



PRESS RELEASE

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Students Stand Against Domestic Violence

Today is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. In a poignant mark of solidarity, Bayside students and members of the Staff and Student Council locked arms to form a human chain around Bayside school to signify their stand against domestic violence in all its forms.

Staff and students dressed in white as a symbolic gesture and wore white ribbons – sold by students at a stand they organized. The White Ribbon Campaign (WRC) is a global movement of men and boys working to end male violence against women and girls.

Students from Bayside school and the Gibraltar College demonstrated their awareness and understanding of domestic violence issues through a poetry and short story competition. Winners were announced during an assembly at Bayside school this morning, and prizes and certificates of participation were presented by Minister for Equality, the Hon Samantha Sacramento. Minister for Education, the Hon Dr John Cortes also addressed the students, praising them for their sensitive submissions and expressing his enthusiasm for working together with staff and students to tackle domestic violence.

The winners of the competitions were as follows:

Bayside Poetry Competition:

- 1st Prize – David Lester
- 2nd Prize – Omar El Yettefti
- 3rd Prize – Walid Halhoul

College Short Essay Competition:

- 1st Prize – Erica Fernandez
- 2nd Prize – Elina Vilop
- 3rd Prize – Kaylan Payas

Minster for Equality, the Hon Samantha Sacramento, thanked the students sincerely for their wholehearted participation in this emotive event. She told the assembly: “I am absolutely overwhelmed at the solidarity you have demonstrated, and that is what this is all about. To anybody who has come across domestic violence, we are here to help. Although this is the International Day for the Elimination of Domestic Violence against Women, men can also be victims of domestic violence. There is no shame in that and it’s important that everyone knows that the support structures are there for anyone who needs it.



“In combatting domestic violence, education is key and students’ voices are an important part of that. It is clear to me from reading the submissions to the poetry and short story competition that you have a very deep understanding of these issues. They have been really touching. Thank you, and well done.

“Thank you also to the teachers and staff from the Department of Education, Department of Equality and Social Services for all your work in pulling this event together. Working against domestic abuse is an important part of my Gender Equality portfolio, and I am looking forward to working together with you and with Minister John Cortes to achieve best results on this and other social policy initiatives.”

Note to Editors

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is a global Human Rights initiative intended to raise public awareness and mobilize people everywhere to bring about change and eliminate domestic violence. Designed to remove persisting inequalities between men and women this campaign relies on men and boys to be the voice of change by making a personal pledge to SAY NO to domestic violence and sexual assault.

While of course not all victims of domestic abuse are women and not all perpetrators are men, studies shows that this is currently the predominant situation.

Acknowledging that not all men are violent, the current campaign asks men not to ignore the problem but to pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about men's violence against women.