

THE RESOURCE

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center Newsletter • Winter 2018



WHERE THE MOVEMENT GOES FROM HERE ON PAGE 4

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MeToo founder Tarana Burke marches at the Take Back The Workplace March and #MeToo Survivors March & Rally (Photo by Gabriel Olsen/Getty Images)

ABOUT THE COVER

MeToo has proven to be much more than a hashtag. We discuss its offline beginnings, its impact on the cultural conversation about sexual assault and harassment, and where the movement to end sexual violence can go from here starting on page 4.

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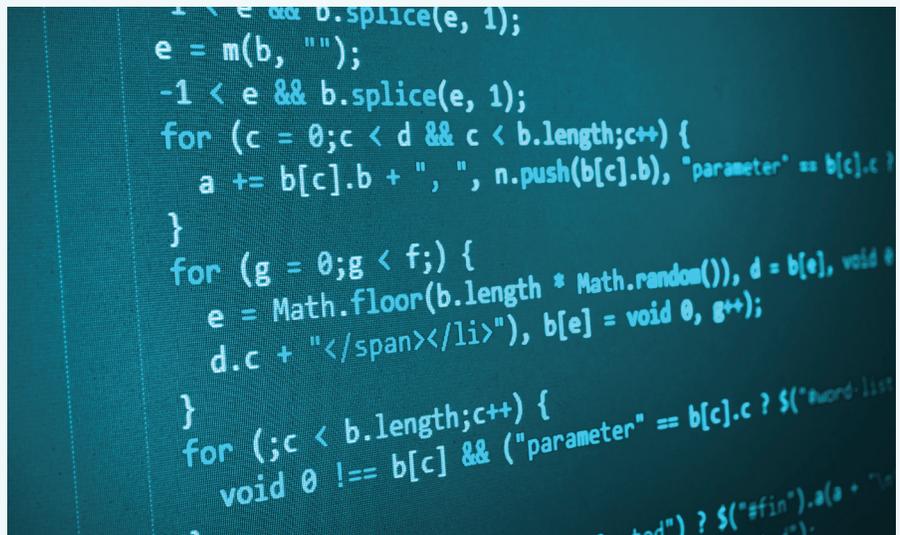
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Read about four resources that might interest you.

TECH ROUNDUP

Utah's new digital infrastructure helps reach more survivors.

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sexual violence work. She has been a part of collective efforts towards more equitable and just communities within the United States and internationally for over 20 years in the connected fields of youth development, violence prevention, and racial justice. She has a B.A. in Psychology and a Master's in International Development and Social Change. She is passionate about addressing disparities and inequities and making sure that in our work, we are most accountable to those we serve.



The **Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative** is a multi-year project working with dual/multi-service programs. Partners on the project include the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, the Resource

Sharing Project, Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition, and the National Organization of Asians & Pacific Islanders Ending Sexual Violence.



KAREN BAKER, NSVRC DIRECTOR

Looking back on the last few months, there has been such a surge of energy and events in the movement to end sexual violence. It's hard to highlight everything. It's been a time of great change and forward movement, and this issue of *The Resource* covers some of the major events – like the hashtag #MeToo that grew into a phenomenon — as well as some of the new directions taken and lessons learned by organizations across the country.

The growth of the #MeToo movement has left many people wondering what comes next. In this issue, you'll read about how cultural change can happen at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. There has been a necessary and increased focus on the role of both organizations and individual bystanders in being accountable to take action when they are aware of inappropriate behavior. It is now clearer than ever that it's the responsibility of workplaces to provide good trainings on sexual harassment prevention, going beyond legal requirements to establish respectful environments and open communication.

The individual and collective action around #MeToo captures the vital need to make our society and culture more equitable, and this same theme of working to eliminate all kinds of oppression is integral to our work to serve survivors and prevent sexual violence. The Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative (SADI) echoed this sentiment in their findings. Through the multi-year project, SADI partners learned that a focus on intersectionality and response to oppression is crucial for effective sexual assault services.

In this issue, you will also learn about a workshop facilitated by the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault on doing the work as people of color. Several coalition staff members

discuss the importance of specific spaces where people of color can share their perspectives and call for continuing conversations about racial equity as we move forward.

The Utah Coalition Against Sexual Assault also moved forward by developing a mobile app, launching a new website, and increasing their social media presence, using technology to reach even more survivors.

We are currently seeing unprecedented action, and it's clear from the work of coalitions across the country that we will only continue in this trajectory toward a safer, more equitable world.



In Partnership,



WHERE IT STARTED

MeToo first appeared not on the internet, but as a campaign created by activist Tarana Burke. Burke founded Just BE Inc., a nonprofit that helps survivors of sexual assault and harassment, in 2007, and along with it, she created the Me Too movement. Burke's intention with the movement was to center the experiences and needs of women and girls of color who were survivors of sexual assault.

Visit the Me Too movement
online at metoomvmt.org

But one recent event has made the movement visible to a wider audience. Following the sexual harassment and assault allegations against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein, which led to his subsequent ousting, the topic of sexual harassment gained traction in public discourse. Actress Alyssa Milano wrote a post on Twitter reading: "Me too. Suggested by a friend: 'If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote 'Me too.' as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem.'"

And people did.

According to Twitter, the hashtag was tweeted nearly a million times in just 48 hours. The hashtag also jumped from Twitter to Facebook, where it was shared more than 12 million times in 24 hours, according to the Associated Press.¹

IMPACT OF #METOO

Hashtags come and go on social media, and #MeToo is not the first time that social justice issues have taken center stage. For example, a similar hashtag, #YesAllWomen, trended in 2014, creating a place for women to share instances of harassment, abuse, and misogyny they'd experienced. What's different about #MeToo is its longevity and the impact it's had on the wider cultural conversation about sexual violence.

For starters, sexual harassment and assault are now being widely discussed. Turn on any news station in the hashtag's first few days, and #MeToo was bound to be a hot topic. Even months later, *TIME Magazine* recognized the "Silence Breakers" – including Burke, Milano, and many other survivors and activists – as the 2017 Person of the Year. Sexual violence thrives in silence, and one of the first steps to preventing sexual violence is talking about it.

The popularity and widespread nature of #MeToo have also helped many survivors feel less alone. People who may have never shared their stories before have come forward online and in person, and in doing so, have found a community of other survivors. For example, NSVRC's Facebook page alone saw an increase of over 1,000 new likes after the popularization of #MeToo. This speaks to the growing community of people who want to share their personal experiences and look for ways to make a difference.

Another impact that sets #MeToo apart is that some people who commit sexual offenses are starting to be held accountable. We have seen various

¹ Associated Press (2017, October 17). More than 12M "Me too" Facebook posts, comments, reactions in 24 hours. *CBS News*. Retrieved from <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/metoo-more-than-12-million-facebook-posts-comments-reactions-24-hours/>



high-profile figures, from actors to politicians, lose their jobs or resign after people have come forward with allegations against them. While this is heartening progress, it has not yet extended to all situations. Many survivors still do not feel empowered to break their silence, especially people who work in low-wage positions, women of color, or young people — who are all at disproportionate risk for sexual violence. So as huge as this moment is, many survivors still feel silenced or shamed if they do speak up.

