

**Year 2 Public Description of Work for
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

California Institute of Technology

**Addition of New Campus Confidential Resource Specializing in Sexual
Violence and other Misconduct**

Relevant Rubric Areas:

Response: Trauma-Informed Response and Education Programs

Remediation: Increased or Enhanced Confidential Resources and Support Services

Description of Work

In the Spring of 2020, Caltech introduced to its community a new campus confidential resource, the Campus Sexual Violence Advocate, in order to provide faculty, staff, and campus sexual violence survivors with a fully confidential, specialized, and trauma-informed counseling space, referrals to medical and legal resources, and accompaniment services

Identifying the Need for an Additional and Dedicated Confidential Resource

The Equity and Title IX Office holds regular strategic planning meetings, wherein we set our goals for a given year and create a plan for accomplishing those goals. As part of those meetings, we review campus resources and how community constituencies (faculty, staff, postdocs, and students) access both on-campus resources (e.g. licensed therapists) and off-campus resources (e.g., local Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART)).

Prior to the Spring of 2020, Caltech had robust general counseling services, but we did not have a wholly confidential resource specifically experienced, trained, and dedicated to supporting victims of sexual violence to get medical attention, heal emotionally, and access legal resources. To address emergencies, residential life or security personnel, as first responders, would accompany victims to local SART centers and help coordinate access to counselors and Title IX resources. While these personnel received training, they lacked full-time professional-level training and did not provide follow-up or other services. While campus licensed therapists and the Equity & Title IX Office were available and accessed, survivors frequently wanted more options than general counseling and/or immediate access to resolution and disciplinary processes.

To address this gap and continue to forward Caltech's commitment to expanding its resources addressing equity and Title IX issues, the Equity & Title IX Office applied for and received a grant from the State of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services to fund a Campus Sexual Violence Advocate (Advocate). Caltech partnered with our local rape crisis center Peace Over Violence and contracted for one of their trained advocates to serve the entire Caltech community on a full-time basis.

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Broad, Easy Access to Campus Sexual Violence Advocate

The Advocate's services can be accessed quickly through the dedicated section and quick link on the Equity & Title IX Office website, by phone or email, or through the Caltech Student Resources smartphone app. The Advocate's services may be accessed by any member of the Caltech community for free and regardless of when and where the sexual violence they experienced took place, including outside the context of Caltech's operations.

Community members can also be referred to the Advocate by other campus resources, including the Equity & Title IX Office, the Office of Residential Experience, the campus licensed therapists, the Caltech Center for Inclusion and Diversity, the Deans, and Campus Security. To facilitate such referrals, as well as to augment its preventative education efforts, the Equity & Title IX Office has integrated the Advocate into its team and established collaborative activities between the Advocate and these resources, including co-sponsored lectures and workshops for students, group meditations, art therapy nights, and documentary/movie screenings. These activities were conducted remotely over the past year, due to the pandemic.

Key Services Provided by the Campus Sexual Violence Advocate:

Through the local rape crisis center which employs her, the Campus Sexual Violence Advocate is trained to provide direct services to survivors which include crisis intervention, intake needs assessment, safety planning and on-going comprehensive case management. To ensure justice, protection and compassion for survivors of intimate partner violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment and stalking, the Advocate's comprehensive case management services offer support and advocacy on behalf of survivors navigating personal, legal and criminal justice systems. Case management includes:

- Providing emotional support and counseling on survivors' rights, safety, mindfulness, and personal empowerment
- Providing advocacy and follow up with law enforcement, campus administrators, housing and others;
- Helping clients to apply for restraining orders, prepare for court hearings, create a safety plan, and learn their rights;
- Accompanying survivors to hospitals with a Sexual Assault Response Team, police stations, court, and social services in order to provide crisis intervention, advocacy, and support;
- Scheduling and conducting comprehensive needs and risk assessments, as well as an intake process for individual counseling and continuation of services in the rape crisis center's case management, counseling, and/or legal programs;
- Identifying client needs and assisting in accessing services information and referrals
- Referring campus community members to other Caltech resources that can provide assistance

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Results to Date

The addition and integration of the Advocate to the panoply of Caltech confidential resources has been very well-received and accessed by the campus community, particularly by staff and students. As we return to the campus in the Fall, the Equity & Title IX team is strategizing how to increase the Advocate's visibility and offerings to the community, including in-person, expansive education and outreach activities.

Website for Further Information: <https://equity.caltech.edu>

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