

"You may be the first to do many things, but make sure you're not the last." — Kamala Harris, quoting her mother

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Saying Goodbye to Project AWAKEN

Tennessee Tech's campus is losing a valuable resource. Currently, students can utilize Project AWAKEN, an amazing federally funded grant program that addresses power-based violence on campus. Power-based violence includes sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. AWAKEN works to eliminate power-based violence, train bystanders to intervene, improve professional responses to survivors and empower survivors. The Women's Center interviewed Project Coordinator Jac Ewasyshyn and Assistant Project Coordinator Erin Murray, who shared information about AWAKEN's accomplishments and where students can go for help now that AWAKEN's time on Tech's campus has reached its end.

AWAKEN has accomplished much in its four years at Tech, including initiating the Peer Empowerment Program (PEP; see page 3), forming a Coordinated Community Response Team (CCRT), creating the Don't Cancel That Class program, designing a Power-Based Violence course that reached 2,500 new students in fall 2020 alone and planning several awareness-raising events throughout the semester. Project AWAKEN has held several events open to all students on campus and in the wider Cookeville community. "This [academic] year alone, we have planned and sponsored nationally known experts to speak about self-care and healthy masculinity, participated in campus wide events such as One Billion Rising, planned workshops on meditation, the intersection of gun violence and domestic violence, moderated a Criminal Minds expert panel discussion and coordinated trainings for campus police and area mental health providers." Through this diverse collection of events and programs, AWAKEN has



helped educate the student body about power-based violence and ways students can get involved to make a difference.

With the loss of Project AWAKEN, many offices and campus groups will continue offering programs and services that align with AWAKEN's mission. On campus, the Women's Center will continue several of AWAKEN's educational programs and PEP will continue its important work under a new faculty advisor, Nicole Cook. Survivors can go to the Counseling Center, the Title IX Coordinator, the University Police and the upcoming grant funded ASPIRE SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners) program at Health Services that will be made up of Victim Advocates trained to work with survivors and RNs who have been specially trained to care for sexual assault patients. The Women's Center can help direct students to resources that will fit their needs; for more help, reach out to the Women's Center (see back page for more campus and community resources and contact information).

When asked what final words they would like to share with students, Ewasyshyn and Murray wanted to remind survivors that "You are not alone, it was not your fault, we believe you, there is no shame in reaching out for help [and] help is available to support you in your healing process." Even though Project AWAKEN is no longer around, we can continue to make progress on our campus. To the general student population, Ewasyshyn and Murray wanted students to know, "You all can make a difference on campus and in your communities by taking a stand against power-based violence, by being an active bystander and by taking care of each other. If you see something, say something! You have the power to make a difference."

—Rachel Pearson

Letter from the Co-Editors

Just as we evolved to meet the challenges of COVID-19, society is constantly evolving to meet the needs of humankind. Our Spring 2021 edition of *Attune* highlights societal evolution over the years and areas where change is needed today. Try *MAD-AM Vice President* and *An Equal Playing Field* highlight the advancements society made towards equal representation in government and athletics. *It's "Dr." Jill Biden* features the first lady and how her determination to live her own life is helping shift gender expectations in the White House. Similarly, "*These Gender Norms Got Hands!*" showcases how digital media offers a platform to fight gender norms and biases. Directly relevant to our campus community, *Saying Goodbye to Project AWAKEN*, *Tech's Peer Empowerment Program* and *Breastfeeding Spaces* discuss resources available on campus and those our campus still needs.

Change is an ongoing process that we have the power to influence. Whether you revolutionize a national position like Dr. Biden or write a letter supporting something you believe in, we are all capable of making a difference in our own lives and our communities. For information on how to make a difference on campus, check out the "Give Help" section on the back page of *Attune*.

—Rachel Pearson
and Lena Albro

Breastfeeding Spaces

Many parents choose to breastfeed their child, but without proper accommodations and protections, breastfeeding can be deceptively difficult to maintain. Today, many laws exist that address employee and public breastfeeding. However, some groups of parents are overlooked in current breastfeeding accommodations because college campuses are not directly addressed. A push for more dedicated lactation spaces on college campuses is a necessity so that students have access to safe, clean and private spaces to express milk.