#MeToo has also led men to get involved in the prevention conversation. Various male allies have written or spoken on men's roles in preventing sexual assault and harassment. One of the popular themes is that it's not enough for men to just not commit sexual offenses — men should also hold their friends and those around them accountable. This focus on bystander intervention has been brought up largely in relation to workplace sexual harassment, asking men to call out inappropriate and abusive behavior when they see it.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Naturally, the question on everyone's mind is: What comes next? How can we keep this momentum alive and use the attention and energy generated by #MeToo to drive greater culture change?

INDIVIDUALS

As with any change, culture change around sexual violence starts at the individual level. Raliance, a collaborative initiative dedicated to ending sexual violence in one generation, offers several actions anyone can take to make a change. They

recommend individuals examine their own actions, thinking about times they may have overlooked or ignored problematic behaviors — or even behaved in problematic ways themselves. Individuals can also speak up whenever they hear sexist comments or see inappropriate behavior — whether that's on public transportation, at work, or among friends.

“ Many survivors still do not feel empowered to break their silence, especially people who work in low-wage positions, women of color, or young people — who are all at disproportionate risk for sexual violence. ”

RELATIONSHIPS

Change doesn't just happen at the individual level, though. People can create change in their relationships as well — relationships with their friends, family, intimate partners, co-workers, and so on. One of the biggest ways to do this

is by holding people around you accountable. Accountability means something different to everyone, but mostly it's about setting expectations and following through on consequences.

Teaching children is also a vital way to make change at the relationship level. Raising or mentoring children about respect, boundaries, and bodily autonomy sets them on a positive path. Information about consent and respect can be imbued into almost any conversation, and the current cultural climate around sexual violence presents tons of teachable moments. Using your interactions with children to provide guidance is a key way to make lasting change.

COMMUNITIES

Getting involved in the broader community can also spur culture change. People can rally their communities, whether that's by holding events or organizing public awareness campaigns. Another way to make change is by donating to or volunteering at sexual violence prevention organizations that are working at the community



level through education and prevention programs.

Workplaces are also communities — and ideal places to implement change. Employees can read up on their workplace’s sexual harassment policies and work with their co-workers, supervisors, or Human Resources department to strengthen or develop them. They can build a culture of respect and transparency that makes people feel safe at work — and makes it easy to report if they feel unsafe.

SOCIETY

And of course, we can change society as a whole. These changes can come through policies — in workplaces and through laws. They also happen when we dedicate time, resources, and attention to solving the problem of sexual violence, which can be achieved through advocating for continued funding of prevention work.

As mentioned earlier, the #MeToo movement is not perfect. It was conceived as a movement of solidarity and support for survivors of color, and attention has now shifted to predominantly middle-to-upper-class white women. In order to make a change on the societal level, we must focus attention on those who are not high-profile figures or in

glamorous industries, as well as people of color and people who identify as LGBTQ. In other words, the movement to end sexual violence must focus on the places where it intersects with other movements to end oppressions such as racism, classism, homophobia, ableism, and more.

Burke has said that moving forward, the names of specific offenders don’t matter as much as systemic change. But this kind of systemic change cannot be sustained unless the movement as a whole promises to follow through and hold themselves accountable.

What does accountability look like? During a Twitter chat with the DC Rape Crisis Center, Burke explained how the anti-rape movement can be more accountable to racial justice: “Intentionality and strategy. We get a lot of ‘commitment’ to racial justice but not a lot of action. White advocates have to go to the next step and strategize about how to actionize that commitment... They also need to understand that intersectionality is not a gift. It’s earned. One of the ways is through accountability. It’s not about shaming folks or dredging up the past it’s about truth and reconciliation. No more or less than what other folks want.” ■



Bravely embracing change: Lessons learned from the Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative

BY NATIONAL SEXUAL VIOLENCE RESOURCE CENTER, RESOURCE SHARING PROJECT, MINNESOTA INDIAN WOMEN'S SEXUAL ASSAULT COALITION, AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF ASIANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS ENDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative (SADI) was developed to help dual/multi-service programs create effective strategies for enhancing their sexual assault services. Six sites from across the nation engaged in a multi-year process of assessment,

planning, and implementation focusing on both organizational change (policy, structure, staffing, culture) and programmatic change (service provision, outreach, materials, training).

The SADI aimed to enhance services at the selected sites and identify practices and dynamics that cut across all of the sites. In this way, the lessons learned from the SADI can be used by other dual/multi-service programs as they work to enhance services for survivors of sexual violence.

Dual/multi-service programs work incredibly hard, care deeply about survivors and their community, and want to provide services that their communities need. The lessons learned from the SADI ask our movement to be critically self-reflective about the ways we have structured our organizations and service models when it comes to reaching survivors of sexual violence across the lifespan and throughout the healing journey. This article provides a brief summary of lessons learned in the SADI about organizational growth that supports strong sexual assault services. The full report can be found at <http://www.resource-sharing-project.org/sexual-assault-demonstration-initiative-0>.

TO BUILD EMPOWERING AND EFFECTIVE SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES, PROGRAMS NEED:

An understanding of and direct response to racism and oppression

Sexual violence has been used as a tool of racism and oppression throughout history. Programs must address the intersections that all forms of racism and oppression have with one another and with sexual violence. Understanding oppression—whether related to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, immigration status, class, or other forms of identity—is integral to community engagement and survivor services.

The extent to which programs endorse and enact an anti-oppression approach is the extent to which they can capably serve survivors from

marginalized groups. Ascribing to anti-oppression language is not the same as a willingness to allow the self and the work to be shaped by that understanding. Real commitment to anti-oppression frameworks shows up in interrupting oppressive remarks, courageous conversations about oppression and privilege, analysis of the program's readiness to respond to marginalized groups, and ongoing learning about tactics of oppression, microaggressions, and historical/intergenerational trauma.

A clear organizational identity as a sexual assault program

Too often, dual/multi-service programs see themselves and are seen by their communities as primarily domestic violence programs. This is evidenced in agency names, mission statements, outreach and awareness materials, and the myriad other ways that programs show up or are absent from their communities. Without a clear organizational identity, programs are unable to develop strategic plans and priorities that speak to the needs of survivors of sexual violence. For programs that fall within larger community service organizations or tribal government programs, there may be the extra challenges of needing to find alternative, creative approaches to elevating sexual assault services within all types of crime victim services.

“Real change began when we started talking about why we weren't talking about sexual violence. We finally had open discussion about why we were uncomfortable, our own survivorship, the knowledge and skills we lacked, and how those made us feel. We finally admitted that we're supposed to have survivors coming in and talking about their sexual assault experience, but they're not because we're not talking about it...After that we made changes to our core team and we were empowered to do the work that



needed to be done. We trusted each other more and we made fewer decisions out of fear.” - a SADI site, as quoted in the SADI Final Report (2017).

Agency-wide support through policies and procedures

Explicit and agency-wide support is critical for sustainable sexual assault services. Policies and procedures make sexual assault services integral to the program’s work, ensure that all staff has clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the sexual assault program, and support trauma-informed work. Programs must take care not to simply add “and sexual assault” to policies and procedures that refer to domestic violence, but assess how to tailor existing policies or create new policies and procedures that are specific to sexual assault services and survivors.

