



Longfellow Middle School

Wednesday, October 2, 2013

To Whom It May Concern'

I would like to nominate the My Body, My Life Program put on by the Norman Police Department for the City of Norman Human Rights Award. I believe there is no better program in Norman that promotes human rights and equality than the My Body, My Life Program.

The My Body, My Life Program was written and developed by Norman Sgt. Bob Moore and Master Police Officer Marcus Savage, as well as Darien Moore, a former Norman Public Schools principal. The program empowers women and young women through awareness, education, violence prevention and self defense techniques.

The class was first developed in the 1990s and has been taught for years at every middle school in Norman, both high schools and Moore Norman Technology Center as a part of its Summer Youth Academy. It is also being offered for free to adult women in partnership with Norman Regional Hospital

I have had the privilege of being the counselor who sits in with the class countless times when it has been taught to middle school students at Longfellow Middle School. I also have served as the counselor on site when it was taught to 12-14 year old girls at Moore Norman Technology Center this summer. I have seen countless teen agers learn life-saving skills in this class. Students are taught everything from the dangers of drinking drugs and alcohol to basic self defense techniques.

Most importantly, this class empowers women to take control of their own body and their own life, the very essence of human rights and equality. I have seen students enter the class who have never stood up for themselves and what is right for them, leave the class with their heads held higher and with complete confidence they could say an adamant, "NO!" in a situation that compromised their rights.

I have also never been in a class when a student didn't disclose something that compromised their rights, whether it be a rape, sexual abuse, fear of another person or sexual promiscuity. Each time this has happened, the student didn't have the courage to report the issue before the class, but the class promoted their own human rights and they had the courage to report.



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The officers who teach this class are completely committed to changing lives through preventative measures. Sgt. Moore, MPO Savage, officers Carl Pendleton and Glenda Vasseur, as well as other officers, work together to teach students in 7th grade through adult women on how to be empowered and how to take control of their own lives.

I am honored to have been able to be a part of such an amazing program for four years. I implore you to recognize this outstanding group for their contributions to promoting human rights and equality in Norman. This group is extremely deserving.

Sincerely,

Michelle Sutherlin
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