

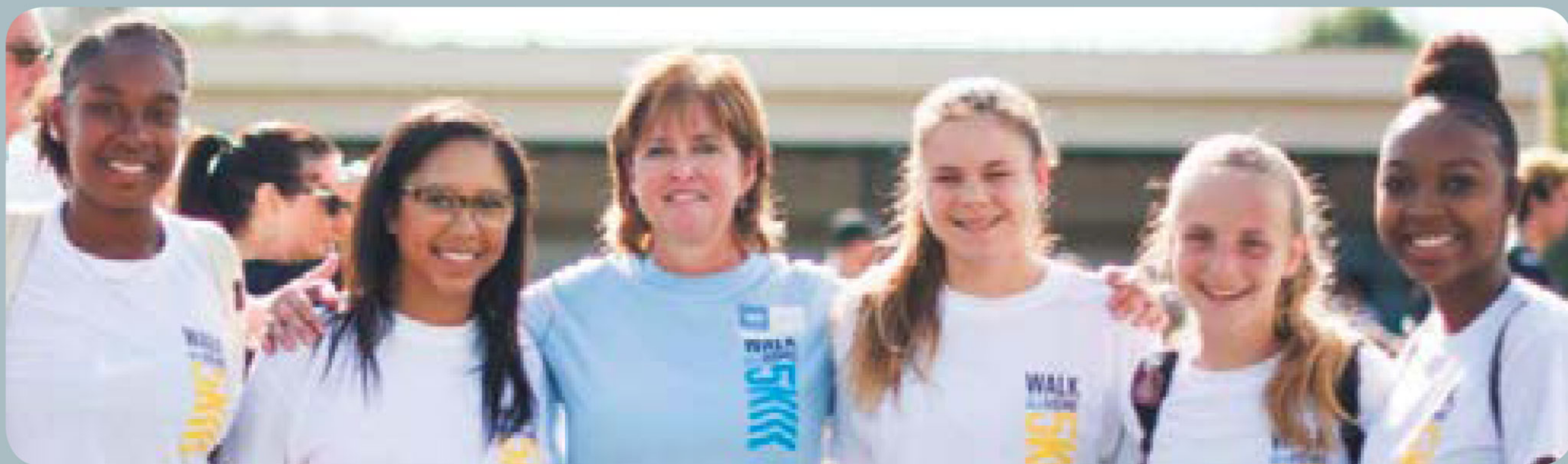


HUMAN TRAFFICKING CLASS TIA GAINES, ADJUNCT SAIL INSTRUCTOR

When I first announced I was going to teach a SAIL class on Human Trafficking, I was pleasantly surprised to see how eager students were to register for the class. This is certainly a mature subject matter for our students and we have never offered anything like it before. However, response to this course demonstrates DC students and families have a deep passion for issues of justice in our world.

Every week before class, I remind students they need to come ready to “think deeply, critically, and biblically” – and they do just that! Early in the semester I invited alumni parent Susan Ingram to speak to our students about her important work around this issue. Susan is a recent recipient of the Eva Murillo Unsung Hero Award, a Congressional honor for people who've suffered a personal tragedy and go on to help others. After being assaulted at a local spa, Susan was compelled to create the Walk Her

Home 5K event to raise awareness and money for human trafficking victims. Susan's presentation was so impactful, a number of students decided to do more than just “think deeply” and opted to participate in the October 7 Walk Her Home event held at Westtown School in West Chester. Students participated in a Q&A with William Walker (U.S. Department of Homeland Security Special-Agent-In-Charge), Mary Claire Peditto (FBI Victim Specialist), Tom Hogan, (Chester County District Attorney), and Mary DeFusco (Advisor, Villanova Law Institute to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation). They also walked in the 5K and participated in a meet & greet with community advocates, social service agencies, law enforcement, and with representatives from Dawn's Place and the Salvation Army, two agencies who offer residential programs for survivors.



(L-R) Janae Johns, Mrs. Tia Gaines, Susan Ingram - event organizer and Alumni parent, Elena Broyles, Maddie Vavala, Asha Davis

I am extremely grateful to have experienced the “Walk Her Home” event and was touched to see so many people joining together to help in the fight against human trafficking. Before taking this SAIL course, I was uneducated on all things [pertaining to] human trafficking. Now, not only has my perspective broadened, but I have also developed a new level of sympathy for human trafficking victims. This experience has inspired me to partner and work alongside an anti-human trafficking organization.

Asha Davis '18

“I appreciated the opportunity to participate in the “Walk Her Home” event. It was amazing to see many people supporting this cause. The speakers were all very compelling and opened my eyes to the ways teenagers are lured into human trafficking situations through social media. I encourage everyone to learn more about this issue and to recognize human trafficking is happening locally, not just overseas.”

Elena Broyles '21

Learn more at www.walkherhome.org.