Stable and empowering leadership

The nature of advocacy work is supporting people in crisis; moreover, many programs operate in organizational trauma and crisis. Stable and empowering leadership sets the stage for consistent and effective services. Many leadership styles can be successful, so long as they use direct, open, and transparent communication. Where there is transparency, honesty, ethical communication, and respect among staff and leadership, there is the possibility to have honest self-assessment about program challenges and openness to learning.

Stable leadership is critical to organizational learning and successful change. When going

through organizational change, it is common and normal to experience destabilization. Leaders who demonstrate humility about their own level of knowledge, are willing to engage with and learn from people who have different views, and accept constructive feedback — even when it’s challenging — are leaders poised to take their teams through any challenges and changes.

A culture of care and support for staff

The extent to which programs support their own staff directly influences the quality of services provided to survivors of sexual violence. Programs must attend to the well-being of their staff and of the organization as a whole. It is the responsibility of leaders to create an environment that supports their staff; this starts with providing regular trauma-informed supervision of staff.

Supporting staff also includes creating an environment where staff who are survivors of violence can,

if they choose, identify as such without feeling shamed or having the legitimacy of their work questioned. Bringing this issue into the open is critical to enhancing sexual assault services.

In-depth foundational and on-going sexual assault-specific training

Strong programs prioritize vigorous initial and ongoing sexual assault-specific training for all staff, leadership, board of directors, and volunteers. Sexual assault-specific training should integrate trauma-informed and anti-oppression frameworks to address the unique and multi-faceted needs of survivors of sexual violence. Sexual assault training also needs to address



Enhancing Sexual Assault Services



advocacy skills based on active listening, empathy, empowerment, and collaboration.

Services that meet the needs of survivors

When programs lack a foundational understanding of sexual assault trauma and advocacy, as well as policies to support sexual assault services, they tend to gear their services to the tangible services most frequently used by survivors of domestic violence and not towards providing the ongoing emotional support that most survivors of sexual violence need. To provide comprehensive services to survivors, programs must address the entire scope of survivors' experiences and the range of needs beyond immediate crisis response. Comprehensive services are rooted in anti-oppression and empowerment; address the physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of survivors of sexual violence, their families, and allies; and are welcoming to all survivors across the lifespan.

EMBRACING CHANGE AND GROWTH

Enhancing sexual assault services in dual/multi-service programs requires that programs acknowledge that survivors of sexual violence are

not getting what they deserve. It requires openness to more radical change than making tweaks to existing programs. Programs must bravely engage in an honest and critical self-assessment that includes reflection on whether, as an organization, they are ready to say, "We don't know what we don't know" and to accept feedback in all areas, including those where they thought they were doing well.

Dual/multi-service programs can support survivors of sexual violence across the lifespan and at all stages of the healing journey by providing wide-ranging services and enacting the foundational values of advocacy: validating, believing, and empowering survivors. When programs listen to survivors' voices, support their strengths, and provide hope for healing, they provide an invaluable resource along the healing journey.

The SADI team would love to talk with your program about how you can bravely embrace change. For more training and technical assistance, please contact us at resources@nsvrc.org and valerie@iowacasa.org. For more resources and information about SADI, visit www.nsvrc.org/sadi. ■



COMMUNITY VOICES

For every issue of *The Resource*, we reach out to you, our partners and community members, to learn more about your work in the movement.

WE ASKED

WHAT MAKES YOU MOST PROUD OF THE PLACE WHERE YOU WORK?

“

That there is support at the very top to change our campus culture. People are vested in every segment of our campus.

Amanda Vann, *Amherst College*

”

“

As a survivor being able to create my own organization to provide support to other marginalized & isolated survivors has been an amazing journey.

Ashley Thomas, *The Hive Community Circle*

”

“

To work with a group of people who are passionate, empathetic, and believe in the mission of our organization makes me so proud to be a part of it and empowers me to keep fighting against sexual violence.

Jessie Segal, *WOAR*

”

“

Support from our state anti-SV and DV [partners] (OAESV and ODVN) to create safe and accessible spaces for our team to work with survivors.

Stephanie Bowman, *DeafPhoenix*

”

“

Getting to help people feel believed and supported.

Jill Sander McFalls,
YWCA of the Sauk Valley

”

“

I am proud of our resiliency, although we have our struggles, we work hard to build each other up.

Juanita Blaz, *Island Girl Power*

”

“

We have a close camaraderie that is only matched by our passion for providing services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking, human trafficking, and past abuses.

Gregory Isaac Guilbert,
Options Domestic & Sexual Violence Services

”

BE A FEATURED VOICE!

We want to hear your response to our next Community Voices question:

How can organizations ensure that the needs of communities of color are at the center of sexual violence prevention and response?

Tweet your answer to @NSVRC or email resources@nsvrc.org using the subject line “Community Voices.”



Coding a 21st-century coalition

BY TURNER C. BITTON

Utah Coalition Against Sexual Assault

When I started as the Executive Director of the Utah Coalition Against Sexual Assault (UCASA) one year ago, I was considered an unlikely hire for the position. After all, I had never been an advocate nor had I worked long within the nonprofit sector. At 26, I'm much younger than the average director of a statewide organization, and I never finished college. But what I have been able to do consistently is understand the critical importance that data and digital infrastructure plays in the success of the competitive world of the social sector.

Because of my broad experience with the principles of campaign organization, my priority was developing a coalition infrastructure rooted in technology and focused on growing our digital infrastructure to deliver services in more places, more often, and for less cost. One year in and I'm amazed by the progress made by our dedicated team toward the goal of developing a robust digital infrastructure.

Over the past year, we have evaluated and measured our digital footprint to identify areas that we could utilize technology and the app economy to further the work of our coalition and expand the resources available to victims and survivors across each of Utah's 84,899 square miles.

From the beginning, our coalition focused on expanding our social media reach, website resources, and developing new tools for victims and survivors. In the past year, our coalition has grown

our digital infrastructure at an incredible pace to keep up with demand. This expansion has allowed us to put more resources directly into the hands (literally) of victims and survivors across the state.

