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Subject: March and rally says 'No' to domestic violence, sexual assault
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Included below is a press release regarding Take Back the Night march and rally at Ferris State University

For Immediate Release
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March and rally says 'No' to domestic violence, sexual assault

BIG RAPIDS – The Mecosta County community is rallying at 6 p.m. on Oct. 4 to Take Back the Night and say “No” to domestic violence and sexual assault during the annual march and rally to raise awareness.

Take Back the Night will begin on the Campus Quad with a march and continue in the Rankin Student Center Dome Room with a rally to raise awareness on the issue, which left 42 people dead in Michigan in 2005, according to the Michigan Domestic Violence and Treatment and Prevention Board. There were 34 children left without a mother, father or both parents in 2005 due to domestic violence homicides.

Part of this year’s event will include “Purple People” displayed on the University’s Campus Quad, which is a visual representation of the individuals who have died in Michigan because of a domestic violence homicide.

“Each year, more and more people are participating in the rally,” said Elizabeth McCann, a sexual assault advocate and crisis response volunteer coordinator with Women’s Information Services, Inc. “With this increased number of participants, we are sending a message to all victims of violence that we are a community who will support them.”

From October 2003 to September 2004, WISE provided shelter to 115 women and 111 children from Mecosta, Osceola and Newaygo counties. WISE responded to 758 crisis calls, served 67 adult sexual assault victims and significant others, and responded to 88 sexual assault crisis calls, McCann said.

Nichole Wheelock, a junior from Traverse City, said sexual assault and domestic violence touches everyone’s lives, whether they are a victim or not.

“Take Back the Night is a way for the community to come together and send a message of support,” added Wheelock, who helped coordinate this year’s march and rally.

Further information on the event is available at the Student Volunteer Center or by calling Student Leadership and Activities Director **Cindy Horn** at 591-2606.

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