



Statement Addressing the Recent Events at the University of Western Ontario

September 16th 2021

As an alumnus of the University of Western Ontario, and someone who has worked closely with many survivors of sexual assault, I have been asked to offer my thoughts on the recent events in London, Ontario.

In reading a plethora of media accounts of the situation in London my attention draws to the heading title of Global News report September 14th 2021 [“Western University, London Police Urge Survivors to Come Forward Amid Social Media Reports of Student Assaults, Drugging.”](#)

Media accounts through a plethora of channels have chosen to use the same language. University administration has promoted and seek the same remedy. The request for survivors to come forward.

It is the consistency of the narrative playing out that forms the basis for my comments.

It is men of conscience and courage that must come forward. Survivors need not to have to tell their story. To the young men that know what transpired I say your voice is one of principle or silence. Your actions or inactions will define you forever.

My message is also directed to the fathers and alumni of those young men you sent to Western last week. Today your sons must hear your voice. Direct your son to come forward in what they witnessed. To place the responsibility on the young women to come forward alone is nothing more than neglect and indifference. My direction to you is not an acceptance of patriarchy but an acknowledgment of its continued generational history in the culture of Western. This will be amplified in your refusal to challenge your son to be a man of character.

To the Western Administration, your words echo the continued capitulation of the decades of tolerance and acceptance of sexual assaults and revictimization. The parchment you hand graduates each year contain for some your inactions. While they sought only knowledge, they were denied equity.

Finally, to all the women at Western, there are some educational institutions tearing down monuments of the past. Each of you are the greatest monuments on the grounds of Western. Your presence is the demand for inclusion, diversity and justice. The greatest education you will receive is not found in books but in your ability to differentiate a man of character from a man of privilege.

Richard Dunwoody
Executive Director, Project Recover