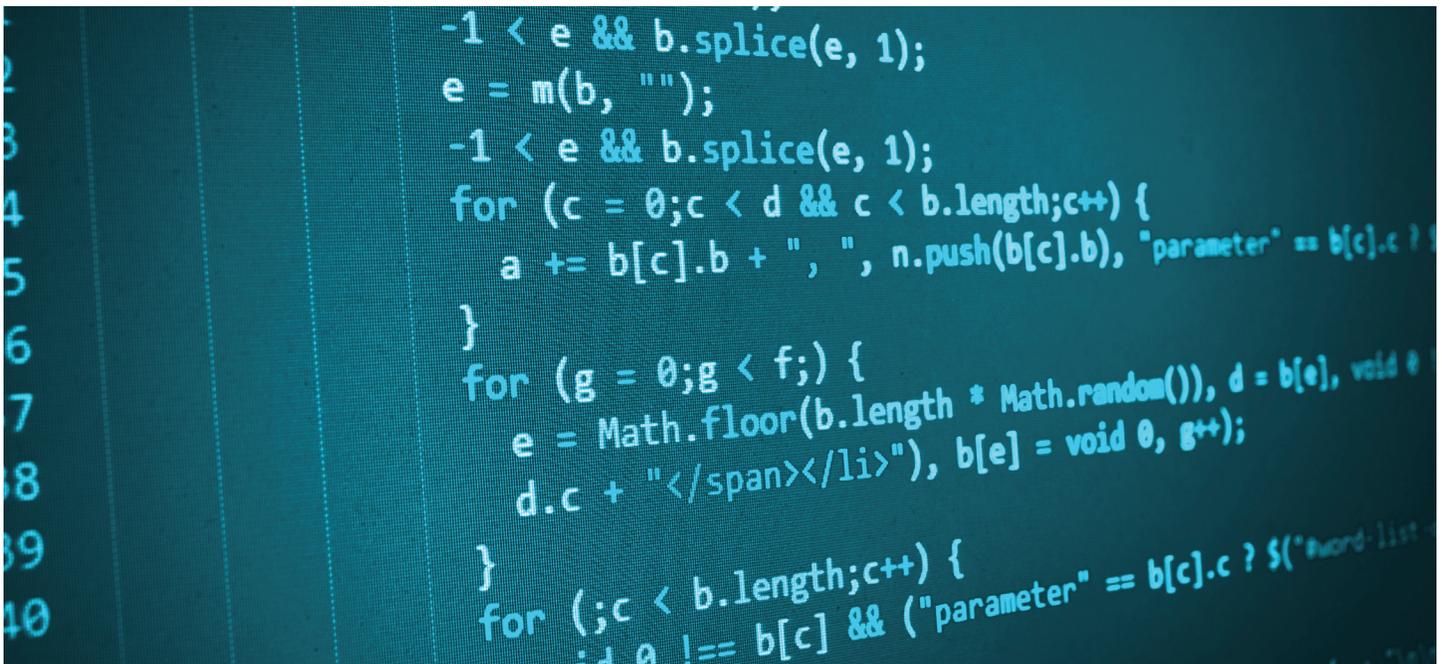
Each new piece of our digital infrastructure has expanded the number of people who we are capable of serving and referring to the critical services provided by Utah's sexual assault service providers. The most exciting part of all of this growth has been the insignificant cost of developing our infrastructure to meet the need for services – this expansion has represented less than one percent of our budget despite increasing our online presence significantly. We were able to utilize tools and programs to create almost all of this infrastructure internally without the need to hire costly consultants or pay exorbitant fees.

We view our digital infrastructure as mission critical because the Pew Research Center reports that in 2016, 69% of the public used some social media with 68% reporting that they use Facebook alone.¹

A NEW WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Before I even began my position, it was apparent that the coalition needed a greatly expanded digital presence with a strong brand. Immediately after starting, we crafted a comprehensive plan to grow our website and develop data-driven

¹ Pew Research Center. (2017). *Social media fact sheet*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/social-media/>



analytics of our existing supporter base. By the end of December, we had launched a new website with greatly expanded engagement tools.

By analyzing our existing support base and genuinely evaluating who interacts with our social media, who contributes financially to the agency, and what motivates them, we have been able to grow our supporter database by almost eight thousand emails successfully. We utilize a software called Nationbuilder that brings together fundraising, data management, and legislative organizing capabilities to create a comprehensive look at each supporter or prospect in our database.

By committing to active engagement and constant communication with our supporters through social media, we have successfully added over four thousand followers to our Facebook page while simultaneously increasing contributions to our new monthly recurring membership program – the Vanguard Network.

We have also successfully enhanced our legislative outreach efforts through the use of technology

to organize our supporters by district and engage support in areas critical to our legislative success. During the 45 days of the 2017 legislative session, we generated over one thousand emails from our supporters to elected officials – all within one system of content management.

MOBILE APPLICATION

Statistics show that the average person spends more than two hours a day on their cellphone, and we plan to take advantage of this fact by launching a new UCASA mobile application. This application is designed to reduce the need for printed packets of information that we provide to programs to distribute to victims and survivors during advocacy services.

The single most significant benefit of having our mobile application is that all the information we try to provide to survivors– including their rights, advocacy service information, and details of the response process – is right at their fingertips. Through push notifications, we're even closer to a direct interaction



and can quickly update information in real time as policies or protocols change. We also can develop more intimate relationships with the survivors who interact with us.

By utilizing a mobile application, we can also measure the breadth of deployment and downloads of the app. We can even measure the amount of content generated from feedback provided.

At the time of writing, the mobile application has not launched, but we anticipate going live by the end of 2017. Our marketing estimates and evaluation indicates that roughly 1,000 people will utilize our mobile application in the first year – many of the likely users are survivors who have never disclosed violence but who are looking for information and resources.

ONLINE SURVIVOR RESOURCES

In addition to the launch of the mobile application, we are launching a new book on the Amazon Kindle Bookstore and Apple iBooks store by the same name. The “You Are A Survivor” booklet will be available for download discreetly to phones and will appear as nondescript as

another book in a phone’s digital library.

Survivors face an incredible amount of information that is designed to reach them and encourage them to reach out for services. Roadside banners, billboards, flashing signs, newspaper ads, flyers, coupons, websites, website banners, Facebook ads, and email marketing all comprise a comprehensive attempt at marketing everything and anything to the same survivors that we are trying to reach.

Because of the amount of information competition we face, we slowly lose our ability to reach those seeking services because of the immense amount of advertising surrounding us all. We believe it is critical that we make a sincere connection with survivors. Our goal at the coalition is to create an environment of trust to improve the quality of sexual assault services statewide.

As we look to the future, it is clear that our digital infrastructure is mission critical, and as a result, we will continue to invest heavily in it. ■

ONLINE

Visit the Utah Coalition Against Sexual Assault at www.ucasa.org



Sport can
help **END**
SV/DV

FIND OUT HOW!

[www.raliance.org/
sport-prevention-center](http://www.raliance.org/sport-prevention-center)

RALIANCE

Ending Sexual Violence in One Generation



IN TEXAS

Doing the work *as* people of color

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY MAYA PILGRIM, DENISE LOYA,
AND RICK GIPPRICH

Texas Association Against Sexual Assault

During the 2017 National Sexual Assault Conference in Dallas, Texas, three staff members from the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault facilitated a workshop called “Doing ‘The Work’ As People of Color.” This workshop was a place for people of color working in the movement to share their experiences in a safe and open way. NSVRC chatted with the coalition staff about the inspiration for the workshop as well as their takeaways.

Why did you as coalition staff decide to hold this workshop?

Maya Pilgrim: Rick approached me about holding a POC-specific workshop for our 2016 state conference, and I jumped at the chance. Prior to that, I’ve had the opportunity to be in POC-centered spaces and was able to really process experiences that I’ve been compartmentalizing for decades. I’d been working with colleagues about race and our work and writing about racial justice within the movement after the deaths of Trayvon Martin, Mike Brown, and Ferguson. That said, there were some really difficult conversations online and in person, and there was an obvious need to have a space where racism existing today, institutional violence, and microaggressions weren’t up for debate or have to

be proved. Providing that kind of space for the POC of our state was a big motivating factor.

Denise Loya: I attended Rick & Maya’s workshop at our 2016 state conference; it was my first conference as a TAASA staff member. I had co-facilitated a two-part workshop on racism that was not POC-specific right before their session. After going through both, I just felt more drawn to the POC-specific space. There was so much happening for me both personally

and professionally, and that space was so much of what I didn’t even know I needed. It resonated with me on such a deep and profound level. So much of what I had been thinking and feeling was validated. It was powerful in ways that I would not yet begin to fully understand until much later. Even now, as I’m thinking and writing about it, I’m still having

new revelations, thoughts, and feelings. After the conference when we debriefed and reviewed evaluations organizationally, I was struck again by how powerful and transformative that space was for others as well. Holding this space again, for me, was a necessity.

