



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

2018-2019 YMCA Youth and Government Participants,

As your Lieutenant Governor, it is my honor to focus on domestic violence and sexual assault for this year's Service Learning. Women and men who experience sexual assault or domestic violence face both physical and emotional trauma which often turns the victims' life upside down. We need to stand together against these atrocities and will be doing so by volunteering with organizations such as "Sanctuary For Families" to assist them in providing high-quality personalized care to survivors of domestic violence, sex trafficking, and related forms of gender violence.

Sexual assault and domestic violence are public health and safety problems with far-reaching implications. Nearly half of all women and men in the United States will experience psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetime. In fact, over half of the victims that have been raped, abused physically, and/or stalked by an intimate partner, have experienced some form of intimate partner violence for the first time before 25 years of age. 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men will experience severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime. 1 in 10 women in the United States will be raped by an intimate partner in her lifetime. Approximately 16.9% of women and 8.0% of men will experience sexual violence other than rape by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime. Four out of five rape victims subsequently suffer from chronic physical or psychological conditions. Rape victims are 13 times more likely to attempt suicide and six times more likely than victims of other crimes. Overall, rape is believed to carry the highest annual victim cost of any crime. The annual victim costs are \$127 billion, followed by assault at \$93 billion per year, murder at \$61 billion per year, and child abuse at \$56 billion per year. Given the substantial impact sexual victimization has on individual victims and society we need to take action

I call on all students to partner with organizations such as "Sanctuary for Families", "Anti-Violence Project", "Barrier Free Living" and "Safe Horizon" or other organizations focused on doing positive work toward these goals. Volunteering with these organizations offers an opportunity to make a real difference in our communities, and gives you a chance to learn new skills, share skills you have, stay up to date on community issues, and network with fellow volunteers. Sexual assault and domestic violence will only be prevented through a multi-pronged approach that includes supporting survivors, ensuring that adjudication processes are fair, adequate, and timely, and educating our communities. This project is a chance for us to help those in need and to potentially prevent more incidents from occurring. Service Learning is one of the many forces that drives our program forward, as it demonstrates the power we possess to make an impactful change when we unite as one. Our society needs to do better, and I believe together we can make a change.

Sincerely,

Dahlia Ramos

Lt. Governor

New York State YMCA Youth And Government