Several laws address employees' rights to parental leave and private lactation spaces. According to The Family Medical Leave Act, the maximum time permitted for parental leave is 12 weeks for most people. This timeframe does not allow many breastfeeding employees to remain home during the entirety of their desired breastfeeding period. Fortunately, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires employers to provide "reasonable break time... for an employee to express breast milk... for 1 year after the child's birth," and, "a place other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public." Prior to the ACA, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was amended by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act in 1978 "to prohibit sex discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions." Based on this law, the US Court of Appeals in 2013 "held that firing a woman because she is lactating or expressing milk is unlawful sex discrimination," according to the USBC.

However, employers are not required to compensate for the break time dedicated to expressing breast milk under the ACA. In Tennessee, state code specifies that all breaks for expressing breast milk must be unpaid and that, "the break time shall, if possible, run concurrently with any break time already provided to the employee," according to the Nation-



al Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

However, just as important is the federal requirement of accommodations for breastfeeding beyond employment. According to the NCSL, 31 states, including Tennessee, currently exempt breastfeeding from the criminal offense of public indecency. As not all states exempt breastfeeding from this crime, public and accessible spaces to breastfeed privately are needed. The Friendly Airports for Mothers (FAM) Act, signed in 2018, requires "airports...to provide a clean, private, non-bathroom space in each terminal for the expression of breast milk." Meanwhile, the Fairness for Breastfeeding Mothers Act (FBMA) of 2019, "requires that certain public buildings that contain a public restroom also provide a lactation room, other than a bathroom, that is hygienic and available for use by a member of the public." This act covers

both employees and visitors of "federal facilities around the nation." These laws protect the rights of parents to breastfeed in public spaces.

Unfortunately, college campuses fall through the cracks of these current breastfeeding laws. While employees must have access to lactation spaces on campus due to the ACA, colleges are not legally required to provide these accommodations for students. I interviewed Tech's SGA College of Business Senator Kelly Bell who has advocated for a bill dedicating lactation spaces for students on campus. Bell came to realize the need when a student approached her asking for directions to a restroom stall with an outlet for her to plug in her pump. Shocked to realize she could not identify any such location, Bell talked with the library, discovering there was one "random stall with an outlet" students tend to use for pumping but very few dedicated lactation spaces exist for students. She says, "students are in a sort of limbo," explaining that although public colleges are largely funded by taxpayer money like federal facilities, Tech is not defined as a federal facility and therefore is not required by FMBA to provide a student-accessible lactation spaces. Expounding upon why she believes this legislation is necessary, she states, "There is no school without the students; they are the backbone of it all." As Bell's senior senate term came to an end, I was motivated to run and was elected in her place with the intention of spearheading this legislation myself. All parents deserve spaces to breastfeed, including on college campuses. While a few lactation spaces exist on campus (see back), more are needed. To support the development of this bill and help to get it passed, email your SGA representatives and myself.

—Amber Lovell

Write a Letter of Support to Help Bring Back Project AWAKEN

Letters of support will be used to help garner administrative support and funding to maintain AWAKEN once grant funding ends. Below are some things to keep in mind when writing your letter.

Questions to address:

- Who are you
- How are you connected to Tech?
- Why do you think AWAKEN is important?

Impact on future students:

- Explain that AWAKEN's presence would not scare you away from Tech. Interpersonal violence is a pervasive issue that needs addressing on all college campuses.

Stay Positive:

- Ensure a positive tone in your letter.
- Express gratitude for previous funding and urge further development of prevention and advocacy efforts.

Technical suggestions:

- Consider providing contact info so readers can follow up with you later.
- If possible, sign your letter on paper and then mail or send a PDF copy.

Letters can be sent to Dr. Ann Hellman at ahellman@tntech.edu

It's "Dr." Jill Biden

"And I'm going to teach as well," Dr. Jill Biden remarked in an interview with Stephen Colbert when discussing her role as first lady. Dr. Biden will continue to teach English at Northern Virginia Community College, but now from the White House. Dr. Biden will be balancing meeting the duties of a first lady with prioritizing time for her students. While making history as the first first lady to keep her full-time job, Dr. Biden will revolutionize the role of first lady and inspire others not to conform to outdated expectations.

