

Community



PROJECT WOMAN

Protect Educate Empower

Newsletter

Fall 2016

Project Woman Gets Rockin' - Strides Against Violence 5K



On April 22, 2016, participants gathered to join Project Woman for its 5th annual Strides Against Violence – 5K ... with a twist!! This year we rallied at Snyder Park for some Rockin' local music, some inspirational words, and a family-friendly Friday Night of 5K!

Running enthusiasts, casual runners, walkers, strollers, and canine companions



all joined to take strides and bring awareness about sexual assault and the many challenges survivors face.

Local artists included the Witt Crew from Wittenberg University; Marianne Kesler; Jillian Potter-Bonsell and Micah; Jesse Level; and the Par (Tolliver) and Dean (Simms) Duo. The musicians shared their talent during the full duration of



the race and went on to rally afterward until dark! Mike Pistorino, returning for the 2nd year as a Survivor/Thrifer and Pacesetter! Mike spoke earnestly of the need for "each of us to share the responsibility to do whatever it takes to help survivors Thrive!"

Join Us at PAVE and Stand Up



Most people do not stand for violence. They stand for PEACE and non-violence! But we feel powerless against the violence and the misperception that it is a "normal" way of life. "It is what it is," "what do you want me to do about it?" etc. are statements that we may hear ourselves or others saying. But, sometimes the solution can be as simple as finding a responsible way to have a voice and say, "Stop."

Intrinsic to standing AGAINST violence is standing UP for PEACE and Non-violence. As a coalition, Partners Against Violence Everyday (PAVE) thought we would focus on the positive and empower the community's voice by mobilizing a Bystander Intervention initiative.

There have been 98 community members trained to be Bystander Intervention trainers. We have held 15 sessions of basic Bystander Awareness trainings and hope to continue forward to meet our annual goal of 20. Since starting the PAVE Pledge campaign through local funding support from the Community Health Foundation, we have 94 people who have signed the pledge already! It is amazing and wonderful to see such momentum built in such a short time.

Visit the PAVE page on our website projectwomanohio.org/pave.html or Like the PAVE Facebook Page www.facebook.com/partnersagainstviolenceeveryday/ to learn more about the coalition efforts and see how you can take a stand for Non-Violence! If you are interested in hosting a Bystander Response Ability Training or would like more information please contact Carl Burgason, PAVE Coalition Coordinator at cburgason@projectwomanohio.org.

To quote, Winkie Mitchell, from the Rocking Horse Center, and the Not in Our Town movement, "We must be louder than the violence!"

Wittenberg Collaborates With Project Woman



By: Dr. Brooke Wagner, PhD, Associate Professor at Wittenberg University

Growing Collaboration Between Project Woman and Wittenberg University aims to Reduce Sexual Violence and Provide Support for Survivors

Over the summer, Project Women collaborated with the Hagen Center and Womyn's Center at Wittenberg University in an effort to train two upcoming seniors as sexual assault Peer Advocates. Alex Ridel and Cheyanna Snyder, completed 40 hours of training to become Project Women's newest advocates, able to work in the shelter, answer the crisis line, and expand the Campus Advocacy Program at Wittenberg. Alex and Cheyanna will use their training to help students living in the community, as well as students on campus.

Project Woman's Campus Advocacy Program is funded, in part, by the Ohio Attorney General's Office. It was initially offered in partnership with Wittenberg University in 2014 and has now grown and expanded to include partnerships with Urbana University, Clark State Community College, and Central State University. At Wittenberg, a Project Woman Advocate holds office hours on campus, bringing all the resources of Project Woman closer to those in need. We believe by offering advocacy services on campus, we can reduce the distance barriers and increase the service to the campus population.

Sexual violence has reached epidemic proportions in the United States, with estimates of 1 in 5 women and 1 in 16 men victimized while in college. Though rates vary across campuses, it is estimated that 90 percent of sexual assaults at colleges go unreported. When sexual violence is reported on campus, the Title IX process begins. Title IX is a federally mandated investigative process that all campuses must complete within 60 days of learning about an incident of gender and power-based violence. The Campus Advocacy program allows immediate access for survivors to the Project Woman Advocate as a support for the duration of this process.

