

## LAST CALL to all Courageous Men of Westmoreland County to...

### Walk a Mile in Her Shoes®

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Men's March to Stop Rape, Sexual Assault & Gender Violence



**When: Saturday, April 21, 2012**

**Where: Lynch Field, Greensburg**

**Registration: 9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.**

Opening remarks at 9:45 a.m., walk begins at 10:00 a.m.

Registration is \$5 for each participant  
Men, women, and children are welcome.  
Includes free event t-shirt (while supplies last)

**TO REGISTER OR FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
go to [www.blackburncenter.org](http://www.blackburncenter.org)  
or call 724-837-9540 ext. 114



United Way  
of Westmoreland County



### ARE YOU MAN ENOUGH TO Walk a Mile in Her Shoes?

This annual event sends  
two clear messages:

**1**

Most men don't condone violence.  
(In fact, the majority of men are  
good guys who care!)

**2**

Sexual and domestic violence are  
not just "women's issues"—  
they impact everyone, women and  
men, and we can ALL make a  
difference by challenging the social  
norms that perpetuate this violence.

**Teams are encouraged! Form groups at work or school and walk as a team.**  
You may carry an identifying banner, but the banner must be pre approved by Blackburn Center prior to the Walk.

# An Invitation to the Conversation: What Do We Need to Understand to End Violence Against Women?

**O**n April 9, 2012, Blackburn Center took the next step in its commitment to address root causes of violence against women by launching a public awareness campaign to draw attention to this issue. In conjunction with this campaign, the agency is introducing a new micro-site on the web to provide a forum for conversation about how to end violence against women. Through the micro-site, Blackburn Center is identifying issues and resources that focus on root causes of this violence, and inviting suggestions from the community for other resources and perspectives.

In developing this new initiative, Blackburn Center considered the societal factors that create and reinforce the objectification of women, and chose to start the conversation by focusing on the significant impact media has by projecting negative images of women.

The community will see the messages from the public awareness campaign on billboards in Westmoreland County and through online advertising. These ads direct community members to **help stop it** by visiting the new micro-site: [mediahurts.org](http://mediahurts.org).

It's 8 pm.  
Press here to see a woman raped.



Or click [mediahurts.org](http://mediahurts.org)  
to help stop it.



## mediahurts.org

Media has a powerful impact. We are considering media in its many forms (TV, music, video games, advertising, internet, etc) – all the ways messages and ideas are transmitted to large groups of people. We know that an increasing number of these are saturated with degrading and sexualized images of women.

And so, does media hurt? Sometimes, absolutely.

For this exploration of how to end violence against women, we're focusing on the degrading and violent images of women that permeate much of media, and that create the current culture that reinforce the many ways that women are marginalized in our society – with one of the most traumatic being domestic and sexual violence.

Facts to remember:

- 1 in 4 women will be battered in a relationship at some point in her life.
- A woman is raped every two minutes in this country.
- Despite increasing services and community awareness, the incidence of domestic and sexual violence, both locally and across the country, has remained constant.

These statistics are not improving. Why? This level of violence continues to happen because we live in a society that tolerates and accepts gender violence as inevitable. The society actually benefits from violence against women when you consider the connection between degrading and sexualized images of women and commerce.

So, it's time to consider what needs to change to begin to see a reduction in violence against women.

When you visit the site, take the opportunity to:

- Understand why we have to consider the root causes of gender violence if we're going to see any positive change
- Identify the REAL actions you can take to be part of the solution
- Provide us with your perspective on this issue.

## Understanding root causes...

When we consider a societal or community problem, it's sometimes hard to see past the symptoms of that problem to get at the real cause. It can be easier to deal with the concrete, immediate factors rather than the complex, far-reaching dynamics. But to get to real change, we must address the underlying issues in order for conditions to improve.

## Consider...

■ **A case study:** A few years ago, researchers conducted a study related to homelessness in a large metropolitan area, concluding that the city leaders had not met their goal of reducing the incidence of homelessness. The city, though they had made a commitment to ending homelessness, had stopped well short of core change by focusing all of their resources on building homeless shelters in the city. This was certainly needed on an immediate basis – but they missed the root causes of homelessness. Homelessness is not caused by a lack of shelters. If they were trying to END homelessness, their resources would have been better spent on addressing issues like the lack of affordable housing, the significant gaps in job training and education, and the lack of availability of jobs with sustainable wages.

■ **An analogy:** If the fire inspector came to your house and said your wiring was bad, what would you do? Put fire extinguishers in every room of the house, OR rewire? Until you got the rewiring done, you'd definitely want to have a supply of fire extinguishers – but you probably wouldn't stop there.

