



Allegheny County Council

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Title: Proclamation recognizing Colleen Bowers for her dedication to help put an end to domestic violence in our region, and recognizing the Center for Victims most recent campaign, MEN Challenge which educates men and give them the tools and resources necessary to use their voices and their actions to be social change agents.

Sponsors: Sam DeMarco, Patrick Catena, Robert Palmosina

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Proclamation recognizing *Colleen Bowers* for her dedication to help put an end to domestic violence in our region, and recognizing the *Center for Victims* most recent campaign, *MEN Challenge* which educates men and give them the tools and resources necessary to use their voices and their actions to be social change agents.

WHEREAS, domestic violence, rape, and sexual assault are often seen as “Women’s Issues;” however, that is not the case. Every individual has a role to play in ending violence against women and girls; and

WHEREAS, the *Center for Victims* has launched a *Men Ending Violence (MEN) Challenge* in which men who work in Allegheny County are encouraged to make a pledge to learn more about how to be a proactive bystander and speak out about violence against women and girls; and

WHEREAS, the *Center* believes that men want to be actively involved in violence prevention, but don’t always know where to start or what to do; the goal of the *MEN Challenge* is to educate men and give them the tools and resources necessary to make a change; and

WHEREAS, men participating in the *MEN Challenge* will receive a tool kit that will give them themed monthly activities and educational tips that can be used in their homes, workplaces, social networks and communities;

and

WHEREAS, *Colleen Bowers*, whose daughter, Melissa, was murdered in 2012 as the result of domestic violence, has dedicated countless hours to increasing awareness of domestic abuse and raising funds for the Pittsburgh-based Center for Victims; and

WHEREAS, *Colleen* along with Melissa's two children, brother, extended family and friends have engaged in several efforts so that no one else in her community has to die at the hands of a violent partner like her daughter did; and

WHEREAS, over the years, *Colleen* has worked on a variety of initiatives and has hosted "In Memory of Melissa Bowers Fundraisers" to raise funds for the Center for Victims to help survivors of violence; and

WHEREAS, most recently, *Colleen* has championed the **MEN Challenge** by working closely with the *Center for Victims* to encourage participation in the initiative; and

WHEREAS, *Colleen* credits a lot of her fundraising efforts to being highly involved in the Ancient Order of the Hibernians. While Melissa was a member of the Ladies Ancient Order of the Hibernians District 11, she worked closely with the AOH, putting her design background to use as a member of the St. Patrick's Day Parade Designer Button Committee for more than 10 years; and

WHEREAS, approached by *Colleen*, the Executive Board of the AOH committed to being participants in the program at its September meeting; the board also asked divisions throughout the county to do the same; to date, six divisions representing some 600 men have signed the **MEN Challenge** pledge;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Allegheny County Council At-Large Member, Sam DeMarco, do hereby recognize and thank *Colleen Bowers* for her dedication to help put an end to domestic violence in our region. And, I recognize the *Center for Victims* most recent campaign, **MEN**

Challenge which educates men and give them the tools and resources necessary to use their voices and their actions to be social change agents.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto caused the Seal of the County of Allegheny to be affixed this 22nd day of October 2021.