

Tulane leader joins White House meeting on campus sexual assault

May 06, 2014 11:15 AM

Aidan Smith asmith41@tulane.edu

While conversations about sexual assault on campus have dominated the headlines in recent weeks, a coalition of Tulane University faculty, staff members and students have had discussions about prevention and policy change for more than a year. In recognition of ongoing efforts to address the issue, [Sally J. Kenney](#), executive director of the Newcomb College Institute, was invited to join other national campus leaders at the White House last week for the release of a [national report](#) on the subject produced by the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault.



Vice President Joe Biden speaks to media as he meets with representatives of student groups, including Diane Rosenfeld, second from right, and Laura Dunn, right, in the White House Complex on Tuesday (Feb. 18) in Washington, D.C., as part of the Campus Sexual Assault Task Force. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

The report, the first of its kind, is the result of quantitative research as well as a national listening tour that visited more than 15 campuses nationwide.

In early April, representatives from the task force visited the Tulane uptown campus to meet with members of the campus community. Participating were volunteers for [SAPHE](#), the student organization that operates a 24/7 confidential hotline; social work professor Fred Buttell and students from his course on social policy; and staff members from [TheWELL](#) and the Office of Violence Prevention and Support Services, among others.

Kenney first convened the group to open up lines of communication across campus, connecting those who were working on the issue in their scholarship with those that were working directly with students.

“The evidence of prevalence is consistent, depressing and incontrovertible,” Kenney says. “While other schools focus to improve bureaucratic compliance, Tulane is working on prevention and norm changes to eliminate pervasive campus rape cultures. The government rightly recognizes sexual assault on campus to be a civil rights issue.”

In addition to the comprehensive report, the national task force announced a website, [NotAlone.gov](#), to make sexual assault enforcement data more accessible to both students and researchers.

Tulane University

The task force is co-chaired by the Office of the Vice President Joe Biden and the White House Council on Women and Girls.

Aidan Smith is external affairs officer for the Newcomb College Institute.