Currently, all employees on college campuses are mandated reporters

required to report any incident of sexual violence (as well as other acts of violence) to the campus conduct board, beginning the Title IX process. This federal requirement can create challenges for victims on campus who may need time to process the incident before making a formal report and becoming the center of an investigation. The partnership between Project Woman and Wittenberg University aims to help victims on campus access resources and build a support network, with the help of a campus advocate, before engaging in the Title IX process. Research has shown that victims who connect with a service provider are more likely to file an official report and have better success and engagement in the justice seeking process. Students on campus have already responded favorably to the Campus Advocacy Program and an increase in official reporting has been documented.

The Campus Advocacy Program reflects the second phase of partnership between Wittenberg and Project Woman. Four years ago, we partnered to create Not Without Consent, a healthy sexual relationship and bystander intervention training that is now mandatory for all incoming students that attend Wittenberg. Not Without Consent was awarded the Promising Practice Award earlier this year at the Ohio Attorney General's 2 Days in May Symposium.

SafeZone



Project Woman has started the process to becoming certified in "SafeZone." The intensive training, hosted by the Ohio Statewide LGBTQI Taskforce, requires participation by staff and volunteers at all levels including the Executive Director and the Board of Directors.



The initial two-day seminar aims at learning how to better serve members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transsexual, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) community; exploring legislation, social history, and cultural dynamics that will help us better understand issues unique to gender identity and sexual orientation, and how these can act as barriers to LGBTQI survivors.

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, states members of the LGBTQI community face "disproportionate experiences of violence" throughout their lifetime, citing that transgender people are twice as likely to experience intimate partner violence, and those who identify as bisexual are twice as

likely to experience sexual violence than non-bisexuals.

These statistics show that there is a real and pressing need for many members of the LGBTQI community to have access to the same survivor support including advocacy, shelter, and counseling services that is provided to straight survivors.

Through the SafeZone certification and partnership with the Ohio LGBTQI Taskforce, Project Woman is working hard to make sure that we can provide all of our trauma-informed supports for every survivor in our community, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.

Abuse That's Hard to Recognize: Coercive Control



Intimate partner abuse that is often disguised as love

Isolation. Threats. Humiliation. These are the weapons of coercive control; a strategy some people use against their intimate partners. A relationship that should involve loving support ends up as a trap designed for domination.

Victims of coercive control grow anxious and afraid. Coercive control strips away victims' independence, sense of self and basic rights, such as the right to make decisions about their own time, friends and appearance.

Many who use coercive control also abuse their partners physically or sexually, but many use coercive control without physical violence. The threat of violence is powerful. We are wrong in our assumption that without physical injury there is no real abuse.

"I knew better than to say one more word. I watched [him] pick up my grandmother's antique rocking chair and bring it down over and over pounding it into splinters as he stared at me...saying, 'this could be you...'" One survivor bravely shared her story. There were no bruises. Only a broken chair. Who would believe her?

Another survivor shared, "it was getting late. I was shopping with my friend. I knew we wouldn't get home at the time I had promised. I was getting nervous saying, 'we have to go, we need to leave...'" she just stared at me. 'What is your problem? She called me crazy for 'having a panic over nothing' but I knew...he would be mad ..."

Do you know someone who is being controlled in this way? Do you wonder if your partner is too controlling? Here's a self-assessment: <http://www.guilford.com/add/forms/fontes3.pdf>

From *Invisible Chains: Overcoming Coercive Control in Your Intimate Relationship* by Lisa Aronson; Fontes. Copyright 2015 by the Guilford Press.

Victims of coercive control are like hostages. They may feel confused as they are told again and again that they have triggered their partner's behaviors by doing something wrong. At the same time, to keep the peace, victims remain silent and detach from loved ones. Unfortunately, victims typically do not see the connection between their partner's control and their own isolation until a time when they are looking back and see the situation outside of the fog. The problem of coercive control needs to be named and recognized for what it is – a form violence.. We may not see the physical wounds but deep within the heart, mind and spirit of the victim are very real injuries and trauma that are in need of the same tenderness, non-victim-blaming and trauma informed support as every survivor.