The position of first lady has countless expectations, but it has no official duties. Each first lady defines the role for herself. Historically, the role of first lady was to perform public and ceremonial duties such as hosting state dinners. "Now they also serve as surrogates to their husbands' administrations, taking

on particular social projects or causes," writes Andrea González-

Ramírez, Senior Staff Writer at GEN. "One of Biden's earliest priorities, even before her husband was sworn in as president, was to restart the Joining Forces Initiative, a program she launched with Michelle Obama in 2011 to support service members, military families and veterans," report Jada Yuan and Ellen McCarthy of the Washington Post. Within the first 48 hours of President Joe Biden taking office, Dr. Biden personally delivered inauguration cookies to National Guards deployed to D.C. By doing this, Dr. Biden is already attempting to work on the areas she plans to focus on as first lady.

While many people praise Dr. Biden for continuing her full-time career from the White House, not everyone is supportive of her decision. Writer and former Northwestern University professor, Joseph Epstein questioned whether Dr. Biden would consider dropping the "Dr." before her

name. Dr. Biden expressed surprise to hear anyone make such a request considering how hard she worked to obtain this title.

Pulitzer Prize winner Robin Giyhan explains that Epsteins' comments reflect older expectations of the office. "No matter how professionally accomplished or independent a woman might have been before her husband took the presidential oath of office, she was expected to shed her previous identity and set about representing the softer side of the United States." Other celebrities such as Reverend Bernice King and Hilary Clinton also spoke out against Epstein's startling invitation. Dr. Biden rejects this view of the first lady's role. Her passion for teaching drives her to continue doing what she loves

as an educator. Dr. Biden believes she shouldn't have to give up her passions because of the path her husband chooses.

"I couldn't just move to Washington and only live Joe's life," stated Dr. Biden. Even as first lady, Dr. Biden will not conform to archaic standards and expectations of what women should be.

Dr. Biden's decision to honor her own path will continue to inspire

women of the future. First ladies "have an enormous impact on the soul and conscience of the nation. Because they often can rise above politics in the heat of the moment and just connect on a very human level," says Anita McBride, former chief of staff to Laura Bush. Without question, Dr. Biden's performance as first lady will continue to shape the role of women in our society for generations to come.

—Natajha Johnson



Tech's Peer Empowerment Program

Thirteen percent of all college students will experience rape or sexual assault, and almost six percent of students have experienced stalking, according to the Rape, Assault, & Incest National Network (RAINN). In addition, only 20% of female students who experience sexual assault report it to law enforcement. With these shocking statistics in mind, the need for an on-campus resource for student survivors of interpersonal violence is obvious. At Tennessee Tech, the Peer Empowerment Program (PEP) was formed to address this need.

PEP is a group of students who raise awareness about sexual violence, stalking, and dating violence on campus. To best serve the campus community, PEP members (PEPs) receive 10 hours of training each academic year on the topics of crisis intervention, safety planning, dynamics of violence, trauma and relevant resources for students. Though not advocates, PEPs are prepared to provide crisis intervention to survivors and refer them to additional healing resources.

PEP also organizes several events each semester. Some of PEP's recent events include the "Criminal Minds: Fact or Fiction?" and "Warm Welcome back to Campus"

events. For the "Criminal Minds" event, PEP and the Sociology & Criminal Justice Club gathered a panel that included a retired FBI profiler, victim advocates, a professor and a forensic nurse. The expert panel discussed how the criminal justice system responds to sexual and domestic violence in the real world and how the process may be different than its pop culture portrayal. At the "Warm Welcome back to Campus" events, PEPs passed out free hot hands to the campus community during the chilly first days of the Spring semester. PEP and Project AWAKEN collaborated to host a Solidarity event at the Backdoor Playhouse where survivors could share their experiences in a night filled with songs, poems, and stories that touched everyone in attendance.

