



**Sexual Assault:** Please protect me...“I can’t vote, but that doesn’t mean I’m not going to. I’ve never been sexually assaulted, but that doesn’t mean I’m not going to. There is a 25% chance that I will be sexually abused before graduating high schools. This means that there is a 25% chance my youth will be taken from me that I no longer get to be an ordinary teenager. The problem is so prevalent and so horrible, yet I live in a school district that gives the benefit of the doubt to the rapists instead of the victim. It’s possible that a classmate of mine suffers every day they go to school because every day they see the assailant. All of this would have happened because rape protocol was not strong enough. Please help make sure this doesn’t happen anymore. Fight to protect victims, the future victims, your own children. Please protect me.”



**Women’s Health:** As a woman I was supposed to put on a happy face... When I was 14 I developed anorexia. Previous to that I had gone undiagnosed with depression and anxiety. As a woman I was supposed to shove all these things down, put on a happy face and avoid the questions and conversations that I really wanted to have. When you do this, you can’t be helped. All you can do is be a silent suffer and hope things get better on their own, but they never do. This is the reality of being women in the healthcare system. You’re not supposed to have problems because society conditions us to believe our discomfort is not worth discussion. In short we are not worth it. And women’s health is made into an ethical dilemma, especially our sexual and reproductive health. There is a battle over the female body that ranges from birth control to eating disorders.



**Human Trafficking:** It can't be undone...“I have met two rape survivors. One didn't remember her rape until many years later. She lives in fear that she'll have to remember more. The other was forced into prostitution and was raped by many men. Because of that experience, she has to sit with the pain. Once somebody is raped, it can't be undone. You can't undo the pain and suffering. The best way to help is to set up prevention so it never happens in the first place. We live in a society that allows for the objectification of a body. Society needs to change before anything else can change!”



**Intimate Partner Violence:** My best friend's story...“I think there are so many more people that have been affected by this that I realize because it is so stigmatized. One person who really comes to mind is one of my closest friends who was in an abusive relationship. I think she didn't have enough knowledge of resources available to get the full help she needed. A lot of the reasoning on why she didn't seek out these resources was because she thought it would be turned on her and she would be blamed, even though she was the victim. I highly value honesty, respect, and compassion, and these are being threatened currently. Our society needs to change immediately, and policy makers have make a significant impact on this.”



**Violence against Women:** I had a friend in elementary school -- I had a friend in elementary school who didn't tell anybody her secret. Only her teachers knew her story. She was scarred for life but she wouldn't show it. Anyway, when she was younger, her Dad raped her. Her Mom was on drugs. She called the police and later on she was adopted. My friends issues are what has gotten to me and makes me feel more deeply about what is happening to women. That's I why I want women to get the same rights and be treated equally and not be looked at as objects.



**Women's Health:** Access to reduce cancer among all women -- As a UW student, I have seen some young women feel powerless regarding their own health. Though they are covered under their parents insurance, they are often limited in care based on parental preferences. I feel that these women need some affordable way to make their own decisions about their health. I also know through my coursework that the US spends so much money on healthcare because they do not focus as much on prevention as treatment and to me that doesn't make sense economically or socially. We need to change the conversation about birth control to be more about preventing cancers then preventing pregnancy. For example progesterone can prevent costly diseases in women. This is important to me as a future healthcare professional because I've come to understand that healthy women mean healthy communities.