



# The Dignity *project*

**OUR STORY**

In 2017, I was raped. I hadn't slept in three days and it was 5 am. I walked a mile home alone in 18-degree weather just two days before my sophomore year finals were supposed to start. An hour later, I found myself standing in the emergency room asking for a rape kit to be taken.

I cannot explain what I thought or felt in the first days after my assault because, the depth of my pain at the time, is unimaginable to me today. The process was in no way shape or form, easy. At times it felt impossible, unmanageable and like a mistake. I have been in your shoes. I have sat in the emergency room for hours, been swabbed and video tapped, been exhausted, taken any pill they would give me to make sure the assault didn't have lasting impacts on my physical being. But unfortunately, I cannot guarantee that tomorrow things will make any sense, that someone will come and comfort you, understand you, reach out to you. I have been in the same systems that you may be considering.

I came to recognize the fundamental lack of respect and compassion for survivors. In particular, the demoralizing, confusing, and hectic process of having a rape kit taken and the "nothing" that happened after it.

The information given to me was vague, untelling, and incomplete about what would happen if I were to make a decision. Most of the time I had to contact my attorney to ask about legal language that wasn't clear. I came to realize that as the "victim" I was the last to be notified yet the first to be ridiculed and diminished, beginning at the time, when the rape kit began. So, I set out to create a more humane and dignified process for survivors of sexual violence, contacted passionate and intelligent women and together this project was born.

*survivors are at the center of our work.*

The Dignity Project has made it its mission to increase clarity for survivors in the aftermath of trauma. We seek to enable and empower a survivor's ability to feel dignified and educated in the decisions they are asked to make. We know there will be days when you feel confused and out of place. But allow that discomfort to let you grow wings. I made a promise to myself, that if I was ever able to escape the pain and frustration, agony and confusion, I would do all in my power to ensure that I could reduce those feelings for at least one other survivor.

This project was created from us to you.

*Danielle*  
Founder