



**PRESS RELEASE
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Human Rights Conference at The Woodstock Academy

WOODSTOCK, CT (March 26, 2019) – On April 4, The Woodstock Academy will host its first Human Rights Conference, with Connecticut Attorney General Tong as the keynote speaker. The conference for eighth through twelfth graders from area schools is hosted by Woodstock Academy students and coordinated by senior Waverly Dombkowski, Social Studies Department Chair Sara Dziedzic, and Assistant Head of School for South Campus John Rigney.

“The reason this conference is so important is because it is starting the conversation. Too often human rights violations and discriminations are overlooked because they do not affect our daily lives and are not taught in our education. That’s why we need this platform for students to grasp the reality of the issue right here at home and begin to make change moving forward,” shared Dombkowski.

Dombkowski and students from her Human Rights and International Relations classes at The Academy have championed the need for the conference and helped to make it a reality. The conference represents an important transfer from the classroom to practical application. In fact, the theme of the conference is “From Education to Action: Raising Awareness of Human Rights Issues in Our Backyard.”

“Through classes like Human Rights and conferences like this, students learn that there is a world beyond themselves and they are part of a larger community,” said Chris Sandford, The Woodstock Academy’s head of school. “Part of our mission as a school is that our students become ‘lifelong learners and global citizens,’ and that’s what we see in this conference. Students and faculty are working together to engage our community in education and action and help change the world.”

The Woodstock Academy is pleased to partner with several organizations including TEEG, Central Connecticut State University Study of Food Insecurity, The Underground, Office of Healthcare Advocacy, Where Be The Dragons, Connecticut Immigrant Rights Alliance, True Colors, Disability Rights Connecticut, Clark University Holocaust and Genocide Studies, and the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness. In addition to the keynote address from Attorney General Tong, students can choose to attend several hands-on workshops on a range of topics, including food insecurity, human trafficking, health care rights, immigration, LGBTQ rights, disability rights, genocide, and homelessness.

The conference is made possible through a generous grant from the University of Connecticut’s Early College Experience program.

The conference will begin with Attorney General Tong’s address at 9 a.m. and will conclude at 1:15 p.m. after students attend selected workshops, lunch, and a panel discussion. Conference registration is available at www.woodstockacademy.org/humanrights.

The Woodstock Academy is an independent, day and boarding, co-educational, college preparatory high school for grades 9–12 and postgraduates located in Woodstock, CT. The mission of The Woodstock Academy is to prepare all students by providing diverse opportunities through a rigorous curriculum and a variety of programs in order to cultivate the necessary skills to become lifelong learners and global citizens.

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