

# The Hill News

The Student Newspaper of St. Lawrence University - Founded in 1911

## Protos on Sexual Assault Take Back the Night, Take Back Our Campus

Rachael K. Allen  
Editor-in-Chief

In recent weeks two reports of sexual assault have been emailed to the St. Lawrence campus at large. Due to these attacks, students on the campus have become increasingly worried about safety.

In response to student concerns, several departments and organizations have stepped forward to offer answers to student questions regarding safety and sexual violence.

Katie Protos, Director of the Advocates Program on the St. Lawrence campus openly addressed several questions posed by the Hill News on the subject of sexual assault on this campus and college campuses nationwide.

"Sexual assault is any touching of a sexual nature that is without the consent of the person touched including, but not limited to rape, sexual abuse, non-consensual sodomy and sexual misconduct," Protos said.

Sexual assault, therefore, can range in meaning and is inclusive of any unwanted sexual advances.

Protos urges that the numbers have neither increased nor decreased, but rather that student comfort level for reporting them to campus improved.

"So far this year, there have been 16 students who have worked with a member of the Advocates Program about an experience of sexual assault. Of these, 8 have taken place since August 2007, with 6 of these sexual assaults occurring on campus," Protos said.

These numbers stand in comparison to the 8 sexual assaults that were reported to the Advocates in the 2006-2007 academic year, Protos said.

"Although the statistics reflect an increase in reporting, I do not believe we are witnessing an increase in sexual assault on campus. The resources at St. Lawrence have been improved through the restructuring of the Advocates Program and the Health & Counseling Center. I believe we are seeing an increase in reporting due to an increase in trust of student body in the resources available on campus for support during the aftermath of a sexual assault," Protos said.

In regards to sexual assault prevention, excessive alcohol consumption is commonly reported as one of the leading risk

factors in sexual assault.

"Underage drinking plays a large role in sexual assault, but it does not cause sexual assault to occur," Protos said.

"Sexual assault occurs in situations where both parties are intoxicated, one party is intoxicated or neither is intoxicated," Protos said.

Protos went on to state that alcohol is the most commonly used date rape drug due to the way that it affects the body by lowering inhibitions. On occasion, it may inhibit a victim from remembering their attacker.

In response to the recent campus attacks, student responses have reflected similar concerns.

"I won't walk anywhere alone after dark," junior Claire Plagge said.

"It's really sad that people really have to actually plan out their night so they won't have to walk anywhere by themselves on campus. It's awful," Plagge said.

Students have not been taking this news idly. Many have expressed interest in self-defense classes. Those students wishing to learn self-defense can register for classes at the St. Lawrence Fitness Center.

According to Protos, the Advocates Program is also working to construct a course that would combine a physical exercise program and self-defense. Common sense is also a key factor in sexual assault prevention. Have a plan to return home with a trusted friend if you don't feel comfortable calling safewalk, avoid dimly lit places on campus after dark, and as basic as it sounds, do not talk to strangers acting suspiciously on or off campus. When drinking, know your own personal limit. Also important is knowing the location of the campus Blue Lights and being aware of the number for campus security.

Sexual assault is never deserved and most certainly should never be tolerated. Victims of sexual assault should not feel ashamed.

Students wishing to learn more about the Advocates Program or who wish to speak confidentially with someone about their experiences are encouraged to call the Sexual Violence Hotline at (315) 244-5466, Security & Safety (315) 229-5555 and ask to speak with Counselor on Call, or contact the Advocates Program directly at (315) 229-5122.

Any underage student assaulted while under the influence will not be reprimanded.

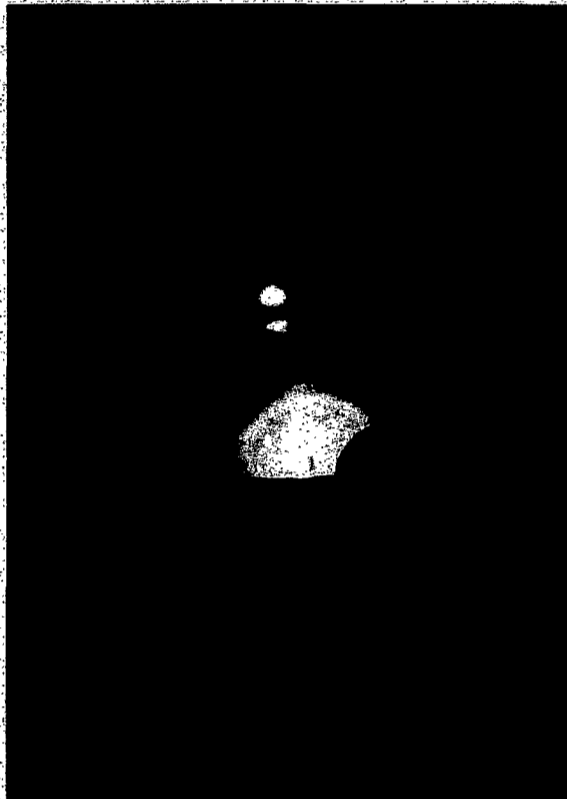
Maggie Olsen & Erica Guralnick  
Contributing Writers

