

Citizenship judge keynote speaker at 17th annual Take Back the Night

Published on Aug 18, 2006

Pamela Appelt of Oakville, Canada's first female Afro-Canadian judge in the Court of Canadian Citizenship, will be the keynote speaker at the 16th annual Take Back the Night on Thursday, Sept. 14.

She will speak at about 7 p.m.

The event will be held at Coronation Park, Lakeshore Road east of Third Line, starting at 6 p.m.

Hosted by Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services of Halton (SAVIS), the event will also feature singer-songwriter Sarah Melody and poet Denise Anderson, a survivor of sexual assault, at 7:20 p.m.

There will also be community booths, face painting and henna tattoo artists.

This year's theme will be 'Walking in Sisterhood' and women and children will be invited to march to Bronte and back along Lakeshore Road, carrying candles, starting at about 8:30 p.m.

Take Back The Night has been an internationally organized event first held in Germany in 1973 to protest a series of sexual assaults, rapes and murders.

In subsequent years, the event spread around the world as a public protest against violence against women and children.

"We know that violence is gendered," said Zehra Haffajee, SAVIS Public Education Coordinator.

"In Canada, one in two women will experience at least one incident of physical or sexual violence in their lifetime.

"More specifically, in 2004, 11,738 women were sexually assaulted, compared to 1,900 men," she said. " Further, 98 per cent of individuals charged with sexual assault in 2004 were men.

"In Halton alone, there were 175 reported cases of sexual assault in 2005.

"Take Back The Night is opportunity for Halton residents to come together and demand that Halton be violence free," said Haffajee.

"This is also an opportunity to bring awareness to sexual violence and inspire action to bring about positive change.

"The march is symbolic of our right as women to walk freely in our neighbourhoods without male accompaniment and fear of being a target of violence."

For more information call SAVIS at 905-825-3622.