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**MacEwan University students move to eliminate gender-based violence**

Edmonton—U-SOLVE (University Students Offering Leadership for Violence Elimination) is an initiative between MacEwan University and the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton to end gender-based violence.

“By engaging and collaborating with students, U-SOLVE will identify resources unavailable on campus, determine student priorities in addressing these needs, and implement appropriate strategies for response,” said Cathryn Heslep, Vice-President, Student Services, MacEwan University. “Students, as project partners and agents of change, will be supported and empowered by U-Solve to create a sustainable campus community plan to end gender-based violence,” added Heslep.

U-SOLVE will utilize social media to generate interest and awareness, including Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. There will also be ongoing engagement events at all four MacEwan University campuses, including information sessions during orientation (new student, mature students, and parents).

Heslep believes that coming up with student strategies to confront gender-based violence on campus is necessary for several reasons; sexual assault is not exclusively a university issue but a societal issue that is perpetuated by myths and misconceptions. “Awareness needs to be raised around myths related to alcohol, clothing, motivation, as well as myths that stem from cultural differences,” said Heslep.

The committee agreed that U-SOLVE needs to find a balance between being a student driven project and involvement of the people in positions of authority to show that the U-SOLVE initiative is supported on campus.

*Founded in 1971, MacEwan University is a comprehensive university offering more than 60 programs including undergraduate degrees, applied degrees, diplomas, certificates, continuing education and corporate training. Its philosophy of inspiring minds, providing career opportunities and opening the doors to academic excellence, continues to be its guide as it serves the educational needs of students across Alberta, Canada and the world.*

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