To get personal, I joined PEP to further my education on advocacy and gain a better understanding of sexual violence and its effects on those involved. The opportunity to educate others about these complex topics has been beneficial to me as a student and a survivor. Many people do not know much about issues like sexual violence and stalking and I feel lucky to have the training and knowledge to raise awareness. As someone who plans to work with survivors after grad-

uating, involvement in PEP has opened many doors for me. PEP has made me a better ally and has prepared me to be an excellent advocate in my career.

Though violence continues to happen, we can all do something to help. PEP and similar programs are valuable to college campuses because they are made up of students who care about their peers and can connect peers to the resources needed to get through the aftermath of their experience. PEPs help the campus community by educating students on supporting friends, training students to be active bystanders and providing referrals to survivors. PEP is full of passionate students who want to create a safe campus for everyone, and you can be a part of this work too. As a student, you can participate in PEP's programs and trainings or even become a PEP yourself. If you have questions or are interested in joining PEP, contact PEP President Madison Sendek at mmcantrell42@tntech.edu. No one should have to experience violence, especially within our own campus community. By joining PEP in its work against violence, we can all help to make our campus safer for everyone.

—Madison Sendek

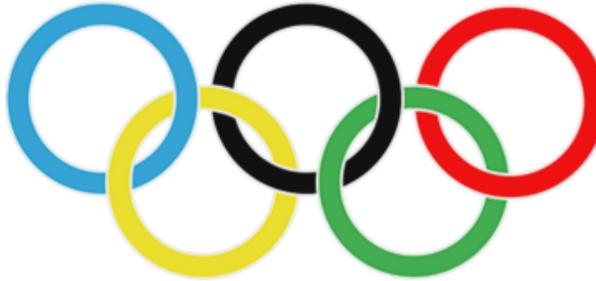
An Equal Playing Field

After a one-year delay due to COVID-19, the 2021 Olympics will be held in Tokyo this summer. In previous years, women have been underrepresented in the Olympic games and leadership positions. The Olympics is taking several steps to promote gender equality and create a balanced representation of genders. Their example can encourage equality worldwide since the Olympics set a global standard for athletics.

Women have historically been underrepresented in the Olympics. According to an article in *The World*, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, a founding member of the Olympic games, excluded women from the first Olympics in 1896. Coubertin said, "No matter how toughened a sportswoman may be, her organism is not cut out to sustain certain shocks." Since then, women have continued to struggle to compete in the Olympics. Even as late as 2016 in Rio de Janeiro, men dominated the Olympics competitor population with women making up less than half of participants. Additionally, more men's events were hosted than women's or mixed events with 161 strictly men's events and only 145 women's and mixed events combined, according to *The World*.

The Olympics has taken steps to push for gender equality in the games. In 2018, the IOC Gender Equality Review Project was put in motion to balance representation in the Olympics. This project implements ways to achieve gender equality beginning with the 2021 Olympics. Some of the project's goals include ensuring gender equality by the 2024 Olympics,

creating equal competition formats and technical rules, removing unjustifiable differences in technical requirements for uniforms and providing the same sport-specific equipment to men and women. In addition, men and women will have balanced media portrayal in screen time and advertisements and will be paid the same in prize money and athlete payments.



These changes are working: in 2021, the competitor population is almost 49% female compared to 34% in 1996, according to Reuters. The Olympics also changed their rules to allow a female and male carry their team's flag together at the opening ceremony. The Olympics is pushing for gender equality and wants the number of female and male competitors to be 50%/50% across the 206 current teams by the 2024 Paris Olympics.

The Olympics is also working towards equal representation in leadership positions. The goals of the IOC project include balancing gender representation in coaches, officials and leadership positions. The first woman was not elected to the Olympics board until 1990. Women's representation in Olympic leadership positions increased from 21% in 2017 to about 42% in 2021,

with the appointment of 12 additional women to the Olympics board, according to *The Guardian*. Seiko Hashimoto, the current President of the Tokyo Olympic Organizing Committee, pushed for these changes when she was appointed following the forced resignation of former president Yoshiro Mori for his derogatory remarks about women.

