

PEACE MATTERS

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Dear friends,

Just in the first two weeks of the Illinois Covid “stay at home” order, domestic violence calls to the Chicago Police Department increased by 27% and calls to the Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline were up by 17%.

Fast forward through 2021, and our world continued to shrink time and again with the speed of viral mutations. The four walls of every victim’s home continued to close in and at the same time, the homes of those who were abusing. The pandemic magnified isolation exponentially — a hallmark home barrier to domestic peace. Renewed mandates, job losses, civil unrest, and universally palpable fear continued to make their mark.

Our mission has never been so clear and present, nor our services so needed, or our resources so constrained. As I may have shared with you earlier this month, difficult choices lie ahead if we do not reach our year end fundraising goal of \$10,000 which will be matched by an anonymous donor, providing a total of \$20,000.

Yet, we cannot help but hope and plan. With every tentative, renewed encounter as the world cautiously reopens, we hear people and organizations talk about resilience and the newfound strengths they have discovered and built upon during this time. People, relationships, families, teams, and organizations learned and grew and connected to survive. We all did more with less. Now, just imagine what we can accomplish going forward.

In that spirit, I want to share some highlights of the year with you in these pages. We hope these will inspire you as you look back on your own 2021 and consider the possibilities for 2022.

With best wishes for healthy, peaceful and above all, Happy Holidays,

Sincerely,



Christine Call, PhD, LCSW
Executive Director & Co-Founder

OUR MISSION

“The Center helps people who abuse to stop their domestic violence, take responsibility for their behavior, create healthy relationships, and strengthen their community.”



IN THIS ISSUE

- NETHERLANDS CONSULATE INVITES DR. CALL TO ORANGE THE WORLD LUNCHEON TO SHARE INSIGHTS AND STRATEGIES
- CENTER’S TREASURER RUNS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OUT OF TOWN
- CENTER PARTNERS WITH BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF ILLINOIS
- DOING MORE WITH LESS – CENTER HAPPENINGS IN 2021
- STAY TUNED FOR UPDATES ABOUT A 2022 PURPLE DOVE EVENT

Netherlands Consulate Invites Dr. Call to Orange the World Luncheon to Share Insights and Strategies

We may work on a local level in Chicagoland day to day, but the Center’s and others’ work against domestic violence reached a global audience earlier this month. The Consulate General of the Netherlands in Chicago invited the Center’s Executive Director and Co-Founder Dr. Christine Call to a luncheon with local executive directors to share insights and strategies that might be relevant to their global Orange the World campaign against gender-based violence. The Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Chicago is the official diplomatic representation of the Netherlands in the Midwest.



Dr. Call joined panelists from other Chicago organizations working to end domestic violence – Apna Ghar, Inc. (home to the Chicago Consulate), Connections for Abused Women and Their Children, The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence, and WINGS Program, Inc. The panelists enjoyed an open and productive exchange of ideas.

The group discussed best practices and different approaches to implementing solutions to gender-based violence in respective regions. Dr. Call shared the Centers’ unique focus on providing counsel to those who have harmed to help them evaluate their beliefs that allowed

them to choose to harm. All participants also joined Dr. Call in sharing current challenges such as increased demand for services and the imperative for general increase and flexibility in funding.

“It was a privilege to meet with local colleagues at the invitation of the Dutch government, to exchange knowledge and innovation in the face of gender-based violence,” said Call. “It is immeasurably encouraging to see the issue of domestic violence gain greater international attention. It is a human problem that knows no boundaries.”



Center's Treasurer Runs Domestic Violence Out of Town

The Center's treasurer Naeem Nulwala ran the 2021 Chicago Marathon as part of the Run DV (Domestic Violence) out of Town Team. The team includes runners supporting six organizations working to prevent domestic violence and assist survivors: Arab American Family Services, our Center for Advancing Domestic Peace, The Network Advocating Against Domestic Violence, Connections for Abused Women and their Children, Family Rescue and Shalva.

Through Naeem's work as an attorney for a legal aid organization, he represents survivors of domestic violence, sexual crimes, child abuse and stalking. He sees firsthand the trauma exacted by these crimes, and how vital our services are to survivors. As a Center board member, Naeem knows what our staff do to prevent domestic abuse where it starts – working with those who harm a partner to understand, examine and change their behaviors. Many abusive behaviors originate with generations of cultural norms that preclude learning how to manage feelings and communicate in ways that are conducive to healthy relationships.

