Congratulations Karen!

Earlier this week, CCADV announced that our CEO, Karen Jarmoc, will be leaving the organization after nearly ten years of leadership. Karen will leave CCADV in mid-December to take on the position of Assistant Vice President Sustainability Leader at The Hartford in Hartford, Connecticut. At The Hartford, Karen will be a part of leading sustainability matters in such areas as environmental stewardship, diversity and inclusion, social responsibility, corporate ethics and governance practices.

David Bogan, CCADV’s board chair, pointed to the tremendous impact that Karen’s leadership has had on the organization over the past decade where the scope and size of the state’s voice for victims of domestic violence and those who serve them has grown exponentially. When Karen arrived at CCADV in 2011, the organization’s operational budget was $7.4M. Today CCADV’s budget is more than $18M with the implementation of critical projects such as medical advocacy, rapid rehousing, lethality assessment and CT Safe Connect. Said David, “Karen has been a remarkable leader. She has championed new laws, elevated the public’s understanding of domestic violence, forged critical partnerships, and worked to significantly improve responses to victims of domestic violence.”

Karen is beyond grateful for her time at CCADV saying, “This job has been the opportunity of a lifetime. The occasion to wake up each day and be a part of a tremendous team of advocates who are working tirelessly to keep individuals safe in our state is immensely gratifying. I will miss the people and the work, but am excited for this new chapter at The Hartford.”

CCADV staff wish Karen the very best in her new endeavor. Karen’s leadership, passion and drive has moved CCADV forward in its mission to make victims of domestic violence safer. Karen is a leader that encourages her staff to reach their highest potential in producing outcomes for CCADV as well as individual career development, while understanding the importance of work life balance. Karen’s determination and tenacity has inspired us all. We will miss the potluck lunches, breakfast pizzas and laughs we’ve had over the
The CCADV Board of Directors voted to retain Steve Eppler-Epstein to serve as the Interim Executive Director while they search for a permanent leader. Eppler-Epstein is the former Executive Director of Connecticut Legal Services, Inc. and currently consults with nonprofit providers around strategic planning and organizational assessment matters.

The staff and board at CCADV wish everyone a safe and healthy Thanksgiving. While it’s unlikely that everyone can be with their families this year, it’s important to remember that the effects of this pandemic have, for many victims, compounded the sense of isolation that they feel from their friends and family. So please be sure to call your friends and family or check in on them virtually because you never know who might need your help. And if someone does need help, CT Safe Connect is available 24/7 including holidays by calling or texting (888) 774-2900 or visiting www.ctsafeconnect.org. Bilingual services available!

CCADV Issues Series of New Reports

CCADV has issued a series of new policy briefs and update reports in the last few months…
Online Restraining Orders

In September we released our policy brief, Online Restraining Orders: Ensuring Safe Access to Court-Ordered Protections During a Pandemic. This policy brief assesses the processes established during the pandemic to ensure victim access to restraining orders amid court closures and limited hours of operation in Connecticut.

As stay-at-home orders went into place, it quickly became apparent that the safety measures taken by the Judicial Branch to limit public and staff exposure to COVID had the unintended consequence of limiting access to family violence restraining orders. Victims also expressed hesitation about going to the few remaining open courts for fear of COVID. The Judicial Branch, Connecticut Legal Services, Inc. and CCADV offered guidance around a solution. In response, Governor Lamont signed Executive Order No. 7T on April 2nd paving the way for the restraining order application process to be completed entirely online.

The online option has allowed victims to file their application independently or seek assistance from either CT Safe Connect or one of CCADV’s 18 member organizations. Advocates assist the victim with completing the application, the contents of which the victim must attest to under penalty of false statement; file the application on their behalf; and, coordinate service of the order with a state marshal.

Click here to read the complete policy brief

Dominant Aggressor/Dual Arrest

In October we released another policy brief, New Dominant Aggressor Law Positively Impacts Intimate Partner Violence Dual Arrest Rates in CT. This brief highlights the positive impact of Connecticut’s new dominant aggressor family violence arrest law.

The law, which guides law enforcement responding to a family violence call to arrest only the person who poses the most serious ongoing threat, has been in effect since January 1, 2019. From 2014 through 2018, a full five years before the dominant aggressor law went into effect, Connecticut’s statewide dual arrest rate stood between 17% and 26% according the CT Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and the CT Judicial Branch. By the end of 2019, after one full year of the new law being in place, the state’s dual arrest rate stood between 10% and 16% according to those same agencies—a marked improvement.

Connecticut’s dual arrest rate had historically been twice the national average. This new common-sense measure has given police officers the tools and discretion they need to keep survivors safe while avoiding unnecessary dual arrests. We’re grateful to our partners in law enforcement who have embraced this change and ensured its successful application to the work they do every day to protect victims.

Click here to read the complete policy brief.