Hashimoto stated, "Regarding the promotion of gender equality, we believe that it is necessary to work with a sense of speed and produce solid results in order to restore the trust in the organizing committee." Those in positions of leadership recognize the need for action and have worked together to set goals of immediate change towards gender equality in the Olympics.

Gender bias has been present since the beginning of the Olympics. Since the Olympics set a standard for athletics programs across the world, gender biases and discrimination cannot be allowed to continue within the games. In a report within the *IOC Gender Equality Review Project*, current IOC President Thomas Bach stated, "I firmly believe that sport is one of the most powerful platforms for promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls." By improving gender representation and adapting rules and practices within the Olympics, the current IOC hopes to inspire worldwide change towards gender equality. The steps taken by the IOC not only provide hope for equal representation by the 2024 Olympic games, but also in societies worldwide.

—Lilly Davis

NEW!

Dismantle the Patriarchy Tuba Quartet

D.T.P (Dismantle the Patriarchy) is Tennessee Tech's first all-female tuba/euphonium quartet. DTP's premier performance was on April 14th, 2021. "Low brass instruments have long been a bastion of male musicians...I am so proud of these young women as musicians and representatives of our School of Music and my colleague Winston Morris for recruiting and coaching them" said professor Dan Allcott, Director of Orchestra Studies.

For more information on this group, contact the School of Music at music@tntech.edu or (931) 372-3161.

Quartet members: Hannah Eitzen, Gracie Smith, Audrey Wakefield and Hannah Griffin



Try MADAM Vice President

A glass ceiling was shattered on January 21, 2021 when Kamala Harris was sworn in as vice president of the United States becoming the first woman, first Black and first Asian-American vice president in the history of the U.S. This is not the first glass ceiling Harris has shattered. Born to immigrant parents who met over their passion for civil rights, Harris learned early on to fight for what she believes in. After earning a degree in political science and economics from Howard University and a degree in law from UC Hastings College of Law, Harris became the first Black woman to be elected district attorney in California in 2003 and later became the state's attorney general. In 2016, Harris won her U.S. Senate race and was appointed as President Joe Biden's vice president in 2020. Harris' achievements represent important milestones in the fight for gender equality and inclusion of marginalized groups.

The term "glass ceiling" is used to acknowledge an invis-

ible barrier to professional advancements that affects women and minorities. The term was coined by Marilyn Loden in 1978 when she addressed why



women don't advance in the workforce. Her conclusion, that there is no evidence supporting that women don't have the skill sets or temperament to advance, made her very unpopular in the company that hired her to investigate these issues. Today, the glass ceiling is still preventing career advancement for women and minorities. According to Bailey Reiners' *Built In* article, men are statistically twice as likely to be hired over women by managers of all genders. Men

are also 30% more likely to achieve managerial roles. The discrepancy is even bigger for minorities. Peace First Fellow Jasmine Babers coined the term "concrete ceiling" in 2016 to describe the reality that Black women face a barrier much tougher than glass.

Women's careers may frequently stall because of stereotypical gender roles and gender bias. Women are often thought to lack the assertiveness and ambition to fill managing positions, but are also discouraged from possessing these traits as they are not considered proper for women. Also, women are often expected to take on the role of the caregiver in their home and must balance a "second shift" of work at home which men aren't often subjected to. According to the 2009 journal article *Taking on the Second Shift* by Melissa Milkie et al., "Mothers who are employed fulltime work about 12 hours more per week in unpaid labor compared with similarly situated fathers." The only way these often-unconscious biases in society and workplaces can be tackled is by having a conversation, acknowledging the barriers, and setting new standards.

To tackle these biases, representation of women and minorities in leadership matters as we break barriers, prove gender bias wrong and inspire a whole generation of wom-

en to fight discrimination. According to Leanne Kemp, chief executive officer of Everledger, "improving political empowerment for women typically corresponds with increased numbers of women in senior roles in the labor market." This prognosis seems promising considering that a record high of 144 women are currently serving in the U.S. Congress, including Harris. Furthermore, Biden's cabinet is set to be the most diverse cabinet in US history, with nearly 55% nonwhite and 45% female positions, according to a National Public Radio article by Alana Wise. This upward trend towards inclusion and representation of women and minorities can be attributed to women like Harris, who shatter glass ceilings and pave the way for women's leadership. Harris' mother taught her the motto, "You may be the first, but make sure you're not the last," and with it Vice President Harris is inspiring a new generation of women and minority leaders.