Organizationally, we did face backlash. Some folx thought holding a POC-specific space

POC: Person of color, someone who is not white or of European heritage

Folx: A group of people, inclusive version of “folks”



The 2017 National Sexual Assault Conference took place in June in Dallas, Texas

was divisive, which is unfortunate. There's a misconception about affinity spaces being at odds with how we do this work. Violence and oppression work hand in hand; they build off of and strengthen each other. Wherever you find one, you are sure to find the other. Failure to recognize the ways in which we see oppression (and violence) in our everyday lives only perpetuates this cycle. We will never be able to end violence, of any kind, without acknowledging this. Holding POC-specific spaces allows us to build community by centering our voices and perspectives. Being in like company also helps create a sense of safety where we can be ourselves without the weight of respectability politics, among other things, which is critical to the work of dismantling oppression. This is ultimately how we push the movement forward. The critique we received coupled with the positive feedback cemented our need as an organization to push the movement forward in the state of Texas. Later, Maya and Rick asked me if I would be willing to

co-facilitate with them. Having the opportunity to recreate, or at least try to recreate, an environment that I had had the privilege to be a part of and that helped me grow by understanding myself and my experiences in new ways, which in turn pushed my work forward, well...not doing it just wasn't an option for me.

Rick Gipprich: I had been to a couple of National Sexual Assault Conferences where they held roundtables for different affinity groups. I left there not really understanding what the dynamic was supposed to be. But when I thought about what was missing for me, it took me back to my own state and a realization that we have never done anything like this before with folks who identify as POC in the movement. I wondered what it would look like to have POC in a room speaking candidly about their experiences. It's what I wanted from the NSAC affinity groups. So I approached Maya about the possibility of doing something very intentional and providing the necessary space for our advocates of

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color, and the rest just fell into place.

What kinds of conversations were you having with POC in the movement that confirmed the need for a space like this?

MP: I noticed POC staff seeking me out for support in dealing with racist comments and behaviors in the workplace, other staff being dismissive of them, other staff being overly judgmental or harsh to POC clients. I was doing my best to support them one on one and try to encourage agency growth around the issue. As the state coalition, we also see our job as providing connections between program staff so there was a definite opportunity there. But also, as POC, we began creating the space that we, ourselves, needed last year and have been trying to refine our strategies from there. It definitely was not a selfless venture.

DL: The conversations I was a part of during that first POC session at our 2016 conference were huge for me. They had a great influence over how I did my training and offered technical assistance moving forward. When I started to be intentional about doing the work I needed to do to process institutional violence, historical trauma, daily microaggressions, etc. and what that meant for me, I think that enabled me to be more open to hearing others voice concerns around those same issues. I was able to listen in a new way, and because of that I think I invited and initiated more conversations that centered those lived experiences.

RG: I really wasn't having too many specific conversations around this topic at all, to be frank. I was doing very specific trainings that

incorporated language around work with survivors of color, but nothing in depth with advocates. As I stated above, the NSAC roundtables were new to me, and since I could honestly say that no one had ever asked me what it was like doing the work as a person of color, I figured that a lot of people had never been asked that question either. So why not have it be TAASA that provides this space?

How did you prioritize goals for the workshop?

MP: We consulted a lot with Tracy Wright of the Resource Sharing Project (RSP), and she was instrumental in helping us really consider the space we wanted to create, what she's been hearing across the country, and contextualizing caucus work within the movement. She is an amazing resource. What we ended up prioritizing were three questions:

1. How do we validate and celebrate a diverse group of identities?
2. How do we allow space to air the challenges facing us but not let that overwhelm us?
3. How do we move forward in our work?

DL: Yeah, I echo Maya's sentiments. Our conversation with Tracy gave me a lot to think about and process; it also really helped give me focus as we started designing the workshop. I think as we worked together to craft the questions and activities, we were constantly asking how we could create space that simultaneously acknowledged and validated our individual and collective realities while not getting weighed down by the heaviness of them. Then we had to think about how to honor and celebrate our strengths, again individually and collectively. It was a lot of working and reworking our design then

Learn more about the Resource Sharing Project at www.resourcesharingproject.org

reworking it again. Once we felt good about it, we just trusted each other and the process.

RG: Working with Tracy Wright really helped shape where Maya and I wanted to go with the space we were creating at the state level. For me, the most important piece was not spending too much energy on the challenges, but focusing on what makes us as POC in the movement so special. We of course needed to name those challenges, validate them, and then literally rip them up and get rid of them. But it felt good to hear from everyone about what makes us special, unique, and necessary!

How did you decide which voices to center in the workshop?

MP: The voices we center in the workshop are those of the participants—as many feel comfortable in sharing and talking. We were intentional about using own personal experiences to model activities but to not make assumptions of the people in the room or insert our expectations on what their experience has been. Those experiences all came from participants themselves. By providing time to document one’s own personal experience and then time to look for patterns in our struggles, we open a wider space for the commonalities of our unique challenges and what solidarity between us could look like.

DL: The title of our workshop is “Doing the Work as People of Color” not “How We Do the Work as People of Color,” so the voices that are centered must necessarily be those of the participants. I think that was a huge part of the magic, so to speak, that was captured during our sessions. It was never about us sharing our experiences so much as it was about creating space for folx to share and build community with one another.

RG: I share both sentiments from Maya and Denise. The most important voices in the room were those



of the folks who attended. We also had to be mindful of what we heard and what we did not hear. There’s a lot of power in “hearing” what is not heard.

Were there any themes you think it is important for folks who weren’t in the room to know about?

MP: To the other people of color who were not able to make it into the room: We recognize that doing this work as a person of color can be an added challenge and that too often our work, our perspectives, our approaches, and sometimes just our ways of being are not valued or respected. We pledge to push for that to change and at the same time, we have to be intentional about validating, appreciating, and celebrating ourselves and each other.

To aspiring allies: We’ve had challenges with colleagues not understanding why this space is necessary. Communities of color in the U.S. have their own unique histories, but the patterns of European settler colonialism across this globe have left these communities with similar struggles and challenges. These are not spaces for aspiring allies or service providers to learn from us. They are spaces for us to listen to and learn from each other. Spaces like these are emotionally charged with personal

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experiences of hurt and generations of trauma that can be too difficult to bear in “mixed company” and, as difficult as they can be, they are absolutely necessary to an inclusive and equitable movement. To have to defend why we have spaces like this just puts an added emotional burden onto us. We appreciate you respecting our space and helping others understand why our space is so important.

DL: For me, one of the biggest and most recurring themes I saw as a participant and facilitator was that we aren’t alone. I mean, to a large extent we know this, on some level, but to feel this was another thing entirely. I know that I felt siloed and disconnected in my work at times, especially as a POC, and this space helped me to heal and feel whole again. If you are a POC and feel that disconnect, reach out, we’re here; I’m here.

