



April 7, 2017

Head Football Coach Ed Orgeron
LSU Athletics Administration Building
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Dear Coach Orgeron,

We have received several messages from survivors of sexual trauma and community members expressing concern about a presentation that has been "indefinitely postponed" by the LSU Athletics Department. According to an email generated by a member of the LSU Athletics Department, the presentation was scheduled for April 3, 2017 and planned to feature student athletes involved in the 2013 Vanderbilt sexual assault case. We are concerned that giving alleged perpetrators and/or convicted perpetrators a platform to discuss their involvement in sexual assault sends the wrong message to student athletes at LSU.

In addition, earlier this year, your star running back, Derrius Guice, sent out a tweet from his twitter handle "@DhaSickest.", that read, "I support Connor Whalen. Girls are always at an advantage when it comes to situations like this. I know he's innocent! #WhalenWarriors." To explain, Connor Whalen has been arrested and indicted by a grand jury for sexual assault and rape of an LSU student. He is awaiting trial and faces the potential of five to 40 years in prison. The comments by Derrius Guice can only be explained as condoning rape and/or that the victim is a liar. Either way, it is not his place as an athlete and a leader at LSU to make such erroneous comments.

Survivors of sexual assault often live in shame and silence due to the widespread stigma associated with reporting the violence committed against them. According to the FBI, only 30-35% of rapes are reported to police in a given year. We know that comments such as those made by Mr. Guice further the pain and trauma experienced by victims of sexual assault, and set a poor example of community accountability for offenders.

LSU admitted last year that sexual harassment sensitivity and assault awareness training was necessary. When asked about the hiring of the Dan Beebe Group to lead the training to all student athletes, coaches, and support staff, F. King Alexander told *The Advocate*, "We're implementing this in a proactive mode." Kudos to the leadership of the University for implementing this program, however, there is more work to do.

STAR works to support survivors of sexual trauma, improve systems response, and create social change to end sexual violence. We take this problem facing LSU and our state very seriously, and as fans of LSU athletics, we expect our champions and championship programs to do the same.

We are committed to partnering with allies in our community to prevent sexual assault, and we firmly believe that sexual assault prevention efforts can be relevant to the audience without compromising survivors' safety and well-being. We would like to assist your program in better understanding the widespread issue of sexual violence and its role in helping prevent and intervene in this serious crime. We are also able to be of assistance to members of your team who themselves are survivors of sexual trauma.

Looking forward to your reply and with best regards,

Racheal Hebert, LCSW
President & CEO

Cc: F. King Alexander, President
Joe Alleva, Athletic Director