■ **An example from Blackburn Center's work:** We hear a lot lately about teens and violence in relationships. This is an urgent issue. And we can't get sidetracked off root causes if we hope to have a long-term impact. But think about this: if our efforts are centered only on helping young women make different choices about who they're dating, and how to get out of a bad relationship, we may be helping to reduce their risk. But we're not having any community-wide impact on preventing teen violence because we're talking to the wrong person (the victim), and focusing on the wrong behaviors (hers). Instead, shouldn't we be focusing on the behavior of perpetrators, and how the norms in our society perpetuate sexual and domestic violence?

# The Special Occasion Card: A Greeting with a Purpose

## Planting the seeds of promise to nurture a bouquet of hope.

In 1853, Esther Howland brought young girls into her Massachusetts home to hand-color valentines. She provided them with shelter and an opportunity to earn a livelihood. In that tradition, this specially created collector's card will be hand-colored by Blackburn Center's clients and volunteers.

In its thirteenth year, the *Special Occasion Card* from Blackburn Center offers a meaningful way for you to mark important occasions and to honor important people in your life. This year's card, designed by a Blackburn Center staff person and hand-colored by the agency's clients and volunteers, features a quote from Robert Louis Stevenson: "Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant."

For each \$25 gift to Blackburn Center, we will send a card to the person you specify and will include your personal message inside the card. For any level of giving, your name and the name of the person or occasion you honor will be included in the summer edition of our newsletter, and your name will appear in Blackburn Center's Annual Report. (If you prefer, we will list you as "anonymous.") We have enclosed a remittance envelope in this newsletter for your convenience.

Please consider this way to touch the lives of thousands of people in our community as you touch the lives of those you honor. On behalf of those we serve, thank you for sharing in our mission.

## Seton Hill Plants Flags to Raise Awareness

As reported in the agency's spring 2011 newsletter, Blackburn Center has an unprecedented opportunity with a project at Seton Hill University to make significant strides in Blackburn's mission to transform the social norms that perpetuate domestic and sexual violence. Seton Hill has made a long-term, institutional commitment to undertake both campus-wide and curriculum-based activities to engage university students in Blackburn Center's goal to address the root causes of this violence.

In one of their many projects to support this commitment, Seton Hill recently partnered with Blackburn Center to launch a new initiative on campus to focus attention on the issue of dating violence. The Red Flag Campaign is a public awareness initiative designed to address dating violence and promote the prevention of dating violence on college campuses. The campaign was created using a "bystander intervention" strategy, encouraging friends and other campus community members to "say something" when they see warning signs ("red flags") for dating violence in a friend's relationship. The campaign posters reflect racially and ethnically diverse models, and illustrate both heterosexual and same-gender relationships.

The core of the Red Flag Campaign activities spanned a month and were launched when Residence Life staff "planted" plain red flags in late January across the campus: on the lawn, in residence halls, in the dining hall. The red flags stayed in place for nearly two weeks, generating curiosity and discussion.

Interest peaked with the next part of the campaign in mid-February, when Residence Life staff replaced the red flags with posters, some that focused attention on the attitudes and beliefs that are at the core of dating violence (an example of a phrase on a poster: "If I want to get some, I just need to get her wasted.") and others that showed the signs of a healthy relationship.

In the week the posters appeared, Seton Hill sponsored several supporting activities on campus, including a "Coffee Talk" on healthy relationships; a "Wear Red" fundraiser for Blackburn Center; an information table staffed by Resident Assistants where students and faculty were encouraged to sign a "bystander" pledge; and a presentation by a nationally known expert on the topic of "Sex Signals." Resident Assistants rounded out the week with additional programs in their individual halls.

The campaign was spearheaded by Amanda Ries, Assistant Director of Residence Life & Community Development, who described it as a huge success. A few flags and posters remain on campus, and the dialog continues.

## Give a Gift with Hope

This Mother's Day, why not give a gift that cares as much as she does? Blackburn Center is pleased to announce an opportunity with Beeghly and Company Jewelers: from April 1 until May 14, 2012, each purchase of Sarah's Hope® Jewelry designs at Beeghly and Company Jewelers will give back to Blackburn Center. Sarah's Hope Jewelry is a socially responsible jewelry line that helps provide microloans and small business training to women in impoverished situations throughout the world and the USA.