To speak to Maya’s point about aspiring allies... yeah, that’s big. In the same way it’s important to call out and challenge rape culture when we see it (because we know the violence that can follow and is normalized as a result of repeated exposure) it’s important to call out and challenge oppressive behaviors when we see them too. Having to face challenges and outcries of creating divisiveness when we are having these POC centered spaces is oppressive by nature. I see it as an attempt to silence our voices. In the same way you wouldn’t silence a survivor’s voice, why should ours be silenced? Aspiring allies, step up, speak out.

RG: I agree with Maya. We definitely had some challenges in getting people to understand why this space was necessary. I was especially taken by the pushback we got from POC-identified folks

who felt like we were just further emphasizing segregation and division among people who are all in this work for the same reason—to help survivors. But...we have to validate that pushback and honor why they felt that way. I think another thing for me that stood out was the fear that some attendees had that their non-POC co-worker or leadership would question why they felt they needed to attend. But again, that fear is valid. Sometimes getting a room full of POC together is threatening and dangerous to non-POC.

“ **In the same way it’s important to call out and challenge rape culture when we see it... it’s important to call out and challenge oppressive behaviors when we see them too.** ”

What are some of the considerations you made while planning this workshop that folks might not always think of?

MP: The possible diversity of the room both in experiences and identities was something that we really wanted to not take for granted. How do you make space for pain and strength and look for ways forward in a small amount of time? It could easily be a three-hour session, but the possibility of having different people in the room for the 1st part and 2nd part (as is the case with most conferences) felt like too much of a challenge considering the process we were asking of people.

DL: In addition, I’d say it’s important not to underestimate the amount of emotional work needed, both before and after, to facilitate this kind of session. However, I also think that had I known how much work it would take beforehand (just the work mind you, nothing else), I might not have done it. I would have been too scared and overwhelmed. Even so, I’m glad I did it. Now I know how to better prepare for the next one. It’s important to find your people; lean on them and call on them to help you center yourself before and after.



RG: I agree with Maya. Personally, I had to consider where I even was in my own level of comfort in having these conversations with other people.

How can presenters of workshops like this embrace difficult conversations?

MP: The distinction between presenting and facilitating are important here. We really didn't present. We facilitated and had to trust in the process. We didn't have to say much because the wisdom and experiences are in the room. Facilitators have to put a great deal of intentionality into how to bring them out, how to allow them to evolve and how to make space for as many people as possible. Our role was to frame, guide and connect.

RG: Trust was really important to me as well. I trust and trusted both Maya and Denise. That alone made

it easier to facilitate. I believed in them, and that in turn helped me believe that I could be a part of these difficult conversations. For anyone else who facilitates these conversations, I think it's important to share your own hesitations, fears, concerns, and goals with each other. Because these conversations can also be very emotionally daunting and draining, it's important to try to do this with at least one other person.

DL: Yes, facilitating and presenting are very, very different. Had the intention been to present this workshop, the focus and outcome would have been completely different. I think Maya explained it well. Rick's point about trust is also equally important. For me, embracing difficult conversations has been about trusting myself — I neither know all the things nor have all the answers, and that's ok, because I don't have to. Learning and re-learning this helps me to live in the complexity of things and

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embrace the difficulty. It's definitely a process...a long ongoing one.

How did you prepare emotionally for the workshop, and how did you process afterward?

MP: As much as I could, I processed my own challenges and validated my own stories in different POC spaces and with colleagues before the session. As a facilitator, you set the tone and are responsible for allowing participants space, which can be hard when you have to sort through your own "stuff" during the session. I've had really intense emotional reactions in spaces dealing with racism and colonialism as a participant. As a facilitator, I feel a greater responsibility to hold it together as much as I can, and that's easier and easier to do with each session. Allowing myself time to get to a certain frame of mind and emotional steadiness is necessary.

After the space, I like to block off a chunk of time to just let the session wash over me. Those sessions can be really heavy and uplifting at the same time, and I try to make that last as long as I can. I always read evaluations directly after a session, and reading the feedback after that NSAC session was so emotional. I needed the time and quiet to feel all of that with my co-facilitators and just let the power of sharing like that make its way through my brain and feelings.

DL: I slept in that morning, took my sweet time getting ready and was intentional about it, blasted my Cumbia/Spanish Mix station on Pandora, danced by myself in my room, then did some quiet meditating for a bit. I didn't allow any other distractions to derail me that morning. If they started to creep in, I said no...and recentered. The music helped...a lot. Afterward the three of us shared some mutual love, respect, and appreciation. We gave ourselves a moment to celebrate our awesomeness. Then Maya & I went



through the evaluations. I cried some more, and I allowed myself to feel joy and be intentional about that feeling. Then I floated the lazy river and lazily processed any lingering feelings.

RG: In full transparency, I didn't really prepare. But that's only because I didn't know what to expect the first time Maya and I did it. I embraced the fact there is potential for this to backfire or go in a completely different direction than we intended. And I had to be ok with that. I also took my cues from Denise and Maya. After we did the workshop at NSAC this year, we all had a really good cry. It was cathartic for me, and an opportunity to thank them for sharing this space and this part of their lives and beliefs with me.

Did you hear from any participants about what it meant for them to have this type of space?

MP: We collect evaluations after every session to inform us if what we're doing is landing. The evaluations have resoundingly indicated how needed POC spaces like these are and common sentiments are of validation and hopefulness. I've personally been struck by the isolation some of our peers are feeling in their work. As emotionally

demanding as creating these spaces is, it's this type of feedback that keeps me going and invested in continuing to offer POC-only spaces and trying to make it better.

DL: Oh...we heard from participants, alright. I'm so thankful for Maya in that sense; ordinarily, an evaluation would have been the last thing on my mind. I'm so glad we had them because they were so helpful and important. We had definitive data to take back to our organization that spoke to the importance of having these spaces. The feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive.

RG: What struck me the most was the number of times we heard from attendees that they were ready to leave the movement. But after attending our workshop, they were instilled with a new sense of hope and energy, and a feeling of not being so alone anymore. I take for granted that in the community that I work and live, I see brown and beautiful color everywhere. I forgot what a privilege that is. Hearing how someone feels less alone because of the experience they were afforded by our workshop is a reminder that we are in it...together.

What do you think are some of the next conversations we need to have as a field and movement in our racial equity work?

MP: I think we need to have "all the conversations" around racial equity, and some of them need to be separate and concurrent and some of them need to be together as a field. Different types of conversations are not an "either or" situation, it's more of a, "yes, those, too" because our movement is so diverse. Some of these conversations can be

triggering or traumatizing for the people of color who are most directly affected and they deserve to have their own conversations about it. Some are just starting to be involved in this conversation and others have been at it for lifetimes. We can't expect that conversation to start at the same place every time, and there has to be room for those who have been moving forward to keep on moving forward and paving new paths. The more entrances to those paths toward racial equity, the better. Grab some friends and start walking, wherever you're at.

RG: This is a hard question to answer. I don't know where to go from here, other than forward... and sideways...and in the next lane...and back a few times...to remind me of why we need to continue and strengthen our approach to these conversations. But POC can't be the only ones

doing it or talking about it anymore.

