

Patricia Prelock
Provost and Senior Vice President

Erica Caloiero
Vice Provost for Student Affairs