For this Mother's Day's event, from April 1 to May 14, 2012, customers at Beeghly and Company will be able to choose any item in the complete Sarah's Hope Collection which includes a large selection of earrings, bracelets and pendants. Designs feature .925 sterling silver and colorful, dynamic proprietary E'Sperene® stones. The complete collection can be seen at [www.sarahshopejewelry.com](http://www.sarahshopejewelry.com).

Beeghly and Company Jewelers will donate 30% of each purchase from the collection to assist Blackburn Center in its mission to provide supportive services to victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Both Beeghly and Company Jewelers locations are participating in this promotion. Beeghly and Company, 401 South Main Street, Greensburg is open year round Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Jewel Box by Beeghly & Co. is located at the Westmoreland Mall on the main floor between Macy's and Center Court.

For more information please contact Amy Beeghly at 724-832-1500 or [amy@beeghlyandcompany.com](mailto:amy@beeghlyandcompany.com).

Again this year, to reduce costs and environmental impact, we will post Blackburn Center's Annual Report on our website:

**[www.blackburncenter.org](http://www.blackburncenter.org)**

(Information and Resources/Publications Library)

If you'd like us to send you a hard copy, call 724-837-9540, x101 or e-mail [anita@blackburncenter.org](mailto:anita@blackburncenter.org).



**Blackburn Center Against Domestic & Sexual Violence** is a private, not-for-profit organization that provides 24-hour hotline services, counseling, advocacy and support groups to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, incest, child sexual abuse, and sexual harassment; emergency shelter is available to survivors of domestic violence and their dependent children. Blackburn Center also provides community education, school student awareness programs, and in-service professional trainings throughout Westmoreland County.

#### Contact Information

Office 724-837-9540  
Fax 724-837-3676  
Hotline 724-836-1122  
Toll Free Hotline 1-888-832-2272  
Website [www.blackburncenter.org](http://www.blackburncenter.org)

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**Blackburn Center** is funded in part by United Way of Westmoreland County, PA Department of Public Welfare funds, including Title XX and Act 44 funds, foundations and local contributions.

*A copy of official registration and financial information for Blackburn Center may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*



United Way  
of Westmoreland County  
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Join the YWCA in taking a  
**Stand Against Racism**

► Friday, April 27, 2012

### Stand Against Racism on April 27, 2012

As an agency committed to social justice, Blackburn Center stands with the YWCA of Westmoreland County against racism and discrimination of any kind. With the YWCA, Blackburn Center commits to promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people in our community and in the world.

Please take a stand with us on April 27!

**For more information about how you can participate,**  
visit [www.StandAgainstRacism.org](http://www.StandAgainstRacism.org)

## NEEDS LIST Your contributions have a direct impact for victims of domestic and sexual violence.

**A** donation of items from the needs list throughout the year helps Blackburn Center sustain the shelter program, and helps to maintain the support groups the agency provides for women and children. In addition, some of these items are made available to women — and their children — who are establishing their own homes and need support with basic household items.

Please put the items that are in **bold italics** at the top of your shopping list, and help Blackburn Center manage donations by bringing new items. If you have used items to donate, the agency can provide a list of thrift shops in the area that make items available to Blackburn Center shelter residents at no cost to them.

#### ■ KITCHEN

Baking pans: 9" x 13"  
Coffee: regular & decaffeinated  
Coffee creamer  
Cooking oil  
Cookie sheets  
Drink boxes  
Food items: any canned food, other non-perishables, etc.  
Food storage containers  
Kitchen garbage bags  
Paper products: paper towels  
Small appliances:  
coffee maker, can opener,  
knife sharpener,  
microwave oven  
Spices and condiments  
Tea towels

#### ■ BATHROOM

Bath mats  
Heating pads  
Paper products: toilet paper  
Plungers  
Shower curtains and rings  
***Bath towels (durable)***

#### ■ BEDROOM

Blankets: full & twin  
Mattress pads: quilted, full & twin  
***Pajamas: women's one-size-fits-most, children's all sizes***

#### ■ MISCELLANEOUS

Baby monitors  
Bottled water  
Brooms

#### ***Gasoline cards***

***Gift cards: Walmart or Target***  
Laundry detergent  
Light bulbs: 60-watt & 3-way  
Mops  
Outdoor garbage bags  
Play-Doh  
Storage bins: 45 qt, clear plastic with lids  
***Sweat suits: all sizes***  
Underpants: women's sizes

#### ■ PERSONAL CARE

***Hotel-size items are no longer needed.***  
Sunscreen

**PLEASE NOTE:** Deliver donations to Blackburn Center's administrative offices on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 4 pm. Please call if you cannot bring your donation during regular business hours. We can make other arrangements if necessary.