Lethality Assessment Program Update

Finally, in November we released our report, Lethality Assessment Program Update.
Assessment Program 2018-2019 Update. This report provides an update on Connecticut’s Lethality Assessment Program (LAP). The program began to rollout across the state in 2012 with 2018 being the first year that LAP was voluntarily utilized by every municipal and state police department, as well as fourteen colleges and universities, both tribal police departments, and the state’s environmental conservation police.

Between 2018 and 2019, 19,496 victims of intimate partner violence were screened by law enforcement. The data reveals that 52% of the victims screened were experiencing circumstances within their relationship that indicated a high danger risk of being seriously injured or killed. Of the victims who were identified as high-danger, 54% of them spoke to the LAP-line advocate and received tailored safety planning and awareness of services available. An analysis of the frequency in which the 11 risk factors received a positive response reveals that:

1) Jealousy or control factors were the most pervasive component at 45%
2) Prior and/or pending separation was second at 36%
3) Attempted strangulation was third at 35%
4) Stalking behaviors was fourth at 32%

The statewide implementation of LAP has opened greater opportunities to identify some of the most dangerous abusive behaviors victims are experiencing. Of those behaviors, strangulation or attempted strangulation may contribute to cognitive medical complications that may not be immediately apparent. Because of this, CCADV will explore collaborating with the medical community to adopt specialized awareness training for nurses in the examination of intimate partner strangulation cases.

Click here to read the complete update report.

**Thank you! CCADV Annual Fundraiser Goes Virtual**

Thank you to all of those who joined us in support of CCADV’s 10th Annual Signature Fundraising Event! While we weren’t able to be together in-person this year to celebrate the accomplishments of leaders and advocates across our state working to improve circumstances for survivors and their children, we were pleased to have the opportunity to gather for an important virtual discussion.

Women’s empowerment leader and author, Tiffany Dufu, was able to join us for our event this year. A passionate advocate for the advancement of women and girls, Tiffany spoke about her personal experiences with forging a successful career while balancing the demands of family. She also spoke about her work to create The Cru, a network of women across the country that can provide support and guidance to each other as they work to achieve those same goals. Tiffany’s book, Drop the Ball, gets to the heart of gender-based assumptions that undermine the success of women as she seeks to dismantle an unequal power structure. The conversation was moderated by strategic consultant and diversity & inclusion champion, Joelle Murchison, who also weaved in her own experiences. We are deeply grateful to both Tiffany and Joelle for sharing their stories with us.

As we all continue to grapple with the impact of a global pandemic, CCADV is grateful for Safe Connect and the more than 400 advocates across our 18 member organizations who have stepped
forward in remarkable ways to meet the increasingly complex needs of survivors and ongoing requests for services. While the pandemic has left some survivors shut in their homes with their abusers, many of the families with which our coalition works have felt the effects of job loss, housing instability and food insecurity. Compared to the previous year, we’ve seen a 134% increase in the number of hours that advocates have spent on calls with survivors and an 18% increase in victim advocacy services. Additionally, more than half of the individuals who reached out to Safe Connect for help during the pandemic have never previously accessed services through our 18 member organizations.

The needs of survivors are ever-present and CCADV needs your ongoing support to ensure that every survivor can access the services available across our state. Our staff has worked tirelessly to form new relationships and work closely with many key partners, which has been essential to increasing knowledge about the availability of domestic violence resources. But we can’t do it without you. Thank you so much to everyone who joined us last week and supported our work. If you weren’t able to join use but still want to make a year-end, fully tax deductible donation, please click on the donate button below.

We truly appreciate your support. Your engagement in our work is enormously important. Collectively, we can make a difference in the lives of survivors and their children.
Thank you to our generous sponsors...

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Karen Jarmoc
CCADV Holds Virtual Conference in Recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Last month we were pleased to offer our first-ever virtual conference. The month-long event took place every Wednesday on Zoom. Each day we were joined by two national experts to discuss a range of topics including:

- Identifying and Implementing Tools to Develop Resiliency
- Impact of Adultification on Child Survivors of Trauma with a Focus on Children of Color
- Survivor-Centered Service Design and Delivery
- Supporting Safe Engagement with Men Who Cause Harm
- Enhancing Access to Services and Safety for Immigrant Survivors
- When Courts Went Virtual - Helping Clients During a Pandemic
- Addressing Historical Trauma and its Impact on Our Work
- Confronting Privilege & Bias to Make Meaningful Change

Over 100 people joined each individual session (2 sessions per day) and provided positive feedback about the presenters. Each session was held for 40 minutes with a 10 minute break. Many attendees noted that they would have liked the opportunity for longer sessions with presenters. As this was our first virtual conference, the feedback will be useful in shaping future events and finding a good balance between how much time people want to spend in a single sitting participating in a virtual event with the variety of issues/topics to address. Stay tuned as we hope to offer more opportunities like this in the future!

Advocacy in Action:
Promoting Justice, Creating Change
Domestic Violence Awareness Month Virtual Conference

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