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STETSON UNIVERSITY

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Koestner Joins Stetson Students to Take Back the Night

Empowering event to focus on sexual assault prevention, victim support

DELAND, Florida, April 4, 2018 – On Wednesday, April 11 Katie Koestner, founder and executive director of the Take Back the Night Foundation will present the keynote address at an event designed to empower victims and help end sexual violence and harassment. Stetson University's Take Back the Night event will begin with Koestner's talk at 8 p.m. in McMahan Hall, 417 N. Woodland Blvd., DeLand, 32723. Following the address, attendees will move to Stetson's Palm Court for a speak out, rally and candlelight moment of reflection. The event is free and open to the public.

"The theme of this year's Take Back the Night event is 'Shatter the Silence, End the Violence,'" said Cathy Downes, Stetson University's executive director and Title IX coordinator. "Our hope is that attendees will feel empowered to speak up and to step up to change the current culture."

During the speak out individuals will be invited to share words of encouragement or support for victims, a relevant poem or personal experience as a person affected by sexual assault or harassment. The evening will close with a candlelit vigil and moment of quiet reflection for those affected.

The event is part of a campus-wide initiative to empower victims and end sexual violence. In the days leading up to the Take Back the Night event student groups including PACT (Peer Advisory Council for Title IX), SASA (Students Against Sexual Assault), NOW (National Organization for Women), WELL team (Wellness Educators for Lifelong Learning) will ask the community to make signs of support, sign a pledge to end sexual violence and provide general knowledge about sexual violence prevention, reporting and intervention.

Koestner is also president of Campus Outreach Services, a national organization dedicated to developing research-supported curricula, model policies and outstanding educational programs for schools on student risk issues. She has provided keynote speeches and programs for more than 2,000 schools across the country to raise awareness about the prevention and response to sexual and technology-related misconduct. She is the co-author of two books on sexual assault policy and procedures for schools and the creator of "Responding to Sexual Misconduct: A Customizable Training Manual for Schools." She is credited with convincing the world you could be raped by your date. Koestner's speaking career began at age 18 shortly after her own personal experience. Her dedication and vision have been the source of program development and policy change on both community and national levels.

About Stetson University

Founded in 1883, [Stetson University](#) is the oldest private university in Central Florida, providing a transforming education in the liberal arts tradition. Stetson stresses academic excellence and community-engaged learning, and consistently earns high marks in national rankings. Stetson encourages its students to go beyond success to significance in their lives, the lives of others and their communities. [Stay connected](#) with Stetson on social media.