DL: Ummm, yeah, what Maya and Rick said... we need to have "all the conversations" and POC can't be the only ones having them. We need to talk about what else we can do to support and sustain POC in the field, and that begins by asking folx what they need and how they need it. Then we need to listen, like really, really listen. ■

ONLINE

Visit the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault at taasa.org

Embrace your voice this April! Sexual Assault Awareness Month 2018

BY SUSAN SULLIVAN

We know how we talk about sexual violence matters. We also know everyone's voice is critical in the movement to prevent sexual violence. That's why this April, we want to keep the momentum of the #MeToo movement going by ending the silence around sexual harassment and assault. The theme, Embrace Your Voice, calls on individuals to challenge the status quo to bring about real and lasting change.

The campaign materials help individuals reflect on their own views and identify misconceptions they might have about sexual violence. When we change how we think and talk about the issue, we can create a culture of respect, equality, and safety. Everyone is encouraged to speak up when they hear comments that blame victims or make light of sexual violence. Whether individuals are showing their support for survivors or helping someone better understand these issues, their voice is powerful and necessary in this conversation.

Additionally, the campaign materials touch on other ways everyone can harness the power of their voice. One resource focuses on how you can practice consent in everyday situations. For example, asking before hugging or even before sharing photos of someone online. Another resource encourages parents and caregivers to teach children that the choices they make about their bodies deserve to be respected. For example, adults shouldn't force a child to show physical affection to others, even if they're a relative.

All of the campaign-specific information is contained in four key resources. Each resource is a 3"x5" palm card, which is perfect for handing out at events or leaving around community spaces. The palm cards are titled *Embrace Your Voice, Everyday*

Day of Action 4.3.2018
Get Involved Online Using #SAAM
Visit www.nsvrc.org/SAAM for free
campaign resources

Consent, Healthy Communications with Kids, and Understanding Sexual Violence. They can be purchased in the NSVRC Store (bit.ly/NSVRCstore) or downloaded for free as one-pagers from the SAAM webpage (www.nsvrc.org/SAAM).

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SAAM PLANNING BLOG SERIES (bit.ly/SAAMBlogSeries)

With the current national attention focused on sexual violence, we're calling on all passionate and motivated individuals to bring a Sexual Assault Awareness Month event to their community. We understand this might be daunting to a first-time organizer. That's why we've created the Beginner's Guide to SAAM Planning Blog Series. This series is full of tips and tricks for planners of all experience levels.

Topics covered include:

- Sexual Assault Awareness Month Planning 101
- 6 SAAM Events to Inspire Your Planning Efforts
- Planning a SAAM Event on a Budget
- Embrace Your Voice as a Leader this SAAM
- SAAM Event Ideas for Any Community
- How to Engage Your Campus in SAAM
- Movies to Screen During SAAM
- How Social Media Can Amplify Your SAAM Message
- Using "Embrace Your Voice" in Your SAAM Event Planning
- Overview of SAAM Campaign Resources ■

YOUR VOICE HAS POWER.

**BELIEVE SURVIVORS. END VICTIM BLAMING.
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APRIL 2018 · SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

HOW WE TALK ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE MATTERS.

Find out how you can embrace your voice to become an agent of change.
Visit www.nsvrc.org/saam for free campaign resources and bit.ly/NSVRCstore for merchandise.

Celebrating 23 years of leadership

BY NSVRC STAFF

After 23 years of leadership, Chief Executive Officer of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) Delilah Rumburg announced her decision to retire.

Prior to her tenure at PCAR, Rumburg was the Executive Director of ACCESS-York and the Director of Major Gifts and Planned Giving for the American Heart Association.

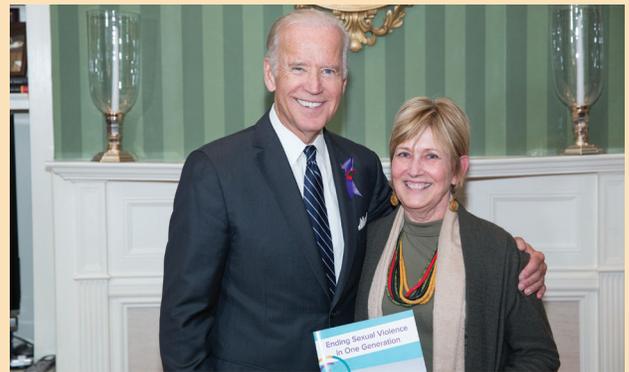
Rumburg was first appointed CEO of PCAR in 1995, and has been instrumental in growing and developing the organization in the years since. One of her many notable achievements includes chartering NSVRC through an agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2000. Recent efforts include partnering with the National Football League to launch Raliance, a collaborative initiative with the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault and the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence with the goal of ending sexual violence in one generation.

As part of her leadership, Rumburg has also visited military bases in the U.S., Europe, South Korea, Iraq, and Kuwait, developing recommendations on serving victims of sexual assault in the military. She served on the National Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women and has provided guidance and testimony for task forces and Congressional briefings on the topic of sexual violence.

Her passion and heart will continue to shape PCAR and NSVRC's mission. From the legislative efforts she has championed to the compassion and inspiration she exudes, Rumburg has built a legacy in PCAR, NSVRC, and the national movement to end sexual violence. ■



Visiting Camp Arifjan in Kuwait in 2009



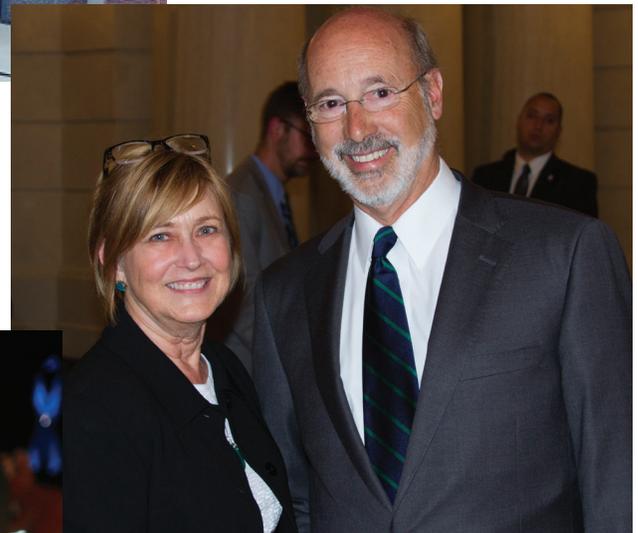
With then-Vice President Joe Biden at the White House in 2016



