

Villanova students take a stand against violence



December 6, 2017 marked the 28th anniversary of the Montreal Massacre, where 14 female engineering students were killed by a gunman at Montreal's Ecole Polytechnique.

Students at Villanova College in King City commemorated this important day by bringing awareness to the issue of violence against women and supporting local women's shelter Yellow Brick House, a shelter and safe haven in York Region for women and children who are victims of abuse.

Over 100 student leaders at Villanova College are working to bring awareness, fundraise and educate their peers about the consequences of abuse.

This social outreach initiative evolved into a collaboration between a group of male students who were planning the school's annual White Ribbon campaign to raise awareness about violence against women and one of the school's social outreach groups.

The results of this collaboration are nothing short of amazing ? the students were not only able to raise awareness in the school community, they were also able to collect over \$5,000 of worth of goods for the women and children at Yellow Brick House and are well on their way to reaching their goal of \$7,500 worth of much needed items with the generous support of the students and families of Villanova College.

This campaign was kicked off at a school assembly where a representative from Yellow Brick House spoke to students about the different forms of abuse and the importance of building healthy relationships, sharing a message from Lorris Herenda, Executive Director of Yellow Brick House, which read, "Your presence is felt here every single day. You make it possible for women and children to walk through this door with sometimes nothing but the clothes on their backs. And when families walk through our door, it finally feels like home. It is with your support that we can provide them with safety, healing and love."

Over 5,000 women used Yellow Brick House's services last year, and this number continues to grow. The donations collected through this campaign consist of household items, strollers, car seats, and grocery gift cards.

The organization uses these items to support women when they first arrive at the shelter, as some women show up at their doors without so much as a pair of shoes or a toothbrush. Furthermore, these much-needed items are given to women as they rebuild their lives and find their independence in new living spaces.

In light of the Christmas season, and the spirit of giving, the students of Villanova College hoped that their story will bring awareness to this issue and inspire others to give generously to those in our community who are in most need.