Naeem exceeded his fundraising goal of \$5,000, raising \$6,713.20! He has run several marathons in his day, the first in high school in 1999. He has also competed in bikeathons, climbed mountains and generally pursued high endurance challenges. However, marathons do not get easier. In fact, one might argue they get harder with age and how unkind age and wear may be to one's frame.

Going into the race this year, Naeem had been pushing the pain from a hip injury aside in the final weeks of preparation. With the aid of some over-the-counter pain relievers and the irrepressible energy of the community and crowd – special shout out to the Pilsen and North Halsted neighborhoods for their enthusiasm -- he completed the marathon despite his injury.

Marathons require excruciating dedication and perseverance. Yet, Naeem acknowledges even the extreme degree of effort and pain cannot even remotely compare to the fortitude required by survivors of domestic violence, or the commitment of those who have harmed to end their violence.



Center Partners with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois' Business Resource Group for Domestic Violence Awareness Event

Imagine being part of a volunteer group inside a large corporation when one energetic soul announces a difficult decision. They need to vacate the leadership role to which they had dedicated countless tireless hours. Then imagine learning they lost their life in a horrific act of domestic violence a few months later. No one who knew her would ever view a resignation from a committee lightly again.

The leaders of the Women Improving the State of the Enterprise (WISE) business resource group, part of Blue Shield and Blue Cross of Illinois' (BCBSIL) Center for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, chose to honor the colleague they lost by hosting a Domestic Violence Awareness event during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. They reached out to the Center's Executive Director and Co-Founder Dr. Call, and together they gathered experts and shared insights about domestic violence via a live webcast.

Panelists included Dr. Call, the Center's Program Director Michael Feinerman and Program Manager Terri Pope two of the Center's aftercare program participants – "Michael J" and "Tommy R" – and Dr. Maxine Davis, Assistant Professor of Social Work at Rutgers University. Bernadette Rasmussen, DVSP of Enterprise IT services for BCBSIL, moderated the panel.

At the outset of the event, and true to broader statistics, more than half of event attendees polled had witnessed or directly experienced domestic violence in their lifetime. Panelists shared statistics and insights from their work, including gender-based origins and typical cycles by which those who harm encounter and then enact abuses, and any related interactions with the judicial system. Perhaps most poignant beyond the gravitas of any statistics were attestations by our two aftercare program graduates. Mike

and Tommy shared their experiences as "normal guys" whose often societally normalized abuse and control behaviors impacted their lives. They shared their "lightbulb" moments when each recognized themselves in materials discussed in their earliest sessions with Center staff.



Stay Tuned For Updates About Our

2022 Purple Dove Event

As pandemic uncertainties continue, we are working with local experts to determine our best options to host a 2022 Purple Dove event in the safest format possible. Stay tuned for more information to come soon!

The Work Never Stopped – Center Happenings in 2021

The Center for Advancing Domestic Peace has been anything but idle, despite the impact of Covid-19 on funding and access to services. Terri and Mike will attest, client work has continued. In fact, we barely had a single week of interruption at the beginning of the pandemic as we pivoted to remote operations.

Terri noted one of the more remarkable revelations she has observed in this time. A client who had been out of work due to quarantine realized the degree of privilege he had assumed in his marriage as he reviewed Center materials. He admitted having sat idle in the home, waiting for his partner to return from work to cook dinner and manage the household.

The Center has also been working with five interns this year - Brittany Adams, Rachel Cohan, Alan Czarnopol, Latoyia Hayes and Jacqueline Nav. These interns are master's degree candidates from area universities who are honing their skills and earning hours toward their respective degrees working with Center clients.

Rachel shared her motivation to work with the Center by noting her interest in “the idea of giving second chances to people who have committed acts of domestic violence.” She said she was “really intrigued by a program that deal(s) with the steps of taking accountability and improving oneself.” Rachel added the observation, “So many times, they (clients) are also victims themselves.”

When asked her most memorable experience with the Center thus far, Rachel shared that a client once asked how to know whether a partner wants a solution to her issue or simply someone to listen. The client was very surprised to learn that he might just ask rather than being expected to read his partner’s mind. The gender role he had been raised to play came with isolating and harmful expectations.

Rachel looks forward to solidifying her voice as a social worker as she completes her internship with the Center. She commented, “I have some great co-facilitators that I’m learning from, and I really want to take advantage of their knowledge and expertise.”



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