

# Fort Drum People



## Military spouses get fit

See SPORTS — Page 20

## Group works to assist sexual assault victims, raise awareness

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Imagine running away from an assailant in a dark alley, screaming for help at the top of your lungs and having someone hold you down against your will. These vivid images may come to mind when people think of sexual assault.

However, they only represent a small percentage of people affected by this illegal act. A majority of assault victims know their offenders, and the surroundings are usually familiar.

"One in four people will experience sexual assault or attempted sexual assault in their lifetime," said James Ambrose, a member of One in Four, a national organization composed of four men working to end rape.

Ambrose and three other recent college graduates spoke to more than 100 Soldiers on April 30 at the Multipurpose Auditorium. Presenters said their organization does not focus on placing blame on victims, but offers effective ways to reach out to people who have survived this crime.

To dispel stereotypes about sexual assault

**"We all have sisters, friends, peers and maybe daughters someday (who) could be affected. We all have the power to help reduce rape and make a huge difference in someone's life."**

**Jor-El Caraballo**  
member of One in Four

victims, the group presented a graphic film on how a male police officer was sexually assaulted and ways his peers reacted to the offense.

"Rape can happen to anyone. It does not discriminate. Four out of five times, when someone is raped, it is by someone (he or she) knows," said Jor-El Caraballo, a One in Four presenter.

"But we cannot blame the victims. It is our job to help them get through the situation once it has occurred."

Caraballo said offering to take victims to the hospital, listening to their situation, advising them to seek counseling and letting them know it is not their fault are just a few ways to help them cope with an assault.

However, presenters said the ultimate goal is to put a stop to any type of assault before it is too late. They defined sexual assault as any situation where consent is not present.

Caraballo then fielded suggestions from the audience on ways they can look out for their peers.

Responses included calling for help before a situation gets out of control and looking out for friends when there is alcohol present.

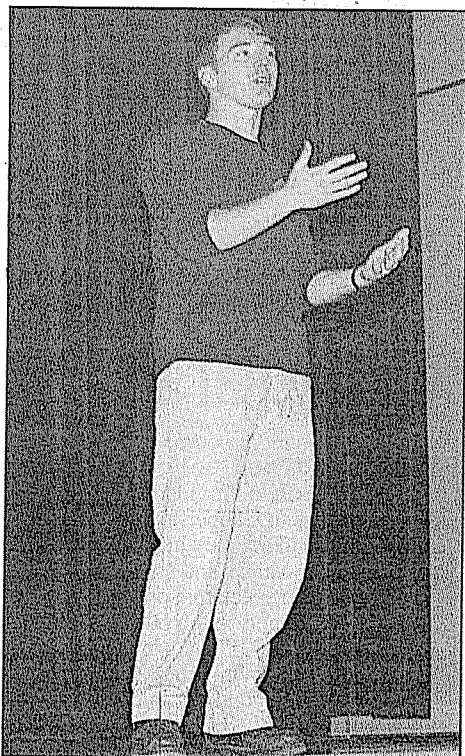
"We all have a responsibility to step up and try to avoid these situations," Caraballo said.

"We all have sisters, friends, peers and maybe daughters someday (who) could be affected. We all have the power to help reduce rape and make a huge difference in someone's life."

Caraballo said that the idea of having young men present such a sensitive topic usually attracts a captivated audience because it is something different from the norm.