Every year, The Women's Resource Center, along with several other campus organizations, hosts a local Take Back the Night rally. Take Back the Night is a social protest

and rally which recognizes the continuing threat of sexual and domestic violence, and strives to bring awareness to the community and allow the voices of victims and survivors of violence to be heard. This year's Take Back the Night event was a great success; the chairs of the Sykes formal lounge were quickly filled leaving many people to stand in the back. Moving speeches were delivered by Reverend Shaun Whitehead and Professors Danielle Egan and Duriel E. Harris, and were well received by the audience. Following the speeches, the women of the resource center lead a large number of students, profes-

sors and administrators on an enthusiastic march through campus chanting protests and uplifting messages all along the way. Upon returning to Sykes Formal Lounge a confidential speak out for those who wished to share their stories was held. These stories were varied and often deeply personal recollections, told in confidence to an audience of sympathetic listeners. This was definitely the most emotional part of the program for many people, and is a key element of Take Back the Night.

"In my four years at St. Lawrence, I have been to all Take Back the Night events, but this year stands out as the most outspoken, thought provoking and informative," said Erica Guralnick of the Women's Resource Center, which, along with the Advocate's Program, provides both information and support to survivors and any who are affected by violence and work to bring attention to these issues both on campus and within the greater community.



## APO, Active and Taking Initiative

Stella Han  
Staff Writer

Leadership, Friendship, and Service. These three words sum up what APO is all about. Alpha Phi Omega is a national service fraternity that currently includes over 17,000 male and female students in 366 college campus. Founded in Easton, Pennsylvania at Lafayette College in 1925, Alpha Phi Omega sought to develop leadership, promote friendship, and provide service to humanity. Since its founding, more than 350,000 members have pledged to this fraternity.

In Spring 2005, the SLU chapter of APO decided to disband because they did not see eye to eye anymore. The fraternity started to focus mainly on service projects and lost the idea of fellowship. They reorganized under another name - SLU ACT. After being inactive since spring of 2005, Sky Heiss (a brother) was very interested in bringing back APO to the campus. Then along came Tori

Meyer - a SLU graduate student and fellow brother of APO. Tori loved her years as an active member of APO and offered her assistance in getting the SLU chapter of APO back on its feet. Since Sky is away on study abroad, Tori contacted another member of APO - Michael Crankshaw-Beirce (a Spring 2005 pledge). Together, they put up fliers around the campus and set up informationals to promote the fraternity.

All together, Tori and Michael recruited 25 pledges for the Fall 2007 pledge class. This was very thrilling since the chapter only had about 4 members previously. The Fall 2007 pledge class consists of students from all four classes (2008-2011). The pledges are excited to carry out the legacy of this fraternity and are ecstatic to carry out service program in the St. Lawrence community.

Will Kahn, the Pledge Class Captain, says that he was highly interested in APO because of its mission for giving back to humanity and the fellowship/

friendship of Greek life it would provide. Kahn thinks that having APO on campus will be good for the students and the fraternity will reflect positively with everything it does.

Alpha Phi Omega allows both males and females to pledge - including First Years. APO also does not tolerate hazing during the pledging process. Activity wise, the fraternity hosts many events that enable them to give back to the community. However, APO is not just about the service. APO also focuses on fellowship and bonding with your fellow brothers. Fellowship (or fun) activities are coordinated to give the brothers a special time to develop close friendships. APO brothers are committed to service to the community and the relationships that develop through Greek life.

Alpha Phi Omega is definitely a good addition to the SLU campus. There are high hopes that the student body will support (and possibly pledge) APO and watch it prosper into a well-established fraternity.

