



NEWS RELEASE

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Her Story: College Activists Raise 25,000 Feminine Hygiene Products for Women's History Month

Donations Pour In Across New York State in Celebration of the History of Feminism

(New York, NY) – This March, Women's History Month, NYPIRG student activists hosted service drives on seventeen college campuses in New York State to spread awareness of the plight facing women living in poverty. The campaign, involving hundreds of college students, raised nearly 25,000 feminine hygiene products and challenged taboos around homelessness.

For decades, NYPIRG has worked on combatting hunger and homelessness through educational and service-based actions. The service drives provide students with the opportunity to build community organizing skills and bring aid to people in need.

“There are current talks of cutting funding to specific services that help people who need it most. The Buffalo area has more than 5,000 individuals that suffer due to some sort of hunger or homelessness. It's important that we voice our concerns about homelessness issues by donating at any chance we get,” said Buffalo State College student Rosalind Eatmon.

Shelters often are desperately in need of feminine hygiene products, specifically tampons and pads. A 2016 Harris Poll found that only 6% of respondents had ever donated period products, but three times as many had donated other toiletries.

The taboo nature of period products contributes to a lack of visibility about the issue and discomfort for women who must self-advocate. That's why NYPIRG chapters across the state are challenging that taboo.

“As a woman, organizing this is such an important issue because it shows how much of an impact women can have on our communities. It's extremely inspiring to see, for example, sororities come together and drop off boxes of products. It's liberating and shows how much we care about these issues, and how much change we can make,” shared SUNY Cortland student and NYPIRG Board of Directors representative Candice Jaimungal.

“I think it's important for younger generations to see how impactful women can be when they organize,

that way they can be inspired to act too. I learned that, unfortunately, there still is a stigma around menstruation but students are challenging that just by talking about it in an honest way,” continued Jaimungal.

Contributions were donated to a wide variety of shelters and food banks across the state including the YWCA in Queens and Binghamton, CHiPS in Brooklyn, and the Ali Forney Center for LGBTQ youth. Several campuses donated to their own on-campus community food pantries.

In addition to hygiene products, many campuses also collected business apparel for job interviews, another crucial need that many shelters are in short supply. Hundreds of cans of food were raised as well.

Students pledged to keep the project alive well past the end of Women’s History Month. Many NYPIRG chapters have worked with college campuses to make the donation drop-off locations permanent fixtures.

“Women’s history should be celebrated 365 days a year, not just one month,” said Tammie David, City College of New York student and NYPIRG’s Board of Directors Vice Chair.

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