—Lena Albro

"These Gender Norms Got Hands!"

"I'ma fight these gender norms" has become a popular phrase used in a video trend on the app TikTok. Videos following this trend all share the same audio in which a voice says "Okay, I'ma fight these gender norms." The TikTok users record themselves mouthing these words on camera while acting confident. The video then changes and the TikTok user acts defeated as if returning from a fight while mouthing the new words, "these gender norms got hands!" Many TikTok users are using this trend to call attention to

issues that all genders face from harmful gender norms in society.

One example of a gender norm addressed in this trend is the belief that women do not belong in STEM majors. In this example, a TikTok might start with a user saying the first phrase while text on screen reads "wanting to be a woman in STEM even though it is predominantly a male field." The user would act confident that they can overcome this gender norm, but then the video displays the user defeated. This part of the video would include the user saying the second phrase while the on-screen text displays

a challenge that makes breaking gender norms seem unattainable. The new text might read "me being the only girl in my class." In this example, a woman wants to be in a STEM major, but is discouraged by the lack of women in classes.

Traditional gender norms can be discriminating and we should critique the gender norms in our society. Several strategies exist that can help overcome the issues that accompany gender norms. These include speaking up when you see gender discrimination occurring and educating yourself and others as to why gender norms are harmful. Though

mainly used as an entertainment platform, TikTok can be an effective tool in educating younger generations, especially about social issues like gender norms. Many young people gather information from social media and popular content creators. TikTok creators can use their platform to make a large impact on social issues. Educating ourselves and others about harmful gender norms and being prepared to speak up about these issues are some of the best ways we can eradicate outdated gender norms within our society.

—Madeline Boyanton

Get Help:

Health Resources

Counseling Center

931-372-3331

tntech.edu/counsel

Eagle Eye Crisis Hotline

855-206-8997*

Health Services

931-372-3320

tntech.edu/healthservices

Food Pantry

tntech.edu/volunteer/pantry.php

Lactation Spaces

Women's Center & Health Services

University Resources

Title IX

tntech.edu/titleix

titleix@tntech.edu

Campus Police

931-372-3234

tntech.edu/police

Educational Resources

Women's Center

tntech.edu/women

Multicultural Affairs

tntech.edu/multicultural-affairs

Community Resources

Genesis House

Office: 931-525-1637

Hotline: 1-800-707-5197*

genesishouseinc.com

Upper Cumberland Family Justice Center

931-528-1512 or 866-704-1080

ucfamilyjusticecenter.org

Cookeville Police

Main: 931-526-2125

Emergency: 911*

National Resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

800-273-8255*

National Sexual Assault Hotline

800-656-4673*

National Domestic Violence Hotline

800-799-7233*

thehotline.org

VictimConnect Resource Center

855-484-2846

We can help you navigate resources!

Call the Women's Center:

931-372-3850

Message us on social media:

[@tntechwomenscenter](https://www.instagram.com/tntechwomenscenter)

***resources available 24/7**

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Give Help:

- Write a letter to help revive Project AWAKEN (see page 2)
- Support lactation stations on campus by emailing ablovell42@tntech.edu or your SGA representatives (contact information at tntech.edu/sga)
- Join Tech's Peer Empowerment Program; email mmcantrell@tntech.edu
- Read, distribute or write for Attune
- Follow the Women's Center on Facebook and Instagram
- Volunteer at the Women's Center for 10-20 hours a semester

Contact Us:

Connect with the Women's Center on social media!

Facebook:

TnTech Women's Center

Instagram:

[@tntechwomenscenter](https://www.instagram.com/tntechwomenscenter)

Office Hours:

RUC room 339

Monday-Friday

8 a.m. - noon &

1 - 4:30 p.m.

Visit our website:

tntech.edu/women