

January 21, 2015 | By Christine Clark

UC San Diego Expands Sexual Assault and Violence Prevention Services

After 25 years of successfully helping students, the University of California, San Diego's Sexual Assault and Violence Prevention Resource Center (SARC) is expanding its services to provide crisis intervention and advocacy to faculty and staff, in addition to students. Due to the expansion of services, as well as a recent call to action by University of California President Janet Napolitano to have a system-wide consistent model for the prevention and response to sexual assault and violence, SARC has changed its name to CARE: Advocacy Office for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Misconduct. In addition, as of January 1, 2015, the center reports to the UC San Diego Office of Ethics and Compliance. CARE will continue to serve as the independent and confidential advocacy office which provides education and support services for those impacted by sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking.

"Sexual assault and sexual violence are intolerable and serious crimes," said Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. "Preventing sexual misconduct is a top priority for UC San Diego. Through the expanded services of CARE, our campus will continue to work diligently to create a safe, respectful and positive environment for all members of the UC San Diego community."

CARE serves as the primary point of contact for victims and survivors who need advocacy, support services and/or assistance with reporting options. All members of the university community who receive information or reports from victims/survivors are encouraged to take proactive steps to refer individuals to the CARE Advocacy Office. In addition, the center will continue to coordinate education and prevention efforts, such as campus-wide campaigns and workshops on violence prevention.

Under the leadership of Nancy Wahlig, who has been director of CARE (formerly SARC) since the program's inception 25 years ago, the office has received about \$1.3 million dollars in grants from the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Department of Education and private donations which have helped the campus become a leader in taking proactive measures that ensure the health and safety of students.

“We are proud to build upon our efforts to now be of service to all members of the UC San Diego community,” said Wahlig. “For more than 25 years, CARE has successfully collaborated and built strong relationships with many units across campus to create a safe and respectful community. We envision a world free of violence and will continue to provide policy development, education and support services that empower students, faculty and staff.”

Wahlig has over 30 years of experience working with victims of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking. Her work at UC San Diego includes providing survivor counseling and advocacy, writing and directing departmental grants, leading sexual assault survivor support groups as well as training police, faculty and staff on issues relating to sexual and dating violence and more.



Nancy Wahlig

In addition to Wahlig’s expertise, CARE assistant director Jessica Heredia, a California-certified victim advocate who has been with the center since 2008, is experienced in providing comprehensive victim support services. Her background includes developing violence prevention curriculum and working with LGBT survivors and historically underrepresented students.

Earlier this year, the task force convened by Napolitano to oversee the university’s wide-ranging efforts to prevent sexual violence, which UC San Diego has been an active member of, released a report which listed seven key recommendations to prevent sexual violence. Among the recommendations for each UC, is the establishment of an independent, confidential advocacy office, which UC San Diego has had in place for more than 25 years, with a full-time staff member. As of Jan. 2015, all campuses are on track to have such offices and each has created at least one full-time position dedicated to providing services to students in relation to treating and preventing sexual violence.

For more information about UC San Diego’s sexual assault and violence prevention services, visit care.ucsd.edu or call (858) 534-5793.

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