

Legislation Text

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Honoring and congratulating the Champions of the Week, Student Activists Against Sexual Assault, for their continued determination and advocacy towards sexual violence awareness and prevention at Temple University.

WHEREAS, Student Activists Against Sexual Assault (SAASA) is dedicated to ending sexual violence on Temple University's campus by educating students about sexual violence, prevention, and survivor's rights. SAASA works to support survivors by walking them through the reporting process and connecting them with campus and local resources; and,

WHEREAS, Student Activists Against Sexual Assault was founded in September of 2022 after having been defunct for 6 years, when founding President Ray Epstein noted the absence of a sexual violence prevention organization on campus and committed herself to filling that crucial gap, a noble act for which she should be commended for her vision and determination. The organization was started from the ground up by Epstein in her sophomore year. Epstein, an English and Communication and Social Influence double major, exemplifies the university's motto "Perseverance Conquers"; and,

WHEREAS, Student Activists Against Sexual Assault has held numerous significant campus, events. Notably, the organization hosted a screening of the documentary *The Hunting Ground* in collaboration with the university's Interfraternity Council, a body representing and governing eight fraternities on campus. On top of that, SAASA has raised thousands of dollars for community organizations, hosts biweekly general body meetings on various topics of concern in the sexual violence advocacy space, and are regular fixtures of university-sanctioned events; and

WHEREAS, In May of 2023, in their first year as a student organization, Student Activists Against Sexual Assault was awarded Student Organization of the Year at the Student Activities Awards. In addition to the honor, the organization was awarded office space in the Howard Gittis Student Center; and,

WHEREAS, With an office, SAASA's ability to serve the Temple University community expands greatly as SAASA staff are not mandatory reporters under Title IX, meaning the office can be used as a safe space for survivors of sexual violence to discuss their case with a trained member of staff without having to report; and,

WHEREAS, In September of 2023, SAASA announced a partnership with the popular rideshare app Uber that would provide the Temple University student body with up to \$200,000 value in rideshare vouchers, with four rides being allotted to each student within a 9 ½ mile radius around campus. The intention was to provide students with a safe way to get home if they were felt a threat of sexual violence or other harm. SAASA was met with widespread acclaim and accolades for its efforts to ensure Temple students can be guaranteed a safe ride home. The program was a massive success; and,

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby honor and congratulate Student Activists Against Sexual Assault for their continued determination and advocacy towards sexual violence awareness and prevention at Temple University.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an engrossed copy be presented to Student Activists Against Sexual Assault,

further evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.