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Author Jon Krakauer Highlights Governor Wolf's "It's On Us PA" Campaign, Need to Address Campus Sexual Assault

Harrisburg, PA – Bestselling author Jon Krakauer today traveled to Harrisburg to discuss his recent book [“Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town”](#) and Wolf administration efforts to combat campus sexual assault in Pennsylvania through the “It’s On Us PA” campaign. At public event at the Midtown Scholar Bookstore, Krakauer participated in an in-depth discussion focused on the epidemic of campus rape across the country moderated by [Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape \(PCAR\)](#) Chief Public Affairs Officer Kristen Houser.

A preeminent writer of narrative non-fiction, Krakauer’s numerous bestsellers include “Where Men Win Glory,” “Under the Banner of Heaven,” “Into the Wild,” and “Into Thin Air.” Krakauer was joined at the event by First Lady Frances Wolf, Commission for Women Chair Randi Teplitz, Harrisburg Mayor Eric Papenfuse, and PCAR CEO Delilah Rumburg. “Sexual assault has a corrosive effect on all of us,” said Governor Tom Wolf. “My administration is committed to combatting this urgent and serious epidemic, specifically on college campuses. That’s why we created “It’s On Us PA” earlier this year – the first statewide campaign to address campus sexual assault. I am so pleased too that in addition to our partners within the higher education and K-12 communities, we also have the support of bestselling author Jon Krakauer, who’s recent book “Missoula” brings much-needed attention and a call to action about the widespread issue of campus sexual assault across the country.”

In an effort to increase awareness, education and resources to

combat sexual assault, on January 29, 2016 Governor Wolf launched “It’s On Us PA.” Building on the national [“It’s On Us”](#) movement [launched by President Obama and Vice President Biden in 2014](#), “It’s On Us PA” engages education leaders from school superintendents to college presidents as well as students, teachers, families, and communities [to make a personal and public pledge](#) to play a role in preventing, addressing, and responding effectively to sexual violence. **Since that time, over 1,500 individuals and representatives from 176 schools in Pennsylvania have taken the pledge on the Governor’s website.** The campaign’s goals are to:

- **Improve awareness, prevention, reporting, and response systems** regarding sexual violence in schools, colleges and universities to better serve all students.
- **Remove/reduce barriers** that prevent survivors of sexual violence from reporting and/or accessing vital resources by creating a more consistent, empowering reporting process for student survivors of gender based violence.
- **Demonstrate significant, proactive, and sustainable leadership** to change campus culture by challenging Pennsylvania’s education leaders – including college and university presidents, superintendents – as well as students, teachers, faculty, staff, families, and communities to pledge to improve their institutions’ climate.

In addition, on September 15, the Governor’s Office announced a grant program in which eligible post-secondary institutions in Pennsylvania could apply for up to \$30,000 in competitive funding to address campus sexual assault. The application period closed on October 15th and grant awards are expected to be announced next week.

This initiative builds on [an important dialogue](#) sparked by the [Pennsylvania Commission for Women](#), the [Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education](#) and PCAR last November, which

brought together educators, advocates, students, and policymakers for a screening of *The Hunting Ground* documentary. "Over the last year, it has been exciting to see the momentum build around the "It's On Us PA" campaign," said Randi Teplitz. "I am proud that the Pennsylvania Commission for Women has been actively engaged in the conversation that is helping to shift the culture and sensitivity in which we handle these cases in Pennsylvania. It is only after society declares these behaviors and crimes to be intolerable can true change occur."

"We are truly at a watershed moment when it comes to changing the way we respond to sexual violence in this country," said Delilah Rumburg, CEO of PCAR. "It is heartening to have so many voices joining ours to support survivors and call out inappropriate words and actions. To have the leadership of the Governor and Mrs. Wolf and the PA Commission for Women working with us here in Pennsylvania is phenomenal."

Since the launch of "It's On Us PA," the Wolf administration has been working with community leaders and stakeholders from across the Commonwealth to develop a comprehensive, statewide policy to address the pressing issue of sexual assault in our schools and postsecondary institutions, which will be announced in the coming months.

For more information about "It's On Us PA" or to take the pledge, visit <https://www.governor.pa.gov/its-on-us/>.

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