Speaking at her retirement celebration in 2017



At the NSVRC ribbon-cutting ceremony in 2000



With PA Governor Tom Wolf



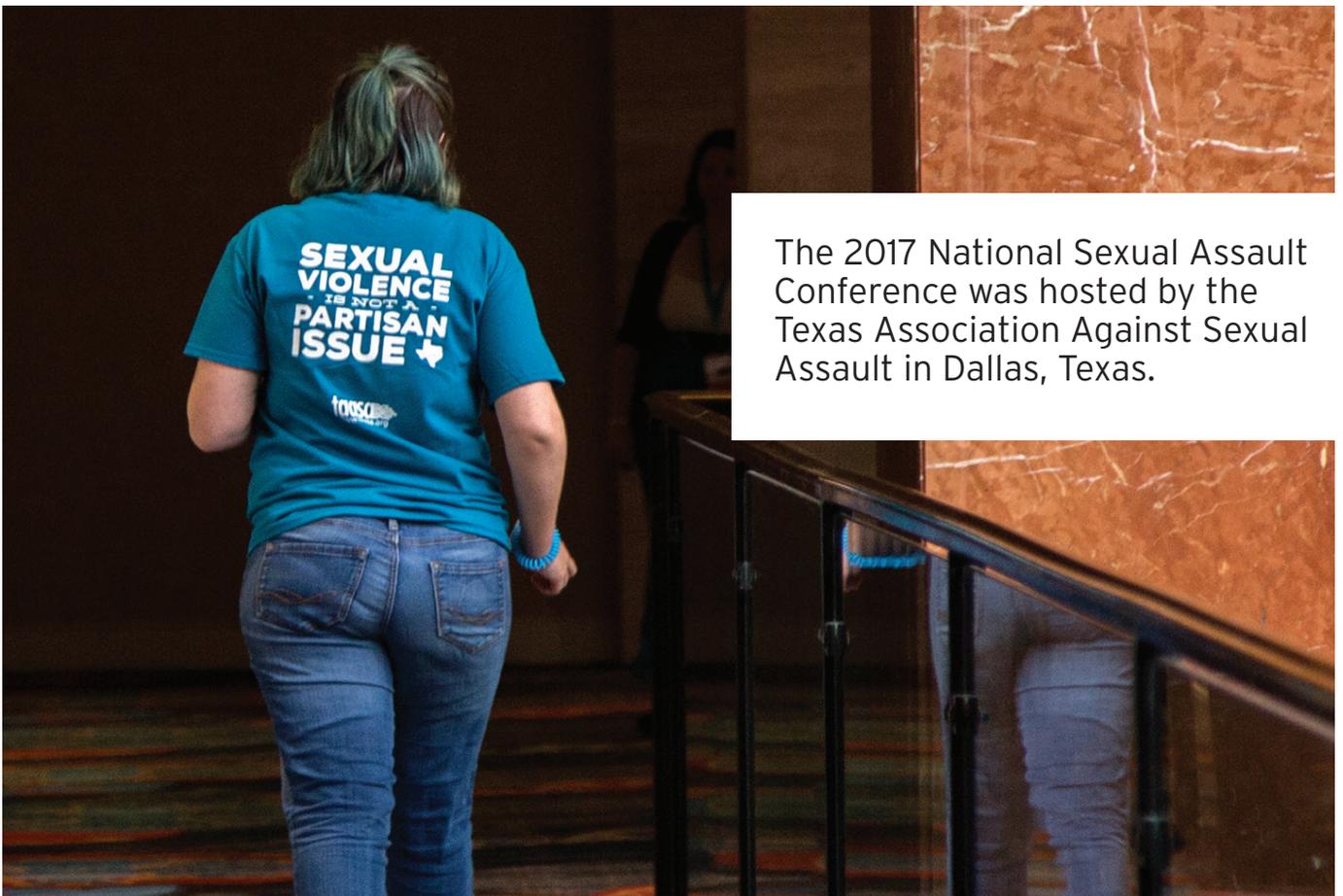
Speaking at the PA Capitol





NSAC 2017

FROM COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS TO CRITICAL ACTION



The 2017 National Sexual Assault Conference was hosted by the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault in Dallas, Texas.

The 2017 National Sexual Assault Conference brought together more than 1,500 participants to share and learn about prevention, survivor services, policy and systems advocacy,

organizational development, and more. Workshops also focused on culturally resonant approaches and underserved populations.

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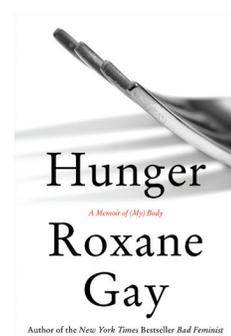
NSVRC
PCAR



4 resources worth checking out

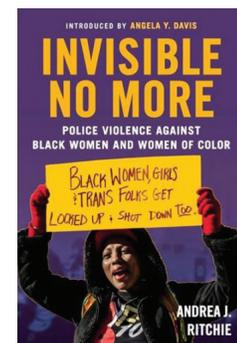
The National Sexual Violence Resource Center library is overflowing with great materials, containing more than 41,000 unique titles and growing every day. NSVRC staff members share four of the collection's resources you might want to grab for your own library. Looking for research materials? Search the database at www.nsvrclibrary.org.

1 *Hunger: A Memoir of (My) Body* by Roxane Gay
Gay begins her memoir by explaining that hers is not a triumphant, weight-loss memoir. She reveals the moment that divided her life into before and after: a violent gang rape at age 12 by a group of boys. Using personal and relatable language, Gay recounts her reactions to the assault, including overeating. This gripping memoir is a reminder that we cannot easily separate ourselves from our bodies, and that trauma impacts everyone differently.



Hunger: A Memoir of (My) Body by Roxane Gay. (HarperCollins, 2017). 306 p.

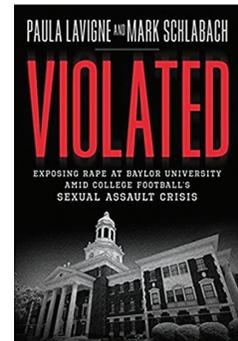
2 *Invisible No More: Police Violence Against Black Women and Women of Color* by Andrea J. Ritchie
On the cover of this book, a woman holds up a sign reading: "Black women, girls & trans folks get locked up & shot down too." That reminder could not come at a better time, and this book tells the stories of victims of the various forms of policing Black women are subjected to. Ritchie's book traces historical contexts of Black women in America, proving an insightful and powerful read for anyone who wants to learn more about the systemic nature of violence against Black women and girls.



Invisible No More: Police Violence Against Black Women and Women of Color by Andrea J. Ritchie. (Beacon Press, 2017). 324 p.

3 *Violated: Exposing Rape at Baylor University Amid College Football's Sexual Assault Crisis* by Paula Lavigne and Mark Schlabach

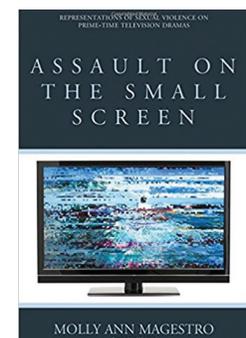
In this exposé, two ESPN investigative reporters provide a detailed narrative of several survivors' experiences at Baylor University. The blend of storytelling and reporting used is riveting, balancing courtroom proceedings with survivors' reactions to paint a fuller picture of their experiences.



Violated: Exposing Rape at Baylor University Amid College Football's Sexual Assault Crisis by Paula Lavigne and Mark Schlabach. (Center Street, 2017) 355 p.

4 *Assault on the Small Screen: Representations of Sexual Violence on Prime Time Television Dramas* by Molly Ann Magestro

This book analyzes popular television dramas, from *NCIS* to *Dexter* to *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*, focusing in particular on the way sexual violence is portrayed. Tackling such topics as victim-blaming and prosecution, the book examines how rape narratives are told in popular culture, while weaving in actual statistics to place the fictional situations in greater context.



Assault on the Small Screen: Representations of Sexual Violence on Prime Time Television Dramas by Molly Ann Magestro. (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2015) 179 p.

RECOMMEND A RESOURCE 

Read something interesting? Let us know! We could add it to our library and feature it here. Tweet suggestions to @NSVRC, share them on NSVRC's Facebook page, or email resources@nsvrc.org using the subject line, "From the Library."



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