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TOP STORY

Caboni, Beshear condemn domestic violence

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Domestic violence won't be tolerated at Western Kentucky University and students should step up to end it.

That was the message from WKU President Timothy Caboni as he joined Kentucky Attorney General Andy Beshear to proclaim October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month on Monday.

“Violence of any kind including behaviors that belittle, demean or are in any way abusive will not be tolerated on our campus,” Caboni said, drawing applause from a crowd of students, faculty and staff in WKU’s Downing Student Union. “A single instance of interpersonal violence is one too many, and it will not stand.”

For Beshear, fighting violence against women is a key part of his job as Kentucky’s attorney general.

“Nearly one in two of Kentucky women will be subjected to some form of sexual violence in their lifetime. One in two,” he said during the event. “Folks I am a son, I’m a husband and I’m the dad of a 7-year-old girl and I will not live with the reality where one in two of our citizens has to be concerned about their safety.”

On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States, according to a WKU news release. Women between 18 and 24 years old are most commonly abused by an intimate partner.

To raise awareness, WKU is hosting a series of events throughout the month. They include a Hope and Mic Night event at 5 p.m. Oct. 22 on WKU's South Lawn and a candle lighting vigil at 5:30 p.m. Oct. 24 at First Christian Church. More event information is available by calling WKU's Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.

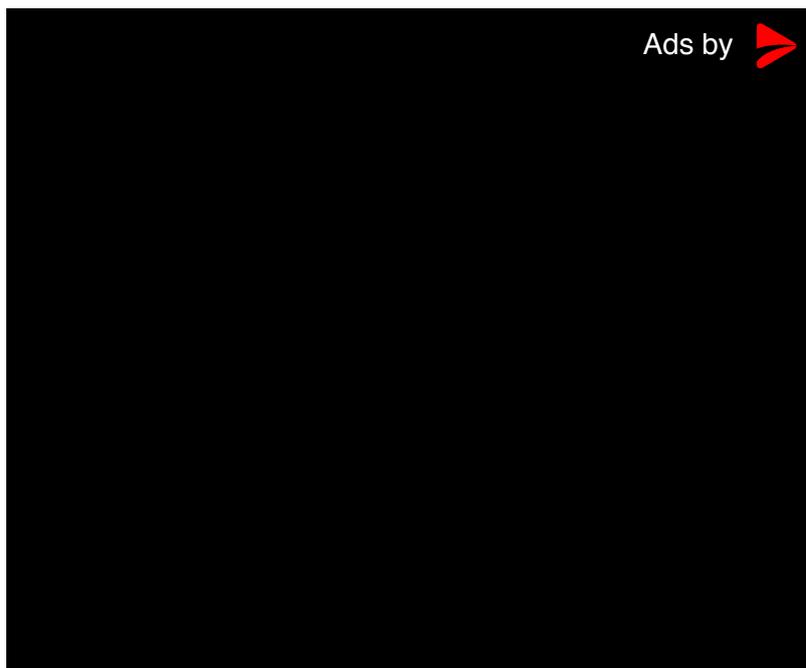
On Monday's kickoff event, graduate assistants Keriann Granato and Victoria Peters worked at an information booth, spreading awareness to students in Downing Student Union.

For Granato, many students don't realize how big of a problem domestic violence is for college-age women. She hopes students will become more conscious of its signs, including isolating and controlling behavior, and get help if they need it.

"There's tons of resources around campus," she said.

Peters agreed, adding their main goal of participating was to let victims know they're not alone.

"Don't be afraid to take a stand," Peters said.



During his remarks, Caboni had his own message for victims.

"To those in a relationship, you didn't cause the violence and no one has the right to hurt you," he said. "And to those who want to help, you're there to offer support, not to rescue and not to save. Both of those messages show the need to learn and understand the resources that are available to the victims of domestic violence."

Caboni also said men on WKU's campus have an obligation to intervene.

"To the men in the room, if you see someone acting like a jerk it is your responsibility to step up and step in," he said. "We will not tolerate that kind of behavior among the men on this campus."

To continue fighting violence against women, Beshear said his office will keep addressing sex crimes in Kentucky.

"This coming Wednesday, I want you to know we are going to have a major announcement of one of the largest grants my office has ever received from the federal government that is going to create an entire unit to seek justice for those same people who have been denied justice for far too long," he said.

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