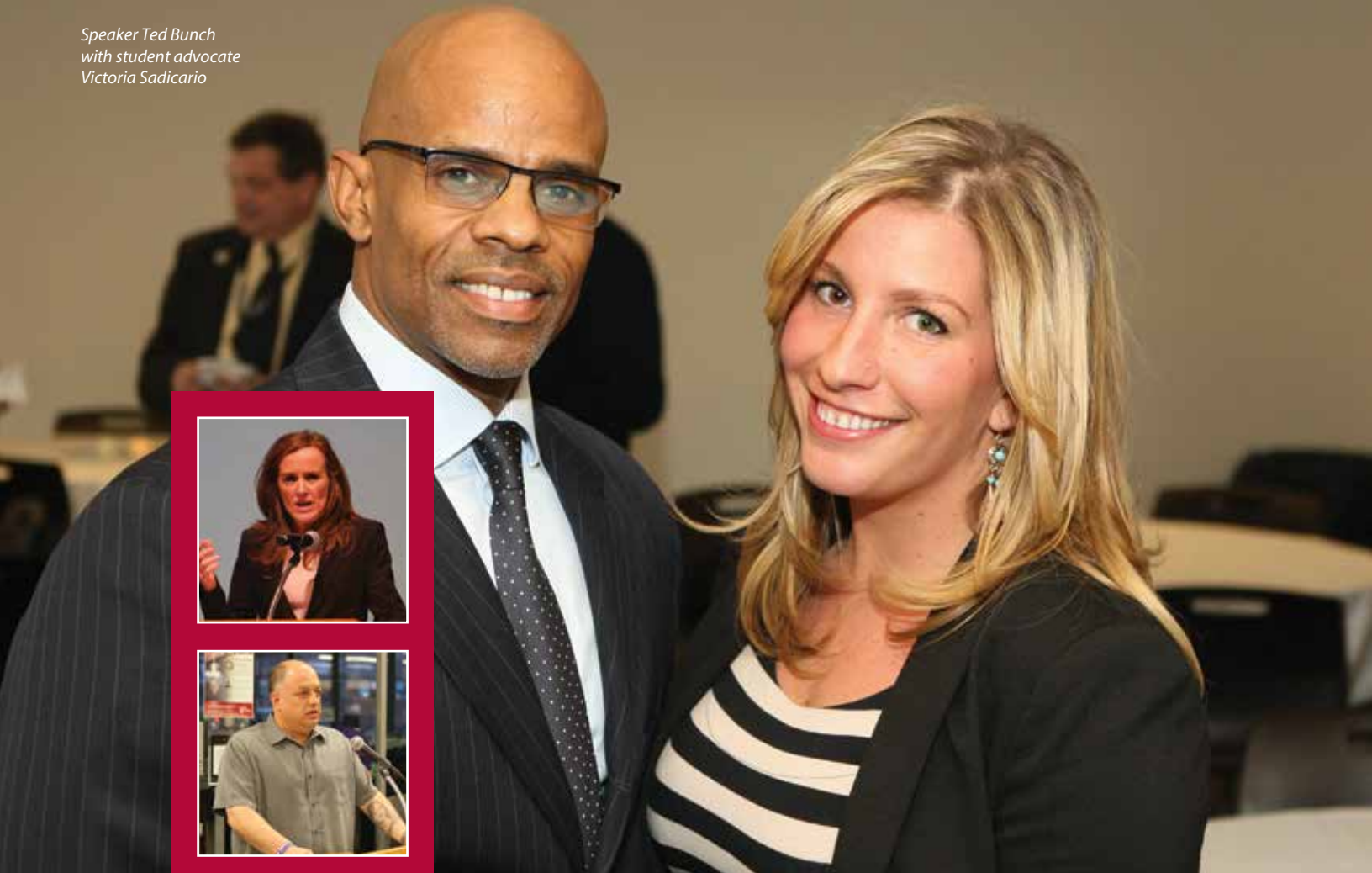


Speaker Ted Bunch  
with student advocate  
Victoria Sadicario



## The Partner Project: Ending Relationship Violence

**T**he Partner Project at Molloy College is a collaborative effort to raise awareness about relationship violence through education, research and dialogue. The organization is dedicated to individuals who suffer in silence due to relationship violence. The founders of The Partner Project are Teresa Aprigliano, Ed.D, R.N., Associate Dean of Nursing at Molloy College, and John Amodeo, M.A., Assistant Director of Public Safety at Molloy. Dr. Aprigliano has clinical expertise in women's health and her educational experience is in administrative leadership and courage development. Amodeo is a former Detective Commander in the New York Police Department and he has extensive experience working with victims of domestic and relationship violence.