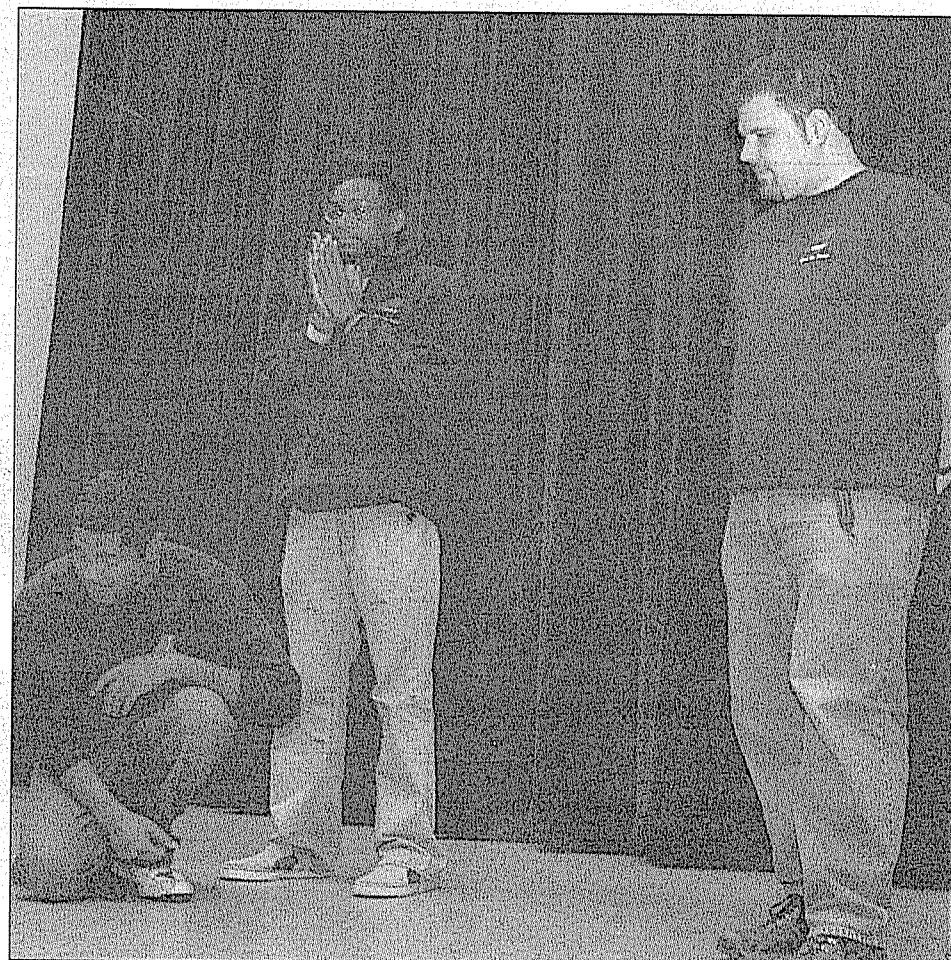
"I saw last year's tour at my school and was immediately drawn to the group. The presenters were people around my age, and I could easily relate to them," Caraballo said.

"Assault is a big issue. People are finally trying to talk about it and do something about



Hannah M. Hayner

One in Four member JT Newberry explains how the organization is working to stop sexual assault.



Hannah M. Hayner

From left, Jor-El Caraballo, James Ambrose and Dan Mollison, members of One in Four, speak to Soldiers at the Multipurpose Auditorium on ways they can help sexual assault victims.

it before it gets out of hand," he added.

Dani'el Reed, sexual assault response coordinator, said she felt Soldiers in the audience responded positively to the program because they saw a fresh approach to a sensitive subject.

"I feel we were able to better reach out to the Soldiers because we had males presenting this topic and they used a lot of statistics," she said.

"Many Soldiers were surprised by how often assault occurs and that it can happen to anyone. Males, females and children can be affected. Assault does not discriminate."

Reed said the number of reported assaults on post has increased over the past year and noted alcohol is almost always a factor.

She said her goal is get the word out that help is available, and there are numerous measures people can take to avoid being a

victim.

Suggestions include the following:

- ♦ use the buddy system and only go out with people you can trust;
- ♦ listen to your instincts — if something doesn't feel right, it's probably not; and
- ♦ always keep an eye on your drink when you go out.

"More than 95 percent of reported incidents on post involve alcohol and occur in a Soldier's living area," Reed said.

"Any form of sexual assault is punishable, and depending on the situation, penalties can include confinement, reduction in rank and dishonorable discharge from service," she added.

Reed encourages all victims to report sexual assault by calling 772-5914. All calls are kept confidential.