

Aspire Women Inspire at This Year’s TUC Reclaim the Night Event

Sisters celebrating the global campaign #16DaysofActivism against gender-based violence

On 25th November almost 100 attendees got together online at a Reclaim the Night event organised by TUC Northern, all of them there to take a stand against gender related violence. That was at the start of what is known as ‘16 Days of Activism’ which is a global social media and event that is usually celebrated in Newcastle with a night-time march through the city and is due to end on Thursday 10th December. The hugely successful event ran without a glitch and was brilliantly chaired by Pat Heron, Chair of the Northern TUC Women’s Group. She was joined by special guests Jess Phillips MP, (Labour Shadow Minister for Domestic Violence and Safeguarding), and Kim Rojas of the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) who is also a violence against women programme specialist.

However, the real stars of the show were our very own Aspire Supporting Sisters Michelle Fleming and Kay Walker, dedicated volunteers who gave up their time to share their experiences and expertise working with women from a variety of backgrounds who come into Aspire’s support and wellbeing services facing various challenges and obstacles.

Michelle (right) a volunteer for Aspire for 3 years had this to say about the

“I spoke about our efforts to raise awareness and support those directly domestic abuse in all its forms. It was strange speaking virtually, as there is no in front of you, but from the live chat comments we could see that what we being positively received. Sometimes it isn’t until you take part in an event like deeply appreciate the positive impact of what we’re doing at Aspire. I’m to be a part of it.”



experience:

affected by physical audience were saying was this that you immensely proud



For Kay (left) speaking at Reclaim the Night had meaning as it was her last appearance she Aspire as a volunteer, having recently our staff team as our new Support and Wellbeing Worker!

“After many years as a volunteer I am delighted to take on this new role. I have been with Aspire since the beginning and embrace all it stands for... I was delighted to be asked to represent Aspire’s Supporting Sisters along with Michelle at such a prestigious event. I am always keen to tell others about the wonderful work we do and this was a great opportunity to reach a wide audience.”

extra special made on behalf of progressed into

Aspire wish to extend our deepest thanks to both Michelle and Kay for speaking on Aspire’s behalf at this major event, and to all the Aspire women who attended as well as those volunteers who have played such a vital role in keeping our support services running. Val Kilner, Aspire Volunteer Development and Support Service Coordinator (who was also a popular guest speaker at Reclaim the Night) added:

“To be part of Reclaim the Night was amazing both personally and for Aspire. The response was so positive and empowering . It was a great example of women supporting other women!”

With an ongoing successful women’s Domestic Violence and Abuse programme of support including All About peer led drop-in sessions, specially trained volunteer DVA Champions and collectable essentials packs, Aspire are making it clear that they will still be here supporting women long after the #16DaysofActivim have ended. For more information about our services or becoming an Aspire volunteer please email:

sisters@aspirenorth-east.co.uk