You are not alone. Find us online at projectwomanohio.org. Call for more information at 937-328-5308 or our Crisis Line at 800-634-9893.

VISTA Members Join Project Woman



Pictured: Carl Burgason & Angela Moody

This July, through the help of Think Tank Inc., Project Woman welcomes two Americorps VISTA members; Carl Burgason and Angela Moody.

Carl is a recent graduate of Wittenberg

University who worked with Project Woman several times throughout his college career. "After serving three years as an Orientation Assistant, and receiving Project Woman-facilitated training on Sexual Assault and Bystander intervention, I decided to complete my community service project with Project Woman." Throughout this project, Carl was able to work closely with the staff to help plan the 5k, as well as to facilitate dialogue in a men's focus group with the goal of gaining insight to barriers for accessing services from Project Woman. "I did not know at the time that a VISTA position would be opening up to continue work on the men's focus group. When I found out that was the case, I knew I wanted to apply to continue this work."

Angela is a second year AmeriCorps VISTA who is passionate about "eradicating domestic and sexual assault, and finding creative ways to raise funds to do so." This

year, she became interested in renewing her VISTA role with a position at Project Woman after meeting our executive director, Laura Baxter. "I will be helping to establish Project Woman's donor and fund development. Presently, my focus is on coordinating the DIVA Night Out, being held on October 20th, which celebrates survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. It is our signature fundraiser that you will be hearing a lot more about in the coming weeks. I am in my element—doing what I love to do! "

Project Woman has grown a lot as an agency in the past few years and having the VISTA members will help us to focus some energy and talent on sustaining that growth and broadening our grassroots reach! Carl and Angela will be serving through July of 2017, and we are very excited to have them part of the PW Team!

New Board Members Welcomed

Project Woman welcomes three new members to its Board of Directors; Ty Buckman, Tom Coles, and Beth Dixon, and we could not be more excited!

Ty Buckman is a professor of English and the Vice President for Strategic Initiatives at Wittenberg University. When asked to comment, Ty said, "I am honored to join the board of an agency that does so much valuable, life-changing advocacy work in our community. Project Woman is as mission-focused and results-oriented as any non-profit I know."

Tom Coles, the Vice President of Human Resources for Bundy Baking Solutions located in Urbana, says that he is "looking forward to assisting in the efforts of Project Woman," specifically because he is "excited to be part of an organization that provides care and support to those in need in our communities."

Beth Dixon, Director of Development at Ridgewood Schools, shared that, to her, serving her community is "much more than a casual effort that demands little and never threatens peoples' comfort zones. It means supporting the entirety

of the community." She also quoted Desmond Tutu who "pointed out that we belong to 'a greater whole that is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed.' At its core, community simply means shared responsibility."

Project Woman is fortunate to have a passionate and strong Board of Directors. Ty, Tom and Beth will add their own talents and commitment to further the organizations mission and to support survivors and our community! Thank you for choosing to serve!

Made Possible by YOU



A spotlight of "THANKS" goes to Evie Oehlers who raised money for Project Woman by setting up a lemonade stand in May on the corner of Fountain and Harding where she raised \$68 in 3 hours! \$100 total was raised by this entrepreneurial 9 year old! According to her mother, Adrienne, "...she's excited to do it again!" Evie is going into the 5th grade at Snowhill Elementary and is pictured here with her brother, Fort.

The generosity of donations and support is essential for Project Woman to meet its goals and support survivors. All gifts are significant; all service is deeply appreciated!

Thank you to Evie and her family for supporting Project Woman! You are making a difference in our community.

Project Woman News & Upcoming Events

Candlelight Vigil - October 6 at 7 p.m.

DIVA Night Out - October 20, 5:30 - 9 p.m.

Dr. Berkowitz - October 26-27

Champaign Shelter Grand Opening - TBA

2016
Candlelight Vigil
PROJECT WOMAN

 **Project Woman's**
Diva Night Out

Visit the Events page at projectwomanohio.org and follow us on Facebook for the most up to date information about our upcoming events!

Thank You Sponsors and Supporters!

