



## Sexual Assault Awareness Month – April 2009

As the Army launches Phase II “Army Wide Conviction” of our “I. A.M. Strong” Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention Campaign, we recognize Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

American Soldiers are a band of brothers and sisters, bound by common values, with duty and loyalty to each other that sets them apart from society. It is in this context that the Army considers the crime of sexual assault and the offense of sexual harassment. It is the duty of every Soldier to intervene and prevent such incidents before they occur in order to protect their teammates. Soldiers who commit the crime of sexual assault not only betray their victims, they violate the sacred trust of their fellow Soldiers who count on them. Sexual assault violates the very essence of what it means to be a Soldier.

The cornerstone of the Army’s prevention effort is the “I. A.M. Strong” campaign where the letters *I, A, and M* stand for Intervene – Act – Motivate. Leaders, Soldiers, and Civilians across the Army are employing “I. A.M. Strong” initiatives to proactively engage as role models who personally take action and address any behavior which can lead to sexual assault.

In our ongoing effort to rid sexual assault from the Army, our Criminal Investigation Command (CID) and our Office of the Judge Advocate General have taken new measures to support victims and hold offenders accountable. We’ve hired national experts in the field of prosecution and investigations. Additionally, we’ve hired and placed 30 special investigators and 15 prosecutors at Army installations with the highest occurrences of sexual assault. We’ve also hired 35 examiners at the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory. Finally, we’ve funded specialized training with the National Advocacy Center for our prosecutors and established a mobilized investigation training team to train all CID Battalions. These additional resources will augment our current capabilities, establish a special victims’ approach in handling sexual assault cases, and reinforce our commitment to accountability.

We encourage all Army community members to take part in Sexual Assault Awareness Month observance activities. In doing so, we can set the standard of conduct within our community, create a positive climate that includes a culture of intervention, and ensure the safety of all our members.

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