



April 15, 2018

President's Waypoint: Sexual Assault Awareness Month

In October 2017, Chloe Ruiz, an SBCC Student, had a class project to interview and write about Joyce Dudley, the Santa Barbara County District Attorney. Chloe gave me permission to share her paper with you ([The Joyce Dudley Interview Story by Chloe Ruiz](#)). This is a nice introduction of DA Dudley, indicating her personal commitment and dedicated career to sexual assault awareness and prevention.

While I work with District Attorney Dudley on the Isla Vista Safe Committee, which focuses on preventing sexual assaults in IV, Joyce's lifelong work and professional experiences in preventing sexual assault and dealing with sexual assault cases were never clearer to me than when I asked her to present the [keynote to students last August at our SBCC Vaquero days](#). As April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, I wanted to revisit her important message, if you hadn't had a chance to hear it. About 14 minutes long, it was a personal, emotional, eye-opening, and at times, a graphic keynote, but one I hope you will watch. She provided this message as part of the College's "It's On Us!" effort to prevent sexual assault.

As the website describes, [It's On Us](#) is a national movement to end sexual assault. The campaign, started in 2014 under the Obama administration, follows recommendations from the White House Task Force to Prevent Sexual Assault that stresses the importance of engaging everyone in the conversation to end sexual violence. It's On Us asks everyone to step up and realize that the topic of sexual assault changes with us. I have joined hundreds of thousands of people who have taken a stand against sexual violence by taking the [It's On Us pledge](#) and being trained on creating a [culture of consent](#), establishing proactive [bystander intervention](#), and [supporting survivors](#).



Studies have shown that 1 in 5 women in the U.S. are sexually assaulted while in schools and college, so there is much more that must be done. Unfortunately, the current presidential administration is undermining work to extend protections for victims of sexual assault in schools, with [Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos'](#) new approach to Title IX. Know that SBCC will continue its strong Title IX policies, refusing to move backwards while violence continues in schools and colleges. However, SBCC can always do better and improve, and I know that Dr. Monalisa Hasson, our new Vice President of Human Resources, is aggressively working on this. I hope you will join me and others in helping contribute ideas and policies that will make our college stronger in preventing sexual assault.

Together forward,