

Student Government Association

Tennessee Technological University

SGA Bill SB-S23-05

An Act to Guarantee Support for Students that are Victims of Sexual Assault on Campus through the Establishment of a Lead Advocate for Student Victim Programs

Whereas, Tech ASPIRES is a federally funded grant program created at our university. ASPIRES addresses sexual assault on Tech’s campus by providing free forensic exams and comprehensive advocacy services; and,

Whereas, the specific grant is “2020-V3-GX-0022” through the Office for Victims of Crime, under the Office of Justice Programs, under the U.S. Department of Justice, which is in their own words “seeking applications to establish or expand Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) programs that will offer medical forensic care, advocacy, and other victim services to sexual assault survivors on college campuses”; and,

Whereas, Tennessee Tech is one of eight institutions of higher education to be selected for this program being awarded \$500,000 from this grant to fund our ASPIRES program; and,

Whereas, this funding has helped to purchase equipment, setup operations, employ students and staff, and provide the necessary services described in the grant description on our campus for twenty-four hours a day three-hundred and sixty-five days out of the year; and,

Whereas, the grant was awarded in 2020 on a three year grant cycle that will be ending in September of this year with no guarantee of being renewed, which would leave the program unfunded, rendering the preparation and effort ineffective; and,

Whereas, without lifeline supportive funding from the university this program will cease to exist as a similar program named Tech Awakens has in the past, which provided support for stalking victims, and dating violence; and,

Whereas, students on this campus do not have an alternative within the Upper Cumberland with the nearest organizations providing similar services being located in Nashville, Knoxville, and Chattanooga; and,

Whereas, additionally there is a need for this service on our campus as a climate survey recently done through this program of our campus found 25% of respondents reported being victims of sexual assault at some point during their lifetimes; and,

Whereas, while the campus administration nor the research office has no bearing on whether this grant funding is renewed or not they do have the ability to provide a position devoted to managing it and similar programs; and,

Whereas, this bill seeks to ask the administration to establish a lead advocate position so that it does not fall to research faculty to champion the necessity and alleviate the management of similar programs; and,

Whereas, along with this the bill seeks to provide funding toward the continuation of the ASPIRES program which would require a budget for supplies; and,

Whereas, overall the creation of this position and continuation of this program will lead to better retention of necessary student health programs, retention of effected students who without support may drop out, further consent and assault education, and an improvement of the safety of sexual assault victims on campus.

**NOW THEREFORE,
BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF TENNESSEE
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY THAT**

- Section 1: This Bill shall be known as the “Lead Advocate Act of 2023”.
- Section 2: University Administration will create a staff position for the management of Victims of Crime Programs.
- Section 2.1: This position's purpose will be to work alongside faculty members on grant programs within the space of Victims of Crime along with administration on the services that positively contribute to student life which should be provided future funding from the university; and,
- Section 2.2: The university position responsibilities are left up to the university administration as they see fit for such a position.
- Section 3: Provide the minimum funding necessary to continue the Tech ASPIRES program as it is currently being managed by the Program Directors and Principal Investigators. This shall include funding for necessary supplies and staffing.
- Section 5: This Bill shall take effect immediately following passage by the Student Government Association, the welfare of the students requiring it.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Co-sponsor(s):

Tymothy J Brandel
Senator, College of Graduate Studies

Pooja Patel
Senator, of College of Engineering

Harrison Simpson
Senator, First Year Assembly

For SGA Officer Use Only

Senate Record

SGA Secretary:	Aye:	Nay:	Abstain:	Status:
Savannah Griffin	26	0	0	Passed

SGA President:



Addison Dorris