The foundation for The Partner Project was cast during the spring 2012 semester when a Molloy student, whose personal life was tainted by relationship violence, visited the office of Dr. Aprigliano. Once the issue was discussed and the student's needs were assessed, Dr. Aprigliano reached out to Amodeo for assistance. The immediate situation was addressed successfully and the necessary tools were provided to properly empower the student. However, both Amodeo and Dr. Aprigliano realized that more could be done to educate and prepare Molloy community members to manage similar situations.

The Partner Project was officially launched in October of 2013 by Dr. Aprigliano and Amodeo. The group provides resources and tools designed to enable victims of relationship violence to enact positive changes in their lives and to nurture

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*- TERESA APRIGLIANO, ED.D., RN, ASSOCIATE DEAN OF NURSING*

healthy relationships that are supportive of personal growth and safety. The ultimate goal of the group is to help victims live purpose-filled lives with wide-reaching opportunities for personal success.

In January 2014, The Partner Project held its first official event, "Breaking the Silence." It was a huge success with over 500 people in attendance. "The event began the conversation about relationship violence," said Dr. Aprigliano. "It was the starting point for breaking the silence and shining a light on this societal issue."

During the inaugural event, a Molloy student who was the victim of relationship violence bravely shared her story of survival with the capacity crowd. Attendees were visibly affected by her words. She was followed by the keynote speaker, Ted Bunch, the founder of A Call to Men, an organization that works to teach men and boys the importance of healthy relationships. Bunch explored common beliefs in our society that affect relationships between men and women. He also offered some suggestions for change in the way we view those relationships. Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice spoke as well, discussing the County's viewpoint on the topic and resources available to victims.

"To date, what has stood out for me is the strength and character shown by the women and men of the College in dealing with a somewhat taboo subject of relationship and domestic violence," said Amodeo. "I've been overwhelmed with their ability to share privately and publicly about what they have been through, and in many cases, are currently living through."

"Since the January event, the conversations went back to classrooms and the dialogue continued," said Dr. Aprigliano. "The Partner Project's most recent event, 'Together as One,' continued the conversation and highlighted the importance of knowing the red flags associated with relationship violence."

During the "Together as One" conference in early April, The Partner Project hosted Sharon Love, mother of Yeardeley Love, a University of Virginia student who was beaten to death by her ex-boyfriend just weeks before graduating. Love not only shared her daughter's story, she also shared a video of her daughter's friends discussing the signs they may have missed prior to her murder. The event concluded with a panel discussion on the topic of relationship violence. Panelists included Love, from the One Love Foundation; Melissa Cortes, Molloy Student Advocate; Rich Zoller, Molloy Student Advocate; and Sgt. Judy Hoffman, Domestic Liaison, Nassau County Police Department.

The first-ever Partner Award was presented to Love during the "Together as One" event. The award will be given annually to a person or organization that joins with The Partner Project as the group strives to raise awareness and works to break the silence associated with relationship violence.

"The events have demonstrated the need to create a community of empowered bystanders, who, when they see something, can recognize the behavior as something that as a society we just don't tolerate," added Dr. Aprigliano.

"We were fortunate to have Ted Bunch and Sharon Love share their experiences with responsibility, respect and dealing with loss," said Amodeo. "To see both theatres filled to capacity with not only members of the Molloy community, but also residents, gives credence to the idea that The Partner Project is the necessary vehicle to bring women and men the services they need, ensuring their personal, academic and career success."

Future goals of The Partner Project include: continuing educational programs that focus on primary prevention and intervention strategies, bringing noted speakers to the campus to engage the students, hosting fundraising activities that will foster the growth of the organization, broadening The Partner Project's reach to other campuses and/or high schools and continuing research.

For more information on The Partner Project, contact Dr. Aprigliano at 516.323.3659, or email the group at [thepartnerproject@molloy.edu](mailto:thepartnerproject@molloy.edu).



*Dr. Teresa Aprigliano,  
Sharon Love, and  
John Amodeo*