

Rape Crisis Center: “CENTERS BLACKNESS” for Sexual Assault Awareness Month

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(MADISON,WI) The Rape Crisis Center honors 20 years of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) by “Centering Blackness as an Act of Self-care and Collective Liberation.”

One in three women and one in five men have been victims of sexual violence in their lifetimes. These numbers are staggering and affect everyone across industry, generation, culture, race, etc. We know everyone has had the unfortunate experience of surviving, or helping a survivor of sexual violence. SAAM is an opportunity to promote awareness and prevention through programming and outreach.

RCC’s SAAM programming will feature a virtual luncheon on April 9th, with food from Chef Patience Clark and keynote speaker Alicia Walters. Walters is an activist and Founder of the *Black Thought Project* and the *Black Thought Wall*. Walters explains, “Black Thought Project transforms public and private spaces into sanctuaries for the expression of Black thought”. *The Black Thought Wall* has its first appearance outside of California right here on Park Street in Madison, WI! RCC stewards this wall and hopes to spread Walters’ message and promote anti-oppression by featuring her at the SAAM luncheon. These activities are a part of a continued effort by RCC to build stronger connections between our services and historically marginalized and underserved populations in Dane County.

In addition to the virtual luncheon, SAAM events taking place throughout the month of April will feature live-streamed conversations with community leaders like Urban Triage’s Brandi Grayson; movie nights with RCC staff; fitness classes with local gym

owners and trainers; and mindfulness and creative activities on social media. Every aspect of RCC's anti-sexual violence outreach in April will have a lens that centers Blackness, including buying from local Black-owned organizations to provide an economic boost during the coronavirus pandemic.